

# Papua New Guinea

Lessons from Triangular Alliances  
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144°

150°

156°

Pacific Ocean



Indonesia

Admiralty Islands

Muscovau Islands

Lorengau

Kavieng

Namatani

Feni Islands

Wewak  
Angoram

Bismarck

Talasea

Rabaul

Hanahan

Wabag

Mount Hagen

Madang

Kimbe

Hoskins

Sougamile

Kiunga

Mendi

Goroka

Lae

Kandrian

Arawa

Kieta

Papua New Guinea

Solomon Sea

Solomon Islands

Honiara

Kikori

Kaintiba

Wau

Morobe

Trebiand Islands

Buin

Choiseul Island

Daru

Kerema

Popondetta

Kupland

Abau

Alotau

Louislade Archipelago

Guadalcanal

Arafura Sea

Torres Strait

Gulf of Papua

Port Moresby

Kokoda

Goodenough Island

Losuia

D'Entrecasteaux Islands

New Georgia Island

Fanning Island

Great Barrier Reef

Coral Sea

Gulf of Carpentaria

Australia



# Basic Facts

- PNG has the **largest landmass** and it is the **most populous** Pacific island nation (estimated at 7 million people in 2013).
- **Largest developing economy** in the Pacific. Average economic annual growth rate of 10% in 2011 and 2012.
- One of the **world's most ethnically diverse countries**, with over 850 indigenous languages.
- Approximately 87% of the population is rural.  
**Least urbanized country in the Pacific region.**



# Religious Affiliations in PNG

The 2000 census percentages were as follows:

- 96% declared themselves to be Christians:
- Roman Catholic Church (27.1%)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (19.5%)
- United Church (11.5%)
- Seventh-day Adventist Church (10.1%)
- Pentecostal (8.6%)
- Evangelical Alliance (5.2%)
- Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea (3.2%)
- Baptist (2.5%)
- Jehovah's Witnesses (0.4%)
- Church of Christ (0.4%)
- Baha'i (0.3%)
- Other Christian (8%)



# Religion in Papua New Guinea

- Non-Christian **religious minorities**: Muslim, Baha'i, Hindu, Buddhist.
- **Religious syncretism**, i.e., reconciliation or fusion of differing systems of belief. **34% of the population hold indigenous beliefs.**
- Urban politics are carried out in rhetoric rich in Christian allusions and assumptions.
- Faith-based organizations **are key providers of health and education services** in many parts of the country.



# Traditional leaders

- Traditional values and system are being eroded and lost due globalization, modernity, urbanization, and internal migration.
- The traditional “Bigman”, the traditional leader, is disappearing.
- Spiritual leaders in traditional society commanded power and respect because of the perceived power they wielded over natural elements and disasters and also the power to destroy or help anyone by the practice of sorcery or black magic. Seldom were they challenged, but the church and clergy now wield much of this power in PNG contemporary society.
- Sorcery is a common belief.



# Lessons from National Triangular Alliances

- Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are key to delivering much needed social services including education and health care. Government social services in many instances unable, in practice, to reach out to some areas of the country. FBOs work in partnership with local traditional leaders , Government entities and elected officials.
- Faith-based and traditional leaders are looked upon as role models and often act as mediators and even judges for disputes and grievances. They can be the conveyors of vital behavioral change communication.



# Lessons from National Triangular Alliances

- Faith-based and traditional leaders play a critical role in **encouraging practices** that will contribute a betterment of the situation of women, children and families. **For instance, these leaders can help change the culture of violence against women and can help promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.**
- **Some topics are sensitive to be dealt with but evidence-based dialogue and advisories** serve to sensitize and guide alliances as well as draft legislation.





# Basis for Triangular Advocacy

- Traditional leadership has a rich depository of indigenous knowledge.
- Faith-based leadership has great awareness-raising capacities that contribute to the well-being of the families and their members.
- Constitutional leadership has the means the cement conducive population and development action in public policies, strategies and plans.

