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**PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Freedom of Information Technical Working Group learns from Pacific Neighbors**

*Monday July 27, 2020* – Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) and members of the PNG Open Government Partnership (OGP) Freedom of Information (FOI) Technical Working Group attended an online presentation last Wednesday (July 22, 2020) as a further step towards drafting of the FOI enabling legislation and policy for PNG.

The presentation, which was facilitated by the United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UNPRAC) Project, in an effort to take stock of FOI efforts in Papua New Guinea and discuss some key principles to consider when drafting RTI legislation, with a focus on lessons learned from other Pacific Island countries such as Vanuatu. Additionally, Members of the Technical Working Group were able to discuss the role of an independent body, such as an information commissioner or ombudsman, in oversight and facilitating external review.

The panel of experts included presentations by three regional experts from Vanuatu, New Zealand & Australia, to inform members of the Group on FOI Policy and Legislation in their respective jurisdictions. The online meeting gave the Group an opportunity to work with other each other and the presenters to discuss and ask specific questions on what an effective FOI framework might look like in Papua New Guinea.

Member of the Technical Working Group included representatives from the Department of Justice & Attorney General (DJAG), the National ICT Authority (NICTA), TIPNG and the Centre for Environmental Law and Community Rights (CELCOR) and is chaired by the Department of Communication & Information Technology (DCIT).

While Papua New Guinea has the Right to Information guaranteed under Section 51 of the National Constitution, guiding policy and enabling legislation is yet to be drafted. The possibility of a PNG FOI law has been heralded as a game-changer for PNG, especially through its potential to redefine the relationship between PNG citizens and the National Government by ensuring citizens better access to public information, and allowing for greater public scrutiny and accountability of government operations.

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### ***What is TIPNG?***

TIPNG is a member of Transparency International a global anti-corruption movement committed to fighting corruption. TIPNG is an independent organization in PNG known as a Chapter of the international movement. The PNG chapter advocates against corruption and promotes transparency, good governance, honesty and accountability both in private and public sector dealings. TIPNG tries to assist strengthen the integrity systems of our country such as the police, the parliament, the public services and the judiciary.