



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL (PNG) INC
Lokua Avenue, Boroko, Section 54 Lot 31
PO Box 591 Port Moresby, NCD Phone 323 7517/4917 Fax 323 4317
E-mail: michael.arnold@transparencypng.org.pg
Website: www.transparencypng.org.pg

PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Government Commitment on Freedom of Information Law is Key

Monday 28th September 2020, Port Moresby – To mark International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) on Monday 28th September 2020, Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) has shared documents with the public that show the Government’s commitment to enact Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. TIPNG is the civil society co-chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) which has in its 2018-2020 National Action Plan, a commitment by government to draft and pass an FOI Law for Papua New Guinea.

“During TIPNG’s inception in 1997, a 14-point action plan was put together. One of these points was the enactment of Freedom of Information legislation,” said Chief Executive Officer Arianne Kassman, “In the year 2000, TIPNG began work on drafting of an FOI legislation, through hosting a workshop, in partnership with the Media Council of PNG.”

“Most recently TIPNG has attempted to work with the Government through the OGP, which has a Technical Working Group on FOI. Papua New Guinea is lucky that we already have a right to access information under Section 51 of the National Constitution, now we need a law to outline that process.”

In a 2019 Report entitled, *Our Right to Know, Their Duty to Tell*, TIPNG surveyed 24 public agencies to see levels of Access to Public Information and found that with the 45-year absence of an FOI Law giving a clear process, agencies have developed a culture of secrecy. An FOI Law would not only aid in reducing corruption but empower broader civil society such as journalists, environmental protectors, academia and the business community.

Under the OGP National Action Plan, TIPNG anticipates the enactment of FOI legislation as the government has committed to delivering the Law as a priority of recent governance reform. TIPNG has shared documents on Social Media using the #PNGRightToKnow so that the public can see the government commitment, dating all the way back to the 1974 Constitutional Planning Committee (CPC) Report.

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Authorised by:
Arianne Kassman
Executive Director

Media contact:
Michael Arnold
Communications Officer

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.