



# **Perceptions of Youth on Governance – Need for Space, Engagement & Participation**

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# Approach

**Focus Group Discussions from  
January – February 2018**

**Facilitating a safe space for genuine  
participatory conversation.**

**Allowed participants to lead  
discussions in an organic manner.**

**Working with local Youth  
Networks & Organizations**

#8 Groups

#2 Consultation Workshops

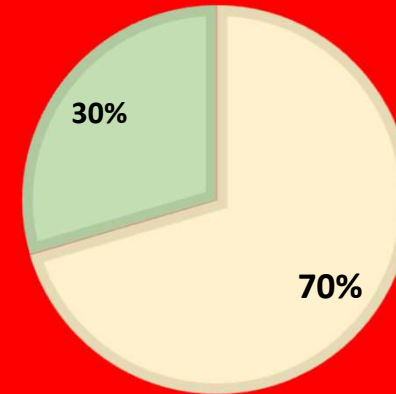
#Lae & POM

#46 Young People

# PARTICIPATION

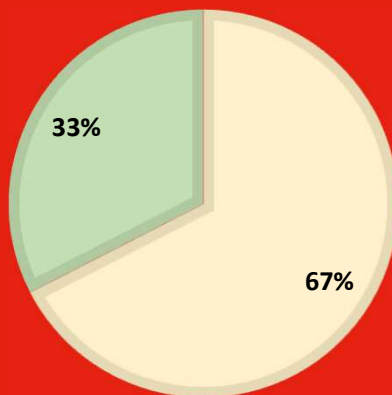
MALE VS. FEMALE

Male Female



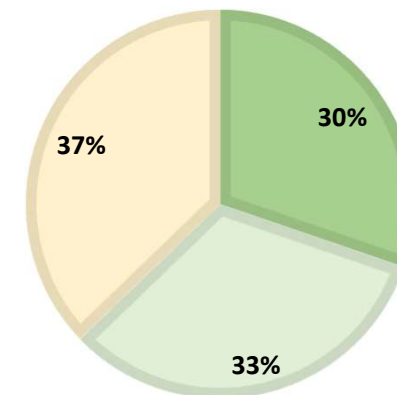
URBAN VS. RURAL YOUTH

Urban Rural



SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS

Student Working Self-Employed



# **What we asked**

**What do you think governance means?**

**What are some of your experiences of governance?**

## **Questions that young people added**

**Why are youth important?**

**How can some of the governance challenges be addressed?**

*"I think governance is something to do with leadership and how leaders should manage things that would bring development for the people and for the country."*

Female, POM

*"Why are basic services not reaching people? I have to carry my coffee bag and walk half a day to the nearest road."*

Male, Lae

*"We are the community's strength. When physically-intensive work needs to be done, it is the young people who are depended upon to shoulder the responsibility."*

Male, Lae

Governance as

- Service Delivery
- Politics
- Leadership
- Unsafe communities
- Gender based violence
- Drug & alcohol abuse
- Lack of education & employment opportunities

# Emerging themes

**#1: Leadership – Need For  
Accountability & Transparency**

**#2: Inclusive Spaces for  
Participation**

## #1: Leadership – Need For Accountability & Transparency

- LOCAL CHALLENGES to good governance were directly related to INEFFECTIVE WEAK LEADERSHIP.
- Further observations made were on how community structures and shared values governing behaviours and holding people to account were diminishing. Some suggested the nature of political leadership had influenced this.
- Churches mainly seen as providing alternative leadership in promoting community cohesion at the community level.

## #2: Inclusive Spaces for Participation

*“When election year rolls by, all candidates will engage us youth because we hold the power to push their campaign. They usually promise to address our needs, which rarely happens when they get into power.”*

Male, Lae

- Despite youth being largely absent in formal governance processes, they are carving out spaces and shaping their own governance systems.
- It was suggested that gender and social inclusion should not be considered as an afterthought in governance processes. As such representation in decision-making positions is one way to increase voice.

# Need to create more 'safe' spaces

that can bring diverse groups of youth together to discuss ideas around governance, participation, leadership, active citizenship, and nation building. Young people want to:



**Be recognized** as an important group in the community



**Share** their experiences of governance and perspectives on what they think needs (or are doing) to be done to address governance challenges;



**Connect** their direct perspectives on how they think change can happen into arenas of decision making; and,



**Building networks** with others who share a common interest in approaching challenges to develop and lead local solutions or support local interventions that are working in the community (for example, networks of youth community leaders).



# Feedback welcome on approach

- Need to have wider youth consultations with different groups in different demographics and especially with critical groups such as young women and spaces were young that capture young people participation like church youth groups or sporting groups.
- Welcome feedback and questions

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# Thank you

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