



Australian Government

AusAID

PNG Advisory Support Facility Phase II

ASFII Strategic Plan 2009

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T a b l e o f C o n t e n t s

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	The Advisory Support Facility Phase II	1
1.2	About this document	1
1.3	Goal and purpose of ASF	1
2.	INFLUENCES ON ASFII FOR 2009	2
2.1	Introduction	2
2.2	PNG – Australia Partnership for Development	2
2.3	GoPNG Priorities and Initiatives for 2009	3
2.4	Strongim Gavman Program	4
2.5	Transition to the Economic and Public Sector Program	4
3.	PRIORITIES TO DECEMBER 2009	5
3.1	Priority 1: Setting Directions and Operationalising Plans	6
3.2	Priority 2: Improving Performance and Accountability	6
3.3	Priority 3: Public Expenditure Management	7
3.4	Priority 4: Tackling HIV/AIDS in the workplace	7
3.5	Priority 5: Gender Equality	7
4.	PRIORITY AGENCIES AND LOCATIONS 2009	8
4.1	Central and key agencies	8
4.2	Line departments and other institutions	9
5.	GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ASF II	9
6.	ASFII – FOCUS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	10
6.1	Definition and application within ASFII	10
6.2	The elements of capacity development in ASFII	11
7.	ASFII APPROACHES AND METHODS 2009	12
7.1	Duty of Care for ASFII advisers	12
7.2	Making the best use of the facility	12
7.2	Progressive engagement	13
8.	CONCLUSION	14

A b b r e v i a t i o n s

ASFII	Advisory Support Facility Phase II
CACC	Central Agencies Coordinating Committee
ECP	Enhanced Cooperation Program
EPSP	Economic and Public Sector Program
FMG	Facility Management Group
GoPNG	Government of PNG
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTDS	Medium Term Development Strategy
MTFMS	Medium Term Financial Management Strategy
NACS	National AIDS Council Secretariat
PATTS	PNG Australia Treasury Twinning Scheme
PERR	Public Expenditure and Rationalisation Review
PPMF	Performance Planning and Monitoring Framework
SPPSR	Strategic Plan for Public Sector Reform
PM&NEC	Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council
PSRMU	Public Sector Reform Management Unit
PSWDP	Public Sector Workforce Development Program
SGP	Strongim Gavman Program
TRG	Technical Reference Group (for the EPSP)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Advisory Support Facility Phase II

The second phase of the PNG Advisory Support Facility (ASFII), a partnership development program of the Australian and PNG governments, is operating from April 2003 to December 2009. ASFII supports PNG public sector agencies to address priority development and reform needs, through the provision of advisers to work in collaboration with officers in these agencies, with a strong emphasis on capacity building to ensure sustainability of reforms.

1.2 About this document

This document is the 2009 revision of the *Strategic Plan* developed by the major ASFII stakeholders initially in January 2004 and then revised in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. This plan provides the ASFII Board of Management¹ with a framework for shaping the uses of the facility generally and guides them when considering specific adviser placement requests. It will also be used by the Managing Contractor to ensure that the most effective use is made of the resources available to ASFII to December 2009.

This *Strategic Plan* is not a static document – it is reviewed annually, and more frequently if necessary, to take account of changes within the PNG development environment, Australian and Government of PNG (GoPNG) policy, or other situational developments. However, it is considered that this will be the final *Strategic Plan* for ASFII as the facility will close on 31 December 2009. This version of the plan will guide the operation of ASFII through to this end date.

1.3 Goal and purpose of ASF

The **goal** of ASFII is to support government agencies in PNG to develop and implement accountable policies, plans and systems and thereby contribute to enhanced service delivery.

The **purpose** of ASFII is to assist the GoPNG to implement reforms in public sector management and administration. This will be done through adviser placements that focus on capacity building of both individuals and organisations, with an emphasis on systems, policy, planning, accountability, management, administration and compliance. The intended outcome is sustained performance improvement within the public service leading to more effective and efficient service delivery.

¹ Also known as the Facility Management Group (FMG).

2. INFLUENCES ON ASFII FOR 2009

2.1 Introduction

There are a number of influences operating to shape and direct ASFII during the final 12 months of its operation. Some of these are similar influences to those that have shaped the facility over the past five years, although there were some new developments during 2008 that need to be taken into account.

2.2 PNG – Australia Partnership for Development

As an AusAID-funded partnership program, ASFII is significantly influenced by discussions and agreements between the Australian and PNG governments. In August 2008 Prime Ministers Rudd and Somare signed the *PNG-Australia Partnership for Development*, which will replace the *Development Cooperation Strategy* as the key strategy document for the development cooperation program from 2010. The *Partnership for Development* establishes a shared vision between the Governments of PNG and Australia to work in close cooperation to meet their common challenges and to achieve improved development outcomes and sustainable improvements in the quality of life for all Papua New Guineans. Specifically, the Partnership seeks more rapid progress towards poverty reduction and the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

The *Partnership for Development* identifies five Priority Outcomes: Key roads, ports and airports providing access to markets and services; Significant, measurable progress towards the achievement of universal basic education by 2015; Improved health outcomes; An efficient and effective public service; and Development policy and program formulation based on sound statistics and performance reporting.

ASF, and its replacement program the Economic and Public Sector Program (EPSP), will be centrepiece for efforts to achieve Priority Outcome 4: An Efficient and Effective Public Service. Achieving significant improvement in the lives of Papua New Guineans and making progress against the MDGs hinges upon revitalising an effective and efficient public service that has capacity, in its systems, organisations and people, to manage and implement public resources.

Taking account of the themes within this strategy, in 2009 ASFII will support advisory placements that contribute to improved governance and service delivery. The management of the facility will reflect the concepts of partnership, PNG ownership and capacity building as well as picking up on the themes of whole-of-government engagement and aid effectiveness.

2.3 GoPNG Priorities and Initiatives for 2009

PNG's *Medium Term Development Strategy 2005-2010* (MTDS) is in place as the overarching plan for social and economic development in PNG and the *2009 Budget and Development Budget* were framed to address the priorities outlined within it. As outlined in the MTDS, the GoPNG's development goals are export-driven growth, rural development and poverty reduction. The MTDS priorities remain relevant in 2009 – transport infrastructure, promoting income earning, basic education, primary health care, HIV/AIDS prevention, and law and justice. In addition, as agreed in the *Partnership for Development*, improved capacity of the public service is a major focus area that will be explored further in 2009.

Work will continue in implementing public sector reform through the *Strategic Plan for Public Sector Reform (2008 – 2012)* (SPPSR) and related annual Agency workplans. The strategic goals for reform are defined in the SPPSR as:

1. Improve the delivery of basic services in villages and districts; and
2. Support service delivery by creating a high-performing, affordable public sector.

These objectives reflect a shift in focus by GoPNG towards building the capacity of the public service for improved service delivery.

GoPNG is also preparing new long term development strategies - the 20-year Long Term Development Strategy and 40-year National Strategic Plan - to strengthen its policy framework.

Performance of government agencies and individual public servants working within them will continue to be of importance to GoPNG in 2009. The Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council (PM&NEC) is developing the proposed whole-of-government Performance Planning & Monitoring Framework (PPMF) based on the Government's Agenda for Recovery and Development. The PPMF will address implementation and monitoring of existing policies and programs to improve understanding of whole-of-government strategies and priorities, as well as coordination, and clarify respective roles of agencies and their accountability and reporting requirements. It also ensures stronger links between policy-making, budgeting, implementation and monitoring. The broad framework has been approved by the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee (CACC), although it remains a work in progress.

The Public Sector Workforce Development Program (PSWDP), a GoPNG program that has built momentum over the past two years, will continue to see considerable efforts and progress in 2009. Under the direction of a major inter-departmental committee, several working groups are operating across the public service, focussing on different aspects of public sector growth and development. Initiatives such as the Executive Development Program, a revised Induction

Program for public servants and a Graduate Development Program were developed in 2008. A five year implementation plan is being developed and will allow the program to roll out these three new initiatives nationally in 2009.

GoPNG is driving a new initiative to revisit the broader strategic financial management framework through the development of a Medium Term Financial Management Strategy (MTFMS). Currently under development, the MTFMS will provide an important overarching strategic framework for the Government's public sector management reforms. The overall objective of the MTFMS is to improve financial management systems, processes and capacities in order to facilitate the efficient delivery of public services. The MTFMS is still in draft form and awaiting Ministerial approval. It is expected the MTFMS will be implemented from 2009.

2.4 Strongim Gavman Program

The Strongim Gavman Program (SGP) is a successor program to the Enhanced Cooperation Program (ECP), which placed Australian public servants in PNG Government agencies since December 2003 and underwent review in 2007. Following the ECP review, it was agreed at the 2008 Australia-PNG Ministerial forum that the SGP should have a more explicit focus on capacity development and on skills transfer between counterpart Australian-PNG officials and enable joint ownership and management of the program.

During the transition phase from ECP to SGP all current positions have been reviewed to ensure they target priority capacity development needs within the PNG Government. A team of capacity development advisers, in consultation with PNG and Australian Government agencies, have developed recommendations for SGP support. A new management framework, capacity development strategy and monitoring and evaluation framework will be implemented from 2009.

Following the ECP review, both Governments also agreed to integrate future Australian whole-of-government assistance more closely with AusAID's sector programs. SGP and twinning are significant programs in the economic and public sector field and complement ASF advisory support. In 2009, ASFII will seek to engage more closely with SGP, through encouraging cooperation between ASF advisers and SGP officers (especially where placed in the same department). Also, ASFII will seek input and advice from SGP on the identification of needs and possible placements.

2.5 Transition to the Economic and Public Sector Program

The ASFII contract will end in December 2009, when it will be replaced with the proposed PNG Economic and Public Sector Program (EPSP).

The design of EPSP is currently underway and will build on assistance provided under ASF II and SGP to create an integrated aid program which will implement priorities under a shared Strategic Framework. A PNG whole-of-government Technical Reference Group (TRG) was established in May 2008 to guide design development and ensure PNG's strategic priorities are reflected in the design. A draft design document has been endorsed by the GoPNG (through the TRG) and is expected to be finalised by March 2009. It is envisaged EPSP will be operational by 1 January 2010, but earlier if achievable.

ASFII has participated in the design of the new program and provided lessons learned from its many years of experience. During 2009 ASFII will position itself to facilitate a smooth transition to the EPSP. This will include reflecting components of EPSP governance arrangements through the FMG and piloting the development of improved Partnership Agreements (*Partnerships for Capacity Development*) between ASFII and recipient agencies. Other practical issues related to changes will be the migration of advisers into the new program.

3. PRIORITIES TO DECEMBER 2009

In seeking to achieve its goal and purpose, ASFII will seek to engage strategically and constructively with GoPNG agencies, AusAID, SGP and other aid donors to:

- Identify areas where ASFII resources can most effectively be applied;
- Scope, define and manage appropriate adviser placements; and
- Focus on governance capacity building in key central agencies.

ASFII recognises Australian and GoPNG policy priorities, particularly public sector reform priorities and suggestions for action in the SPPSR. The National Goals within this reform agenda are:

1. An effective, stable and enduring system of government and public administration, providing sound leadership and management of the economy & resources;
2. A safe and secure environment and respect for the rule of law;
3. Improved public infrastructure maintenance and development;
4. Improved economic environment resulting in increased employment opportunities for all; and
5. Improved access to basic services for all.

Based on these priorities, ASFII will focus on the following five key areas in 2009.

3.1 Priority 1: Setting Directions and Operationalising Plans

ASFII has provided substantial planning support to agencies since 2004, encouraging the setting of clear directions through corporate and strategic planning processes. This support, combined with the work of central agencies and individual agency efforts, means that many GoPNG agencies now have clearly stated and agreed overarching plans and corporate priorities. While some agencies may still need support to further clarify their purpose, direction and priorities it is now apparent that ASFII support should also be focused on related activities, such as embedding the planning and budget cycles and their review and renewal, focussing sector plans within individual agencies; developing 'cascading' plans within departments (e.g. a division and branch level); more effectively linking planning, budgeting and organisational improvement; and the 'bedding down' of streamlined departmental structures.

Recognising both the need to operationalise plans and the difficulties facing GoPNG agencies in doing so, ASFII will offer to assist key departments in its last year of operation to bring plans 'off-the-shelf' and into the mainstream of administrative action and operation.

3.2 Priority 2: Improving Performance and Accountability

A number of PNG agencies have made considerable progress in establishing appropriate systems related to improving performance but the need to provide support in this area continues. The GoPNG, through the PPMF is addressing the general issue of performance within the public sector. These initiatives are likely to result in high-level agreement as to revised GoPNG processes related to performance monitoring and management and ASFII will need to ensure that any support is consistent with these developments. ASFII will therefore continue to support agencies to develop and manage effective systems for measuring, monitoring and reporting agency performance and improving performance appraisal systems for individual officers, within the revised GoPNG frameworks and plans under development. Through all advisers, there will be an emphasis on improving the collection of information that demonstrates agency impact on men and women within PNG.

This revised GoPNG approach will include a focus on accountability by departments, authorities and managers at all levels. ASFII advisory support will therefore be available to assist departments to further improve the accountability of their processes and operations.

3.3 Priority 3: Public Expenditure Management

An important priority for ASFII over the past three years has been that of improving public expenditure management. As identified in early *Public Expenditure Review and Rationalisation Reports*, individual agencies needed support to control spending, improve cost-effectiveness, strengthen the budget process, improve financial management, implement better control, accountability and compliance measures, and follow agreed procurement practices. While SGP is much involved in this area, particularly in the Departments of Finance and Treasury, ASFII has also made a significant contribution in this endeavour – and will continue to do so in its final 12 months of operation.

3.4 Priority 4: Tackling HIV/AIDS in the workplace

Recognising the ongoing importance of tackling the HIV/AIDS threat to PNG, ASFII will continue to provide support in this area. All ASF Advisers will continue to be tasked with assisting their host agency to address issues related to HIV/AIDS awareness and ongoing preventative action within the workplace. Direct support will continue to be provided to the National AIDS Council Secretariat (NACS), in the form of key advisory placements focused on capacity building of NACS to coordinate the nation's efforts to control and defeat the threatening AIDS pandemic. There will be an increased focus on understanding the different risks of infection for men and women, and the link between violence against women (including public servants) and the resulting higher infection rate for women.

3.5 Priority 5: Gender Equality

ASFII recognises the links between gender equality and development, and particularly the significant impact that gender inequality has on labour productivity issues and subsequent economic growth. ASFII sponsored activities have the potential to promote awareness of these issues and to support GoPNG to create enabling environments for women's participation in all forms of governance.

ASFII will:

- Continue to use recruitment strategies which attract more female applicants;
- Continue to identify opportunities to include gender criteria in recruitment strategies and advisers' ToRs, as well as specific activities in advisers' workplans;

- Continue to ensure that monitoring and evaluation frameworks and mechanisms include gender analysis, including gender-disaggregated data, and comment on any gaps or weaknesses in data;
- Conduct at least once gender awareness and analysis training for advisers and interested GoPNG officers;
- Support the development and appointment of women for key leadership positions by ensuring equal distribution of capacity building benefits or even affirmative action policies;
- Include gender considerations when designing and/or targeting activities; and
- Through workplans of appropriate advisers, encourage gender analysis of government policies and how they impact on gender equality, including developing gender-specific indicators and targets for monitoring and evaluation.

4. PRIORITY AGENCIES AND LOCATIONS 2009

Although ASFII provides considerable capacity building support to key government agencies, resources are finite and the requests for support cannot always be met. The FMG has therefore established a list of agencies that will be first to receive assistance if requested. This list has been generated in consideration of GoPNG priorities for capacity building assistance and serves as a guide when making placement request decisions.

4.1 Central and key agencies

As in the past, advisory support will be targeted mainly at central agencies, the rationale being that they continue to be key drivers of reforms relating to the above ASFII priorities, especially priority 2 and 3 (improving performance/accountability and public expenditure management). The focus will be on locations where the advisory placement is likely to lead to flow-on effects within line departments and sub-national agencies, or where short-term practical effects are likely to be replicated in other locations. Key agencies and their sub agencies include:

- Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council
- Department of National Planning and Monitoring
- Department of Personnel Management
- Department of Finance
- Department of Treasury

- Internal Revenue Commission
- Auditor General's Office

4.2 Line departments and other institutions

The focus within these levels will be on strategic interventions in support of government reforms. Placements will explore innovative approaches to policy implementation, improved service delivery, accountability and operationalising plans. Priority may be given to initiatives showing potential for replication of outcomes through similar initiatives in other line departments or agencies.

The FMG may approve strategic placements in other GoPNG locations, such as statutory authorities or GoPNG run committees, across two or more agencies, or to operate within a particular sector. These placements will support GoPNG-approved development priorities.

Other placements may be approved to assist GoPNG agencies to address cross-cutting issues such as poverty, gender, and the environment.

5. GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ASF II

In November 2008, the Australian Government, along with other development partners, signed on to the *Joint Communiqué on the PNG- Australia Partnership for Development*, signalling a continued commitment to work together towards the Millenium Development Goals and the PNG Long Term Development Strategy 2010-2030, with a particular focus on improving service delivery. These commitments abide by the principles of aid effectiveness first outlined in the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, and later in the *2008 Accra Agenda for Action*. These approaches commit both the Australian and PNG Governments to: ownership and leadership by GoPNG; alignment by donors with GoPNG priorities and systems; harmonisation of common arrangements among donors; managing resources for results; and mutual accountability.

ASFII operations will continue to be consistent with these principles, as follows:

- ASFII works in partnership within government systems, building on existing priorities and activities in collaborative, flexible and innovative ways;
- The priorities for ASFII placements are determined by GoPNG and Australian Government policy and are responsive to PNG government reform strategies and evolving needs;
- All ASFII placements will seek to have a cost-effective, sustainable and measurable impact;

- Special emphasis will be placed on ASFII placements which will support implementation of GoPNG public sector reform priorities;
- ASFII placements target areas where they can build capacity of individuals and organisations;
- ASFII acknowledges that capacity building can be enhanced when sufficient adviser resources exist within one agency; and
- All ASFII placements will be gender sensitive in their approach and facilitate greater understanding of core business which is responsive to women and men's differing needs.

6. ASFII – FOCUS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Definition and application within ASFII

Capacity development (also known as 'capacity building') is at the core of advisory support within ASFII, with all advisers being required to focus their major efforts on developing or building capacity during their placements. Generally, 'capacity development' is a term used to describe a range of strategies, activities and methods employed within aid donor contexts to foster sustainable change. Specifically, within ASFII, capacity development/building is the 'process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations... which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement.'²

In terms of capacity development, ASFII operates at different levels, namely:

- The **individual** level, whereby ASF advisers work with identified individual officers (nominated as Key Agency Staff in each ASF *Partnership Agreement* or *Partnership for Capacity Development*) within their allocated GoPNG host agency or department;
- The **group** level, whereby individual advisers or a team of advisers work with GoPNG officers with a designated group of officers within a PNG department or agency, in ways that will not only develop the skills of the officers involved but also will contribute to the improved operation over time of the overall group or division;
- The public sector **organisational** level, with individual advisers (or small teams of advisers) working to build capacity within GoPNG organisations' functional units; and

² ASFII Project Design Document, November 2002.

- The **cross-agency** level, with advisers contributing to capacity development within organisations that operate across departments (e.g. Public Sector Reform Management Unit, Central Supply and Tenders Board, CACC) or across public sector levels (e.g. advisers working with both national and provincial level agencies).

6.2 The elements of capacity development in ASFII

There are a number of essential elements for successful capacity development within ASFII:

- Capacity development efforts need to recognise the complexity (and sometimes competing demands) of the change process being embarked upon;
- Capacity development must seek to address the needs of all stakeholders engaged in the process;
- Capacity development initiatives should be driven by GoPNG officers and must be appropriate within the context of agreed public sector reform plans;
- Capacity development requires a systemic approach that puts in place measures to build organisational capability (e.g. vision, strategy and policy) as well as building functional capacity (e.g. systems, processes) and the skills and knowledge of individual officers;
- All capacity development initiatives should take a long-term flexible approach, and will work within and build upon existing PNG systems – creating parallel non-sustainable systems in order to achieve outcomes in a shorter timeframe is not acceptable;
- Capacity development efforts should build on existing strengths, identify and address capacity gaps, and focus on sustainability of local systems and structures within a realistic resource-base and cultural context;
- Skilled capacity development recognises that men and women may learn differently and have slightly different perspectives to their work;
- Capacity development planning will be sensitive to the differential opportunities available to men and women;
- Sustainability will only be achieved if there is strong ownership of the changes put in place. To achieve this there must be substantial stakeholder participation throughout any review, design and implementation phases, and within any systemic change process; and
- Relationships will be a key element in any capacity development success. ASF advisers will need to establish sound professional relationships with nominated Key Agency Staff and agency management, based on mutual trust and respect.

7. ASFII APPROACHES AND METHODS 2009

7.1 Duty of Care for ASFII advisers

Recognising the need to reduce the risks to advisers arising from isolation and working in a foreign location, during 2008 a number of initiatives commenced to provide greater duty of care for the ASFII adviser community – the adviser plus their significant others, to engender an atmosphere of togetherness and mutual support among the adviser group. These initiatives included:

- The formation of adviser managed technical Theme Groups for advisers to seek peer review and support in their respective technical areas. Theme groups meet monthly and do not involve ASFII core staff.
- The identification of eight ASFII Mentors, drawn from the adviser group, to provide non-ASFII management mentoring to other advisers. Underlying this is the assumption that some advisers may wish to seek advice and support from non-ASFII management staff. Additionally, the considerable experience and breadth among ASFII advisers provides an opportunity through the mentor program to better meet the particular needs of advisers, especially advisers new to PNG.
- The provision of a bi-weekly newsletter (the ‘Community Notice Board’) outlining social and club activities to engage advisers in social networking, thereby reducing risks relating to isolation. The newsletter also includes policy and administrative information such as the status of recruitment and current vacancies.
- The provision of an e-library and a recreational reading facility in the ASF office, specifically for utilisation of advisers and their family members.
- The provision of free and confidential professional counselling for advisers and their families, which is of particular importance at times of stress – for whatever reason.
- The continuation of the ASF Seminar Series – each month an ASF supported agency presents to both counterparts and advisers a topic of their choice. This provides a good networking opportunity for the ASF community.

7.2 Making the best use of the facility

ASFII is a *facility*, with the ability to respond flexibly. It is important that it be used in ways that make the best use of these flexible characteristics.

However, ASFII has limitations, particularly in its use of advisory placements for relatively short time periods (12-24 months). ASFII therefore does not compete with or duplicate existing major programs, nor undertake major new development projects.

What ASFII does best is to provide well-planned placements of high-quality professional advisers to work collaboratively with nominated agency staff towards agreed priorities. It will always seek to provide advisers who:

- Are adaptable and capable of working effectively in the PNG environment;
- Are gender sensitive;
- Have excellent inter-personal and communication skills; and
- Are committed to capacity building and mentoring of their nominated GoPNG colleagues.

ASFII will seek opportunities to promote good governance and support public sector reform through assisting with initiatives to improve public service management and administration by placing an adviser, or where appropriate, a team of advisers, into situations where the opportunity is likely to:

- Support the implementation of an existing or proposed GoPNG public sector reform priority;
- Assist GoPNG agencies to achieve specific, limited yet key development outcomes (mainly delivery of core policy formulation and planning and core common functions);
- Build the capacity (competencies and capabilities) of individuals, groups and organisations, in areas identified by GoPNG agencies, which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement of the agency;
- Prepare the way for, complement or consolidate an existing, planned or completed AusAID or GoPNG project;
- Complement existing Strongim Gavman Program assignment/s or address priority needs as identified by SGP officers; and
- Support or complement 'twinning schemes' between PNG and Australian agencies (e.g. Finance Twinning Scheme, PATTS).

7.2 Progressive engagement

The ASF Board of Management (FMG) is committed to a progressive engagement approach, whereby it assists agencies with an initial advisory placement with a view to later providing further appropriate assistance where the partnership proves to be fruitful. At times ASFII will make single adviser placements (especially initially) but for longer-term or substantial inputs, the Board prefers to use a team-based approach, consisting of two or more advisers. Where the

team consist of more than two advisers, the FMG may appoint a Senior Adviser to coordinate the work of the team.

8. CONCLUSION

The ASFII Board of Management (FMG) has prepared this *Strategic Plan* in order to facilitate strategic and constructive engagement with GoPNG agencies, leading to identifying appropriate areas where ASFII resources can be applied. This will enable the FMG to effectively manage the ASFII and to focus available resources on capacity building likely to foster effective public sector reform and improvement.

As placements are identified and approved, a key ASFII objective is to recruit, induct, support and manage advisers with high quality technical, capacity building and interpersonal skills in a cost-efficient and timely manner. To this end, the Managing Contractor is guided by approved sub-plans, including:

- The ASFII *Recruitment Strategy*;
- The ASFII *Facility Plan*, revised in 2006 for the extension period;
- A *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework*;
- Six monthly *Management Plans*; and
- The ASFII *Procedures Manual* articulated in a series of 14 policy bulletins.

While these may be updated during 2009 if changing circumstances require, such changes are expected to be minimal, given that the facility will close in December 2009.