

# Reconstruction of Radio East New Britain



Project Sites Kokopo

## 1. Background of Project

In Papua New Guinea, radio broadcasting plays an important role as an effective medium for transmitting information throughout the nation. It provides news reports, educational and entertainment programs, and is also used for extending knowledge on health, sanitation and agriculture cultivation, and for emergency information transmission. Radio East New Britain (RENB) used to be the main broadcast station for the northern area until the studio facilities were completely destroyed by the eruption of a volcano on the outskirts of Rabaul in September 1994. The RENB established a temporary office in Kokopo to resume broadcasting, but since the facilities and equipment were not sufficient, they could not produce programs to provide sufficient information for the inhabitants. Under a situation in which volcanic eruptions continued, restoration of the broadcasting service was a pressing need in order to secure the transmission of emergency information.

Based on such background, the Government of Papua New Guinea compiled a reconstruction plan for RENB, and requested Japan Grant Aid for the construction of the new broadcasting station.

## 2. Project Overview

### (1) Period of Cooperation

FY1996 – FY1998

### (2) Type of Cooperation

Grant Aid

### (3) Partner Country's Implementing Organization

Radio East New Britain (RENB),  
National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC),  
Ministry of Communication

## (4) Narrative Summary

### 1) Overall Goal

Necessary information and knowledge is transmitted to the inhabitants in East New Britain Province.

### 2) Project Purpose

Quality radio programs are provided to the people of East New Britain Province

### 3) Outputs

- Facilities and equipment for the broadcasting are developed.
- The technology and the system are developed to edit, produce, and broadcast programs.

### 4) Inputs

#### Japanese Side

|       |                                 |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| Grant | 795 million yen<br>(E/N amount) |
|-------|---------------------------------|

#### Papua New Guinean Side

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Land       | 95 million yen |
| Facilities |                |

## 3. Members of Evaluation Team

JICA Papua New Guinea Office  
(Commissioned to a local consulting firm, Theodore Varpian)

## 4. Period of Evaluation

19 February 2001 – 2 March 2001

## 5. Results of Evaluation

### (1) Relevance

In East New Britain Province, where the diffusion rate of television is low, the radio broadcast by RENB is

indispensable to life. This project was requested by the Government of Papua New Guinea in responding to the needs of the inhabitants who lost such services.

Since the State of East New Britain places emphasis on radio broadcasting in its development policy, this project can be evaluated as being relevant in terms of meeting the needs of the inhabitants and the district and central government of Papua New Guinea.

## (2) Effectiveness

The facilities, materials, and services of the RENB were improved and restored completely. The broadcasting time was restored up to 17 hours per day, from the 5-7 hours per day in the aftermath of the volcano explosion.

Although radiowave interference was occasionally observed in several places in the State, radio services were provided for most of the inhabitants. The project objectives are considered achieved.

## (3) Efficiency

All the materials of this project were procured as planned, and the budget was appropriate. The equipment provided was compatible with the management ability of the RENB staff. A staff member pointed out that the training carried out by the Japanese on how to use the equipment was insufficient due to the instructor's language skills. However, the operating conditions of the equipment are reported to be good, so the efficiency of this project is highly evaluated.

## (4) Impact

Because the broadcasting of RENB was restored, the people suffered from the volcanic eruption are able to learn ways to improve their lives. The broadcasting also contributes in the education of East New Britain Province by introducing agriculture techniques, land use methods, and remote education by universities.

Furthermore, most of the Government organizations, NGOs, churches, local enterprises, community groups and inhabitants are among the listeners of RENB, thus its impact on East New Britain Province is considered to be large.

On the other hand, some people are concerned about the commercialization of life by the advertisements, and the negative influence given to the youth by pernicious information.

## (5) Sustainability

RENB is positioned as the local branch of the NBC network, and continuing the business is not a problem.



The REVB main studio

However, RENB has difficulties in maintaining the present service level because of the personnel restructuring plan of its regulatory authority, NBC. In this restructuring plan, only an eleven personnel arrangement is officially agreed for the radio stations of each state, and salary are not to be paid for the excess staff. Therefore, RENB will have no option but to dismiss some of its 26 present staff members if employment is not maintained by budget distributed by the state government and income from broadcasting. RENB is required to enhance its management ability so that the station is managed with a limited number of staff members.

## 6. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### (1) Lessons Learned

When supplying comparatively advanced equipment, it is necessary that maintenance training is carried out by a person with sufficient language skills.

### (2) Recommendations

It is necessary for RENB to acquire enough budget to maintain and expand its services in the future. Measures to be taken are, the transfer of the supervision authority from the NBC to the state government, the increase in revenues from commerce and enterprise, and the acquisition of financial assistance from overseas can be considered.

Furthermore, it is important to deal with the needs of listeners such as solving radiowave interruption, strengthening of popular programs, establishing a program judging committee, and providing staff training and upgrading of facilities.