

Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections workshop in Tonga



Participants at the Building Resource in Democracy, Governance and Elections workshop at Davina House.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the Tongan Electoral Commission (TEC) conducted a Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) workshop on civic education/ voter information in Nuku'alofa from 14 – 16 January 2014.

As part of the Australian Government's longstanding support on governance to Tonga, funding has been provided to the AEC and TEC to develop electoral education and civic education programs for use in schools and the Tongan community.

As a first step towards developing these programs, the AEC and TEC have conducted this initial BRIDGE workshop with representatives from stakeholder groups who will be involved in the delivery of civic education. The 19 workshop participants were from government ministries, civil society, women's and youth groups and UNDP.

The program was not only intended to give participants a chance to acquire new skills, but also to enable professional networking and peer support among colleagues who have a role to play in the electoral environment in Tonga.

Participants showed great enthusiasm, commitment and creativity in their contributions to the workshop. The workshop style was very interactive and a large variety of activities were undertaken to tap into the knowledge of the group and facilitation skills of facilitators.



The AEC greatly values its relationships with its counterpart electoral management bodies in the Pacific and is also happy to be collaborating with the TEC to provide assistance for election planning and procedures in the lead up to the Tongan general elections in late 2014.

This electoral capacity development program has been designed in collaboration with the TEC to boost institutional capacity to undertake elections both with and for the Tongan community to the highest possible standards, and is part of the overarching Australian Government funded Tongan Governance Strengthening Program.



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