

Republic of the Marshall Islands  
AsianDevelopment Bank Grant 0536 RMI (SF)  
Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the North Pacific  
Independent Auditors' Management Letter Report  
Year Ended September 30, 2019 and Period from Inception (July 7, 2017)  
Through September 30, 2018

May 18, 2020

Mr. Baldwin Robert  
Project Director  
Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the North Pacific Project  
Republic of the Marshall Islands Public School System  
P.O. Box 3  
Majuro MH 96960

Dear Mr. Robert:

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statement of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the North Pacific Project (the Project) for the year ended September 30, 2019 (on which we have issued our report dated May 18, 2020), in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, we considered the Project's internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Project's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Project's internal control over financial reporting.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting. However, in connection with our audit, we identified, and included in the attached Appendix I, deficiencies related to the Project's internal control over financial reporting and other matters as of September 30, 2019 that we wish to bring to your attention.

We have also issued a separate report to the Minister of Education, Sports and Training, also dated May 18, 2020, on our consideration of the Project's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters.

The definition of a deficiency is also set forth in the attached Appendix I.

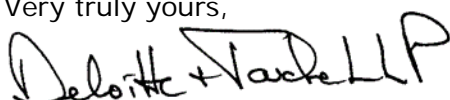
A description of the responsibility of management for establishing and maintaining internal control over financial reporting and of the objectives of and inherent limitations of internal control over financial reporting, is set forth in the attached Appendix II and should be read in conjunction with this report.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Minister of Education, Sports and Training, management, others within the organization, and the Office of the Auditor-General and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

We will be pleased to discuss the attached comments with you and, if desired, to assist you in implementing any of the suggestions.

We wish to thank the staff and management of the Project for their cooperation and assistance during the course of this engagement.

Very truly yours,



## SECTION I – CONTROL DEFICIENCIES

We identified, and have included below, control deficiencies involving the Project's internal control over financial reporting as of September 30, 2019 that we wish to bring to your attention:

### 1) RMI Procurement Code

Comment: Supporting documentation for a \$1,308 payment (check #0245) was inadequate to evidence the procurement process.

Recommendation: We recommend Project management establish internal control policies and procedures requiring compliance with the RMI Procurement Code.

### 2) Partnership Agreement Reporting Requirements

Comment: The partnership agreements with the College of Marshall Islands (CMI) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) include the requirement to submit quarterly reports on the liquidation/use of Project funds. Such reports were not submitted by CMI and USP during the year ended September 30, 2019.

Recommendation: We recommend Project management establish internal control policies and procedures over the monitoring of compliance with partnership agreement reporting requirements.

## SECTION II - DEFINITIONS

The definition of a deficiency is as follows:

A *deficiency* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A deficiency in design exists when (a) a control necessary to meet the control objective is missing or (b) an existing control is not properly designed so that, even if the control operates as designed, the control objective would not be met. A deficiency in operation exists when (a) a properly designed control does not operate as designed, or (b) the person performing the control does not possess the necessary authority or competence to perform the control effectively.

## **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR, AND THE OBJECTIVES AND LIMITATIONS OF, INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING**

The following comments concerning management's responsibility for internal control over financial reporting and the objectives and inherent limitations of internal control over financial reporting are adapted from auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.

### **Management's Responsibility**

The Project's management is responsible for the overall accuracy of the financial statements and their conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. In this regard, management is also responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over financial reporting.

### **Objectives of Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

Internal control over financial reporting is a process affected by those charged with governance, management, and other personnel and designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of the entity's objectives with regard to reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Internal control over the safeguarding of assets against unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition may include controls related to financial reporting and operations objectives. Generally, controls that are relevant to an audit of financial statements are those that pertain to the entity's objective of reliable financial reporting (i.e., the preparation of reliable financial statements that are fairly presented in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles).

### **Inherent Limitations of Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

Because of the inherent limitations of internal control over financial reporting, including the possibility of collusion or improper management override of controls, material misstatements due to error or fraud may not be prevented or detected on a timely basis. Also, projections of any evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal control over financial reporting to future periods are subject to the risk that the controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.