

Administration (JIA) were closed while Mr Mui's colleagues Jamie

Olga: Give more funds to districts, LLGs

By NEVILLE TOGAREWA

WESTERN Highlands Governor Tom Olga has commended the work of the National Economic and Fiscal Commission (NEFC) but said more funds must be given to districts and local level governments in order for the people to see tangible improvements in the delivery of basic services.

"Initiatives like this by the NEFC and key departments and agencies of the national Government can see substantial improvements in service delivery budgets for our people, especially in health and education.

"Your efforts are not being wasted. This is the way forward for the government, the people and the nation," Mr Olga told the CEO of NEFC Dr Nao Badu and his officers.

He was speaking at a dinner he hosted for NEFC and participants at the conclusion of a two-day workshop on inter-governmental financing and service delivery at

Mt Hagen's Highlander Hotel on Friday evening.

"My question is can we go further down to our local level governments," Mr Olga said.

"They need the money more than the national and provincial governments because that is where the bulk of our people live."

He said LLGs had not been funded adequately for many years and more budgetary allocations would make a big difference for the people at the grassroots level.

"We would like to see development funds given directly to the LLGs through their ward development plans. If there is a way to do this, the 2012 budget would be a good start," Mr Olga said.

He said he was willing to do more and he proposed to allocate K30,000 in his government's 2012 budget for his LLGs to look after elementary schools in their council areas.

He also said K1 billion was being expended in DSIP funds but questioned if all his MP colleagues were



MR Olga (right): More needs to be done at LLG levels

being transparent and accountable in the use of this substantial government funds.

"We must abide by the laws and be accountable," he said.

"My recommendation is to have

70 percent of the money allocated to basic infrastructure maintenance.

"If we do this, I know that things will change but that is our biggest challenge."

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