

PNGCJE UPDATES

FIRST QUARTER FOR 2023

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Judges and Spouses attend Judicial Wellness for Judges program

MORE than 30 judges from the PNG National and Supreme Courts along with their spouses attended a two-day Judicial Wellness for Judges program at Loloata Island Resort to help them mentally and physically within their line of work.

The program was funded and facilitated by the PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence with the purpose to promote and maintain a healthy lifestyle among judges and their spouses, ensuring that their physical and mental well-being was prioritized. The program included Judges and their spouses taking part in both outdoor and indoor activities.

Speaking during the opening of the program was Chief Justice, Chief Sir Gibuma Gibbs Salika who said the program was initially planned to be hosted in April 2020, however due to disruptions caused by the global impact of Covid-19 it was postponed to this year.

"This program is good for all the judges in the country because many judges globally are facing both



mental and physical health problems due to the nature of their profession.

"Judges maintain very restricted lives much different from ordinary citizens. They must accept social isolation, and public scrutiny and adhere to personal restrictions that ordinary people will find unbearable. PNG Judges are no exception to this kind of lifestyle and the wide

range of problems and stresses that accompany their profession," he said.

Chief Sir Gibuma Gibbs Salika stated that over the course of nine years, from 2014 to 2022, 10 PNG National and Supreme Courts Judges had passed away due to underlying health problems.

"Some of these problems were caused by stress and Judges not

properly taking care of their health and well-being".

"This two-day Judicial Wellness for Judges program, will surely generate meaningful conversations about how we can take care of our health and well-being by providing resources and information on effective management of judicial stress," Chief Sir Gibuma Gibbs Salika stated.

Pacific Court officers attend fraud and corruption case workshop

FOUR Court officers from the PNG Judiciary attended a week-long workshop on the topic, 'Managing and Reporting on Fraud and Corruption Cases' with thirty other Pacific Islands Court officers at the Federal Court of Australia in Brisbane, Queensland.

Two of the facilitators from the PNG Judiciary were Assistant Registrar of the National Court, Ms Victoria Belo, and PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence (PNGCJE) Program Officer, Mrs Stacey Levakia-Wali. Participating officers from the PNG Judiciary included Ms Janet Kekei from the National Court Crimes Registry and Mr Thomas Sigali, Appeals and Review, Supreme Court Registry.

Regional program officer for the Pacific Islands and co-facilitator of the workshop, Mrs Levakia-Wali said the program was hosted by the Pacific Judicial Integrity Program (PJIP) in a joint venture with PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence.

"PJIP aims to strengthen partner courts and justice systems that may be vulnerable to elite capture and corruption by delivering a suite of Pacific-focused training and development activities to support judicial and court officers preside over, manage and report on corruption-related cases in their own jurisdictions".

She said the training was designed to assist registrars, judges' associates and other Court officers who directly support the Judges to manage fraud and corruption-related cases.

Another key facilitator was Ms Belo who is in charge of the Fraud and Corruption Track at the PNG National Court Registry Office. Her presentation was based on the procedural practices that are in place in the Fraud and Corruption Track including how data is captured in the case management system (CMS) and made accessible to Judges for hearing of cases.

"With our current CMS, it is now easier to extract data for reporting purposes which in turn makes it efficient for Judges to access in-

formation relating to cases.

"Meeting my counterparts in the Pacific has allowed me to understand their challenges and compare their experiences to what we face in Papua New Guinea".

"From the workshop it became clear to me that unfortunately other Pacific Island countries do not have advanced case management systems, criminal court processes as well as Court Practice Rules. The PNG Judiciary will need to assist them in establishing and developing their case management systems and processes," Ms Belo said.

Workshop participant and registry officer, Ms Kekei said she was grateful for the opportunity to be part of the workshop as it has broadened her knowledge on cases related to fraud and corruption offences, and how she can effectively carry out her tasks as a court registry officer.

"I also learned from the Australian Court registrars who were co-facilitators of the workshop about how they manage their fraud and corruption cases."

"The case scenario presentations were the highlights of the workshop, because they got each participant to openly share their experiences," Ms Kekei added.

Supreme Court Registry officer Mr. Sigali also shared the same sentiments as Ms Kekei. He thanked the PNGCJE and PJIP for hosting the workshop and said, "the topics covered during the workshop was very informative especially learning from Court registrars in Australia on how they manage fraud and corruption cases."

"I enjoyed the group sharing sessions as it was from these discussions that we were able to take home key lessons to improve our service to Court users," he said.

Mrs Levakia-Wali said the workshop was the second judicial education and training program covering Fraud and Corruption. The first was jointly hosted by PNGCJE and PJIP in Port Moresby late last year for Judges in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region.



The four Court officers from PNG Judiciary Mrs Stacey Levakia-Wali (left), Ms Janet Kekei, Mr Thomas Sigali and Ms Victoria Belo, who attended the week-long workshop on Managing and Reporting on Fraud and Corruption cases at the Federal Court in Brisbane, Australia. – Picture supplied



Participants paying close attention to the facilitator.



GESI Facilitator and PNGCJE Research and Publications Manager, Ms Debbie Laudiwana facilitating the program.

Staff of NJSS undergo Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Awareness

ELEVEN staff of the National Judicial Staff Services recently underwent a one-day Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Awareness with the aim of achieving the objectives and explaining gender equity and social inclusion in the workplace and to discuss actions that the organization can take to mainstream GESI principles and values into its systems and practices.

The staff that attended the awareness included three support staff from the Chief Justice chamber, officers from NJSS Finance Division, HR Division and staff from the Buildings and Security Division.

The awareness was facilitated by PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence Research and Publications Manager, Ms Debbie Laudiwana. Ms Laudiwana during the one-day awareness explained to the participants the meaning of Gender Equity and the involvement

establishing strategies to ensure disadvantaged men and women participated fully in employment and other opportunities.

She also explained the meaning of Social Inclusion during the awareness which meant improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.

The Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy (NPS) was launched in January 2013 by the PNG Department of Personal Management (DPM).

It has its foundations in the Public Service Management Act, the Public Service Code of Business Ethics and Conduct, and the General Orders (GO 20)

It was designed to address the issue of discrimination, harassment and domestic violence in the workplace and sets a framework for promotion of gender equity and social inclusive practice across the National Public Service.

The policy applies to all National Government Departments, Provincial, District and Local Level Government Administrations and other agencies.

Currently the NJSS and a number of other LJS agencies are yet to implement GESI into their service delivery.

NJSS is currently working on developing its own GESI policy and in creating a GESI help desk.

At present the NJSS uses the Equal Employment Opportunity Handbook plus the Administrative Orders to address issues relating to GESI.

The one-day GESI awareness was facilitated by Ms Debbie Laudiwana outlining the topics on:

GESI;

5. Why do we need to talk about GESI;

6. Key priorities; and

7. Mainstreaming GESI into the work place.

Participants were also given awareness on gender equity and social inclusion in the justice system which is one of the important factors to achieving a fairer justice system outcome.

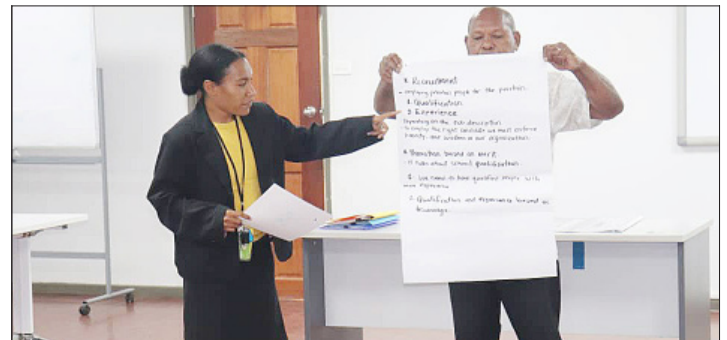
They were also given activities on what they could do to improve each area in ensuring everyone was treated fairly in the workplace.

Ms Laudiwana said this was the first awareness for 2023 given to the staff of NJSS with another one yet to follow.

“We will be rolling out the GESI awareness to other judiciary staff in other provinces as well, but it all comes down to funding in order for us to carry out the GESI awareness program,” she said.



Participants listening to what their other colleagues are explaining on the GESI program.



GESI participants doing a GESI activity.



NJSS Program Officer, Mr Peter Michael (Back row from the left) and Research and Publications Manager, Ms Debbie Laudiwana with the second batch of GESI participants after the awareness training.

NJSS second batch undergo GESI training

THE second batch from the National Judicial Staff Services (NJSS) for the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Awareness program for this year successfully completed a half day training at the PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence (PNGCJE) training room on April 12.

The training was facilitated by PNGCJE Research and Publications Manager, Ms Debbie Laudiwana and Program officer, Mr

Peter Michael.

The GESI awareness was designed to address the issue of discrimination, harassment and domestic violence in the workplace. With the awareness given, participants will now go out and not only promote but also practice gender equity and social inclusion at their work places.

Throughout the awareness program participants were asked to give their feedback on the training program and what needed to

be done in order to improve and promote GESI in the work environment.

Several participants said there should be more GESI trainings given for all staff of NJSS, others said without GESI principles being practiced in the work environment things would not work out well and that this GESI training would break stereotypes and cultural barriers when everyone is well informed and trained on GESI.

Other participants said the GESI principles bring fairness and gender equity into the workplace and should be taken seriously.

At the end of the training, participants were able to explain the relevance of gender equity and social inclusion in the workplace and also discuss actions that the organization could take to mainstream GESI principles and values into its systems and practices.



Batch 2 participants during the GESI awareness training.