



THE NATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

ECONOMIC POLICY ANALYSIS COURSE (EPAC), 2022

Opening Remarks by PNG NRI Director, Dr. Osborne Sanida

First of all, I acknowledge the source of knowledge, God Almighty, for his blessings and protection upon each and every one of us.

On behalf of the Papua New Guinea National Research Institute (PNG NRI) Council, management and staff, I welcome you all participants for the 2022 intake of the popular Economic Policy Analysis Course (EPAC), to the PNG NRI campus. I wish to acknowledge the role of your sponsors, employers and your families for giving you the opportunity or support, either financially or by way of allowing you to take time out to participate in this vital Course. I also acknowledge the Course Coordinator, Dr. Francis Odhuno and his support staff, and the lecturers who will be teaching you for the next 8 weeks.

There was a total of 70 applicants for the Course, comprising 47 males and 23 females. Most of the applicants (69% or 48) applied from within the National Capital District (NCD) with the remaining 22 from outside of NCD. The sector breakdown was as follows: 30 from Government institutions; 16 from the private sector; 14 from statutory authorities; 7 from State-Owned Enterprises; 2 self-employed; and 1 staff of a Member of Parliament.

Obviously, not every applicant made it to the final list for various reasons. But you, who are seated here today, have made the final cut. Based on meeting the Course admission requirements, the Institute is giving you this opportunity to learn in EPAC 2022 so make the most of the opportunity and learn as much as you can.

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inquire, inform, influence

The EPAC was first conducted in 1989, some 33 years ago. Perhaps, most of you here will be younger than the Course. The key aim of the EPAC is to promote the candidates' knowledge on sound government development policies, comprising government economic policies and major public policies with implications for economic growth and social development. The EPAC curriculum is unique in its conception and presentation. It blends theory and policy and backed by research data and analytics.

The program attempts to present the analysis of major government policies and their impacts on income creation, employment generation or retention, and broader economic and social development. The PNG NRI is best-placed to offer this Course, which has been mandated to *Inquire, Inform* and *Influence* development policies.

The Course will be taught by experienced NRI researchers to impart this very valuable knowledge from its research work. In addition to the taught Courses, in recent years, the Institute has extended invitation to successful entrepreneurs, businessmen or Chief Executive Officers and prominent public servants to speak to the course participants on important aspects of government policy that should be emphasised in order to promote national development. We will endeavor to incorporate this in EPAC 2022.

The Institute conducts the EPAC for middle and senior management executives and promising bureaucrats in the public and private sectors and leaders interested in government and public policy-making. The EPAC partially fulfills the Institute's mandate to conduct applied research and disseminate findings through publications and short courses. Since its inception in 1989, the EPAC has been the NRI's flagship Course. The EPAC continues to be very popular and has trained many Papua New Guineans holding high positions in the public and private sectors; and it is also in high demand.

The EPAC is not only openly advertised annually to admit a cohort for training, but it also accepts Institutional sponsorship candidates. Here are a few examples: the Australian DFAT sponsored the media personnel, provincial planners, disciplinary

force members, and officers of MPs; the Department of Environment and Conservation contracted the course for senior managerial staff; and the Department of National Planning and Monitoring sponsored a group of its Staff.

The EPAC will sharpen your understanding of policy analysis and design; sharpen your thinking on policy issues; teach you the steps involved in doing a research paper and writing a policy paper; sharpen your time management as you study in a time-constrained environment; and could become a stepping stone for further studies, should you be thinking of postgraduate studies.

Knowledge gained from the EPAC is vital for evidence-based decision-making. That is, decisions made by Government or businesses must be based on evidence in order to make good decisions that will have a positive impact on the welfare of the people. To have good information, it is vital to have research and analysis skills and knowledge on the main economic and public policies. Your time here will build and strengthen your research and analysis skills so that you can make better and more useful contributions to informed decision-making, not only at where you work but also for the broader development aspirations of PNG.

To conclude, you the participants are now part of the PNG NRI family for the next 8 weeks and I hope that you will enjoy your learning time here. After the Course, I hope that you can continue to be engaged with us, as and when applicable, as part of your new-found skills in research and analysis in economic and public policies, as we endeavor to *inquire, inform* and *influence* for good decision-making to improve the welfare of our people in our various capacities.

I wish you all success as you undertake the challenge of the 2022 EPAC.