



THE NATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Minster for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and Sports visits PNG NRI

The Papua New Guinea National Research Institute (PNG NRI) was honored to have the new Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and Sports, visit the campus on Friday last week.

Hon. Wesley Raminai joined the PNG NRI Council Acting Chairman, Mr. Wilson Thompson and members of the PNG NRI Council during its first meeting of the year, where he was briefed on the Institute's roles, responsibilities, functions and key activities.

While congratulating Mr Raminai on his recent appointment, Mr. Thompson briefed him on the PNG Knowledge Hub Precinct development and on how the PNG NRI is positioning itself in supporting the Marape-Basil Government going forward.

"The Institute's research is organised under eight Research Programs, conducting research aimed at addressing the key economic and social issues facing PNG, as envisioned in the PNG Vision 2050; Development Strategic Plan (DSP), 2010-2030; the Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDPs); and other relevant and topical development issues," Mr. Thompson said.

He said in addition to providing advice on better public policy outcomes and improved service delivery, the PNG NRI research team is also engaged in policy development and analysis in collaboration with key government agencies. For example, the recently held National Land Summit in 2019 with Department of Lands and Physical Planning; Department of National Planning and Monitoring; and Department of Treasury. A key contribution of the PNG NRI to public policy analysis has been the offering of the popular annual Economic Policy Analysis Course (EPAC) since 1989.

Mr. Thompson assured the Minister that the Institute remains focused and would ensure its work addresses PNG's long-term development challenges.

He said the focus for the next three years is captured in the Institute's new 2021-2023 Corporate Plan, which is intended to synchronise with the Government's planning period; that is completion of the current MTDP in 2022 and commencement of the new MTDP in 2023. A new Corporate Plan will be developed to synchronise with the new MTDP going forward.

"The Council sees the importance of the Institute in aligning its plan with the term of each successive government. In this manner, we become more responsive to the priorities of the government of the day and to align our research accordingly and provide solutions to problems as they arise," he said.

Mr. Raminai assured the Council that he would support the work of the Institute during his term. He took on board the challenges faced by the Institute in terms of staffing and budget cuts.

He said that the country is going through tough times in terms of the resources and because of Covid-19 and other problems faced in the country.

The Minister also raised concerns about population growth, which is about 3% per annum, and the negative implications on the country if opportunities are not provided for the youth to be meaningfully engaged in the economy. In particular, there is a big question on the quality of education of students going to higher education and eventually the workforce. There is a need to ensure high quality education outcomes for both social and economic development.

With regards to the role of his Ministry, the Minister stated that the Ministry he leads is a big Ministry and he will try his utmost best to lead the coordination of the Institutions under his ministry for better outcomes.

“The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science, Technology and Sports is a big ministry. There is so much to do and my office will try its best to work with the universities, with PNG NRI and the research institutions and all other agencies within the HERSTS Ministry.”

He urged the PNG NRI Council to provide leadership for the Institute to conduct research into areas like tribal fights, challenges in the education sector, corruption, and the PNG political system.

“There are so many issues to research. We have other research institutions in the country and I have to see how we can all come together and work on a way forward,” Mr Raminai said. The Institutions will need to work together to focus on research that will address the main issues facing the country and with the outcomes of research being used for informed decision-making to improve the welfare of people.

Caption: PNG NRI Council Acting Chairman Mr. Wilson Thompson briefing Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and Sports Hon. Wesley Raminai on the Institute’s roles, responsibilities, functions and key activities.

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