



DRAFT TALKING POINTS

NBC Radio

Gender and Social Inclusion

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Opening Remarks

- ◆ Thank you again for your continued support to host PNGEC on the program.
- ◆ Today I will be talking about why inclusive elections matter and what the PNGEC is doing to create an inclusive 2022 National Election.
- ◆ An inclusive election means that people are included in the election on an equal basis. It also means that women, youth, people with disabilities and other minority groups are represented at the polling places.
- ◆ Sometimes there are inequalities between groups in society and we are committed to making the election as inclusive and safe as possible, no matter where someone comes from, what they believe or who they are.
- ◆ Providing information to the public on inclusion will encourage eligible people with disabilities, youth, and women to vote in the election.

Importance of Inclusion

- ◆ The PNG Constitution recognizes “equality of citizens”. The preamble guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual despite race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour or creed or sex.
- ◆ The political and electoral rights of women have been enshrined in a number of international and regional conventions that PNG has signed.
- ◆ These reinforce that women have the right to participate in elections, government, policymaking and political life and that countries like PNG must take all appropriate measures to ensure that women can participate on equal footing with men.
- ◆ A true democracy includes all voters who want to exercise their right to use their voice through the ballot box.

- ◆ Inclusion is important to create a society where despite differences in age, disability, gender, health, language, and ethnic region everyone has the same equal right to cast a ballot in secrecy.
- ◆ Another reason elections need to be as inclusive as possible is because inclusion demonstrates the openness toward all stakeholders.
- ◆ Increasing accessibility for people with disabilities in elections creates an electorate that is empowered.
- ◆ Inclusivity in the nomination process is also important so that a diverse pool of candidates including women and persons with disabilities can have a fully representative society meeting the needs of specific constituencies whereby creating more equity.

PNGEC HQ GESI

- ◆ Now I will talk about the ways that the PNGEC is making the election process more inclusive.
- ◆ A Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (or GESI) focal point has been appointed in the HQ Office for all GESI-related policies and any GESI related interest from external community service organisations.
- ◆ A GESI policy was created in the past and will be updated. This policy is available on the PNGEC website and is a testament to the importance of GESI at the PNGEC and in the elections in general.
- ◆ PNGEC already works with the HIV/AIDS Council and supported enrolment events with persons with disabilities for the election.
- ◆ The PNGEC is also intending to brief security personnel to support an inclusive and safe election.
- ◆ Disabled peoples organizations, youth and women's groups are part of the PNGEC's Electoral Outreach Network. This group shares their ideas for how to make the election more inclusive.

National Election Measures with GESI

- ◆ The PNG provincial staff have been educated on what GESI means and how it can be incorporated throughout the election process.
- ◆ Some examples of how the PNGEC has done this are:

- Procedures and training manuals and all instructions have a GESI consideration where there is a gender balance in training videos
- Recruitment of Temporary Election Workers is strongly urged to include women as poll workers in polling teams.
- Posters and awareness materials have youth, women and persons with disabilities pictures and specific messages targeted at this audience, giving them more exposure. They are also translated into local languages.
- Enrolment messages were created and disseminated to first time voters.
- The Voter Roll will be gender split and there will be separate queues for men and women in each polling booth. This measure is to maintain secrecy of the vote and safety of voters. This means that when you go to vote, women will stand in one line and the men will stand in another.
- Family or block voting does not allow for secrecy of the vote for women or persons with disabilities and is discouraged. In PNG, there is one vote for every voter, and that voter has the right to vote in secret.
- If a person needs assistance when they vote, they can ask the Presiding Officer or bring a person to the polling booth to assist them.
- Wheelchair booths will be lower and specifically marked for any voter who is in a wheelchair.
- ◆ Trainings have been conducted for youth with disabilities to train them as temporary election workers to learn the skills of being a poll worker.

Closing Remarks

- ◆ To summarise, the GESI inclusion policy is an important step forward for PNGEC.
- ◆ Democracies are stronger when people participate in greater numbers and when the conversation includes multiple perspectives.

- ◆ Seeing all people of PNG reflected in the electoral process can instil confidence. With the expectation that all voices contribute to decision-making, democracies can begin to deliver for all.
- ◆ We must believe and work toward the idea that inclusion is necessary to a resilient democracy, and take steps to ensure that we leave no one behind in the electoral process.
- ◆ We encourage everyone to speak up and say no to violence, intimidation and harassment during elections. To report gender based violence during the election call the free, national helpline 1-Tok Kaunselin Helpim Lain (715-08000).

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