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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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#### **AROB access VC information through awareness**

Village Courts & Land Mediation Secretariat has started running drastic awareness programs in various provinces to make sure people in villages know more about the Village Courts system; and how to use the system effectively in their communities. A week-long awareness was carried out by Village Courts Officers and other members of the Law & Justice Sector agencies in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB) recently.

Speaking during the awareness, Director for Village Courts & Land Mediation Secretariat -AROB, Ishmael Korake told the people that Village Courts should be the first point of contact whenever there is an issue within the community.

“Dispela service i stap lo haus dua, peles blo yu stret na yu no nap tromoi wanpela toea lo kisim dispela halivim. (This service provided right at your door step, within your respective villages and you will not spend a toea for this service.)”

Mr Korake said many people didn't fully understand the role and responsibilities Village Courts had within the community and how it is as important as the District and National Courts in the country.

“Village Courts system provides justice service within your communities, it is there for you to solve your issues within the village and I urge you all to recognise its significance.”

“Now that you are aware of the kind of role Village Courts plays in your communities, I urge you all to work together with the magistrates so the system can work effectively in your communities; never take the law into your own hands.”  
“When you all work together, your villages and communities will be a safe and peaceful place for everyone to live in,” he said.

The awareness team was made up of officers Miriam Dondo, Melenti Shain and Michelle Puipui from the Village Courts & Land Mediation Secretariat in Port Moresby; Ishmael Korake and Solomon Toroi from the VC&LM provincial office in Buka; Seagant Lesly Meten from Community Policing- AROB; Senior Provincial Magistrate, Bruce Tasikul and District Court Magistrate, Joyce Miringa.

The awareness was carried out in villages from South Bougainville to Central Bougainville, right into the mountains of Panguna.

This was the second awareness program for Village Courts under Justice Services Stability for Development (JSS4D) funding for this year; same awareness programs will be carried out later in two other priority provinces.



**Above:** The awareness team posing with some of the people who attended the awareness at the Panguna Pump Station Marke, Central Bougainville.



**Above:** VC&LMS officer, Miriam Dondo speaking during the awareness at Makis Village, Buin, South Bougainville.



**Above:** People looking through the brochures and posters that were handed out during the awareness. More than 2000 brochures and posters were given out during the awareness.