



Press Release
18 March 2024

Community members in Lebudu Sub-Village, Ermera, raise the issue of family neglect during a JSMP information dissemination activity

On 8 March 2024 JSMP disseminated information to local authorities and community members from Lebudu Sub-Village, Deleso Village, Railako Administrative Post, Ermera Municipality. This activity took place in the Deleso Village Hall.

The aim of disseminating this information was to increase the knowledge of community leaders and community members about human rights, legal definitions, types of crimes, gender based violence (GBV), the work of the referral network and access to formal justice.

“JSMP considers that it is important to provide information about how to access formal justice to community members and the administrative structure in sub-villages, who live in rural areas, so that they will have a good understanding and this will help them to resolve their problems and process their cases when they occur at the community level and the national level,” said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

During this activity to disseminate information the participants conveyed their concerns about the issue of children and families (wives) being neglected. In response to this concern, JSMP stated that if a person hears, sees or feels there is a problem, then he or she can make a complaint to the Public Prosecution Service to represent the minor to initiate a process to ensure the alimony rights of the minor, and JSMP can also help by following up the progress of the case to ensure that the minor has his or her rights respected,. It is important to obtain documentation from the child and the parents.

The participants were also concerned about cases that have been with the Public Prosecution Service and courts for a long time. In relation to these concerns, JSMP explained that sometimes cases take a long time to be processed because the Public Prosecution Service needs more evidence to prepare an indictment before it is sent to the court. Sometimes trials are delayed because of a lack of resources, because there are many cases that need to be tried by the courts, but as we all know there are only a limited number of judges available, therefore cases can't be resolved quickly. Through collaboration with this project, JSMP will provide follow-up as cases are processed through the courts, by confirming the progress of cases that are with the police, the Public Prosecution Service and the courts.

During this activity to disseminate information community members also conveyed their concerns about illegal arrests made by the police without a warrant of arrest. In



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response to this concern, JSMP explained that an arrest without a warrant issued by the court is considered illegal according to the law, because the correct procedure is that an arrest can only be made without a warrant when the crime is being committed “*flagrante delicto*”, namely the person is caught in the act.

JSMP also informed the community members that the main role of judicial institutions is to ensure a judicial process that is fair for all people in any cases, both criminal or civil, that are being tried at the courts.

26 people participated in this activity to disseminate information, namely 16 men and 10 women. The participants comprised members of the Sub-Village administrative structure, the Sub-Village Chief, the Village Chief, male and female youth leaders, male and female delegates, and community members including a customary elder.

This training activity was conducted by JSMP through the Community Security Support Program (PASK), through collaboration with The Asia Foundation (TAF) and financed by the Embassy of New Zealand.

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