



## Press Release

14 July 2023

### **The authorities in Samalete Village were happy with a visit by JSMP to help provide information to community members about how cases are dealt with in the formal justice system**

The Village authorities and participants from Eraulu Sub-Village, Samalete Village, Railaku Administrative Post, Ermera Municipality, were happy with the presence of JSMP through the Community Security Support Program (PASK), because this program enables the village authorities and participants to understand how their cases are dealt with in the formal justice system through explanations provided by JSMP.

This activity is one of the responsibilities of JSMP based on an agreement for collaboration between JSMP and Samalete Village that was signed on 10 January 2023. This is because to date community members who have taken their cases to the formal justice system have encountered challenges and have not received follow up information about their cases.

“After hearing the concerns of community members, JSMP immediately sought confirmation with the police and the Public Prosecution Service as well as the courts and informed the village authorities and participants about how cases are being processed. JSMP was really happy to help them, and in addition to providing information about how their cases are dealt with, JSMP was also able to respond to doubts and concerns of the participants who believe that their cases have not progressed, and why the processing of cases takes such a long time at the Public Prosecution Service and the courts and why do decisions not result in defendants being sent to prison,” said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

When JSMP obtained information from the Railaku Police Station and the Public Prosecution Service in Gleno, Ermera, JSMP immediately contacted the Samalete Village Chief to inform him of progress and in the end the Samalete Village Chief suggested for JSMP to speak directly with the Sub-Village Chiefs, as well as meeting directly with the participants who are involved in this process. Therefore JSMP contacted three Sub-Village Chiefs in Samalete Village, namely Aiurlala, Eraulu and Leborema Sub-Villages, and in the end the Chief of Sub-Village Aiurlala was the first one to be available and was very appreciative towards JSMP for providing information to community members because he said that to date community members have been concerned and they are still waiting for their cases to go forward, but he couldn't help

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because he didn't really know about the procedure to confirm with them about these processes.

The meeting was attended by the Sub-Village Chief and community members who are involved in cases, and JSMP informed that in Aiurlala Sub-Village there are seven (7) cases, comprising two (2) cases of simple offences against physical integrity, one (1) case of simple offences against physical integrity characterized as domestic violence, two (2) cases of threats, one (1) crime of suicide and one (1) case of damage and arson. From these seven cases, three cases involving simple offences against physical integrity and cases of threats have been decided, and two (2) cases involving the crime of suicide and simple offences against physical integrity characterized as domestic violence are being investigated by the Public Prosecution Service, and two (2) case involving threats and damage and arson are awaiting decisions. Regarding the other two sub-villages, JSMP has made contact and plans to meet with the relevant parties in the near future.

During this process the defendant in the case of arson really appreciated JSMP because he stated that when he went to respond to the Public Prosecution Service in January 2023, he didn't really understand how the process would go forward because he did not receive any explanation from the relevant parties, therefore the defendant continued to wait without any certainty about this process.

The same situation was also faced by the victim in a crime of threats because previously he thought that he was only being processed for a crime of threats that occurred in January 2023, however after receiving information from JSMP, the victim found out that he was also a suspect for the crime of damage and arson that occurred in January 2023. Therefore JSMP helped to explain to the parties why their cases are with the Public Prosecution Service, and they need to wait for a notification to conduct certain procedural acts and then the case will go to court when the Public Prosecution Service believes that there are strong evidence relating to a crime.

Based on the information that JSMP obtained from the Railaku Police Station and the Public Prosecution Service, up until June 2023 there were 16 cases from Samalete Village and some of these cases had reached a final decision and some cases are still being processed.

The Community Security Support Program (PASK) is a joint effort between JSMP and The Asia Foundation (TAF) which is financed by the New Zealand Embassy to conduct research on the effect of community justice to resolve disputes in the community.

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