



Independent State of Papua New Guinea

Department for Religion and Community Development

Sambra Investment Haus, Kumul Avenue, Waigani. P.O. Box 7354, **BOROKO**, NCD, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Phone: (675) 3010246, (675) 3010230, (675) 3010318. Facsimile: (675) 3250133

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PRESS RELEASE

BOUGAINVILLE HOLDS 4TH MOCK YOUTH PARLIAMENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

The 4th Bougainville Mock Youth Parliament started this week on Monday 20th February, ending on Friday 24th February, 2017 in Buka.

This leadership Training Program is a joint initiative of the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in partnership with National Youth Development Authority, (NYDA), World Vision and AusAid.

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has seen the positive impact of such training on the youth population in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville thus, had made it an annual event on its activity calendar.

The Objectives of the Mock Youth Parliament are to Train youths to be leaders of tomorrow, Inform youths on the Parliamentary process and system, rehabilitate youths that have missed out on educational opportunities, identify potential leadership qualities amongst the youths for further training and most importantly to prepare the Bougainville Youths for the upcoming Referendum.

Secretary of the Department for Community Development and Religion, Ms. Anna Solomon was officially invited by the Head of UNFPA to give her remarks on the opening day of the training program, in which she attended.

Secretary Solomon applauded the ABG Community Development Department for driving this agenda with relevant partners and said that such training modules are necessary as it will enlighten the mindset of the youths to act responsibly.

In her remarks, Secretary Solomon echoed a few encouraging points to the sixty (60) participating youths who were selected from all across the region and urged the youths never to underestimate themselves but to identify the quality that makes them potential leaders of tomorrow.

“Draw on the strengths and the quality you have in you and show others that you can be a leader. And to do that, you need to start today and not after the training is completed.”

“To be a leader, it starts within you. What it is about you in your family that makes you a leader? More importantly, how you conduct yourself at home around your family or within your own community,” said Secretary Solomon.

The Secretary highlighted one of the major contributing factor that continues to see the rise in youth related issues is uncontrolled population growth.

“At the National level, no matter how hard we try to provide services, we still end up facing challenges because we are not properly controlling the population.” Ms. Solomon made this remarks based on the youth population statistics in various areas that was presented by UNFPA Assistant Representative, Dr Gilbert Hiawalyia.

Moreover, Secretary Solomon pointed out that the lack of resources is not the issue why programs are not working. The issue is lack of proper coordination. In saying that, she advised the ABG Community Development Department to properly coordinate the programs and activities with the development and donor partners in the Region.

In her conclusion remarks, the Secretary asked ABG and UNFPA if they can do a follow-up on participants to see who is actually making a change in their community, or who has progress. She said, there should be some form of studies or statistics coming out from hosting such training so that they can identify areas that are not working and those that are working well.

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE BY

Ms Anna Solomon
SECRETARY
Department for Community Development & Religion