

**Keynote Address by Hon. Allan Bird, Governor for East Sepik Province and  
Member of NRI Council, on the Occasion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Graduation of the PNG NRI  
Economic Policy Analysis Course (EPAC)**

**Friday, 27 October 2023, NRI Campus, Waigani, NCD**

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I am honoured to be here today at the PNG National Research Institute (PNGNRI), to serve as the Guest of Honour at this 33<sup>rd</sup> Graduation Ceremony of the Diploma Program in Economic Policy Analysis, more popularly known as the EPAC (Economic Policy Analysis Course).

I am aware that the NRI's research programs are guided by the country's development plans, including the *PNG Vision 2050*, *PNG Development Strategic Plan (2010-2030)*, the Medium Term Development Plans, and the various sectoral plans of Government.

I acknowledge the vital role that NRI has played over the years in conducting applied socio-economic research and the dissemination of the results for informed decision-making, including through the EPAC since 1989. On that note, I thank the NRI on introducing the EPAC in 1989. The sound design, effective implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of public policies is of utmost importance because we need policies that work to contribute to improving the welfare of our people.

I am informed that the students have been taught different areas in economic policy and public policy during the course. I am confident that you have learnt a lot during your time here at PNG NRI. You have been equipped with the tools to design good policies, analyse and evaluate policies, and effectively implement policies with the ultimate objective of making a positive change to the lives of those who will be affected by policies, our people, especially at the subnational level. With the tools you have learnt, you must conduct good inquiry (research and analysis) and inform and influence policy making and implementation for the purpose of improving the welfare of our people.

I note that the EPAC also includes training in the broader public policy areas like education and law and order, among others, besides the core economic policy areas. This is important because we must see things as a system and solve them by understanding the linkages between different sectors of the economy and society.

The EPAC is important for all government sector planners, researchers, policy officers to. I would task NRI to engage with all government agencies, departments and commodity boards to engage with NRI, attend seminars and workshops and

also EPAC course.

I see the importance of NRI and other research institutes, think tanks and universities. Research so vital in generating data and information for informed decision-making.

To the graduates, I congratulate you all for your commitment to undertake this program and successfully completing it. It was eight weeks of intensive study and engagement. I appeal to you apply the knowledge and skills learnt for the betterment of our country. I implore you all to be the agents of positive change through the use of the knowledge and skills from the Course. We, as a country must embrace the important role of research and policy analysis.

In closing, I commend NRI for successfully running EPAC for since 1989 and congratulate you all Graduates today for successfully completing the program. The real work begins next when you start applying the skills to solve real world problems for our country.

Thank you.