

In brief...

PACIFIC JUDICIAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Chief Justice, Sir John Muria invited the Pacific Judicial Development Programme (PJDP) to provide support to address the needs of unrepresented litigants in Kiribati to ensure that they have fair access to the court and receive fair trials by the court. The Enabling Rights Adviser and PJDP Team Leader, Dr Livingston Armytage, conducted a series of consultations and workshops from 18-25 May and again from 10-20 November 2014. The purpose of the first visit was to undertake a needs assessment of the situation relating to unrepresented litigants in Kiribati and the second visit was for the purpose of piloting the PJDP's Enabling Rights Toolkit, developed as a result of the consultations conducted in the first visit.

The Enabling Rights Toolkit, provides practical guidance on supporting courts across the region to address the rights of unrepresented litigants and also provides a methodology for enabling the legal rights of others seeking justice in Pacific communities. The development of this toolkit is part of the PJDP's strategy to support partner courts to implement their development activities at the local level by providing information and practical guidance on what to do. The toolkits are designed to support change by promoting the local use, management, ownership and sustainability of judicial development in Pacific Islands Countries across the region. By developing and making available these resources, PJDP aims to build local capacity to enable partner courts to address local needs and reduce reliance on external donor and adviser support.

To date, eight toolkits have been finalised and published, including:

- Judges' orientation
- Producing annual court reports
- Developing codes of judicial conduct
- Establishing national judicial development committees
- Conducting family violence and youth justice workshops
- Setting time-goals for case management
- Promoting access to justice

- Trainer's Toolkit: Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Training Program

The above PJDP toolkits are available on the PJDP website (<http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/pjdp/pjdp-toolkits>), with more coming soon, including the Enabling Rights Toolkit and the Delay Reductions Toolkit.

Additionally, from 10-28 November 2014, the PJDP conducted a pilot for its Delay Reduction Toolkit in Kiribati. Early feedback on this project led by the Delay Reduction Adviser Ms Jennifer Ehmann, has been extremely positive and it is hoped that the toolkit will have a positive impact on the reduction of delays in court proceedings in Kiribati as well, as throughout the region.

