

Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative Newsletter

Issue 4 | February 2019

WELCOME!

Happy New Year to you all, we hope you had a joyful holiday season! In this Issue of the PJSI newsletter we reflect on achievements during 2018. With 2 regional workshops and 9 local activities delivered across 7 Pacific Island Countries, we were all very busy! We are charging into the New Year and look forward to working with you all in 2019!

Dr Livingston Armytage
PJSI Technical Director



PJSI RETURNS TO HONIARA



Over 9 days, fourteen local Judges and Magistrates explored the basic principles and practices of the judicial role, including judicial life, sentencing, criminal trials, civil disputes, evidence and managing cases at our **local orientation workshop** in Honiara. The workshop was delivered by Chief Justice Palmer, Justice Maina, Justice Mortimer from the Federal Court of Australia, Magistrate Benn from the Western Australia Magistrate's Court and PJSI Technical Director Dr Livingston Armytage.



The judicial officers completed the workshop feeling equipped with a broader understanding of their role and new techniques to take back to the bench.

Chief Justice Sir Albert Palmer and Justice Debra Mortimer of the Federal Court of Australia preparing for the workshop.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN TARAWA

JUNE 2018

Dr Carolyn Graydon visited the High Court of Kiribati to support court actors to understand the relevance, importance and application of human rights in their daily work. The Workshop was attended by 51 participants – primarily judges, single magistrates and court staff on South Tarawa. The two-week activity was lively, interesting and offered great feedback about its usefulness.

"...our participants see[n] human rights in a new perspective and how to apply it effectively in day-to-day court and out of court activities."

Sister Bernadette Eberi, Kiribati

DATA ANALYSIS IN APIA



Accountability Advisor Ms Catherine Sumner meets with stakeholders on Savaii Island in Samoa.

Cate Sumner visited Samoa to support the Judiciary to **collect, analyse and publicly present court data** about the Family Court and Family Violence Court.

The Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration are now developing an electronic database that will enable data to be entered by government officers, judicial staff and the production of reports.

JULY 2018

GENDER & FAMILY VIOLENCE IN VANUATU

AUG 2018

Through facilitated discussion of **court responses to family violence**, we explored gender inequality, the consequences of family violence, perpetrator accountability, and the key components of a good court response to the victims of family violence and the [Gender and Family Violence Toolkit](#). The workshop familiarised Magistrates and their staff with the gendered nature of domestic violence and many of its underlying causes. Speakers from the Strem Rod Blong Jastis program and the Vanuatu Women's Centre brought rich, local expertise and a broader view of the diversity of people and organisations involved in combating domestic and family violence. Participants discussed difficult issues candidly and resulted in a significant increase in understanding of family violence, gender inequality issues, along with what courts can do to be more accessible and responsive to victims of family violence.

SUPPORTING JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP

Across 3 days, members of the judicial and administrative arms of Pacific courts shared their experiences on **what judicial leadership means in the Pacific**.

Judicial leaders from across 13 Pacific Islands Countries attended the second Regional Judicial Leadership Workshop.

SEPT 2018



Participants discussed and made presentations about aspects of judicial and court leadership that inspire them.

They also developed 'Leadership Action Plans', identifying challenges to their realisation, and developing strategies to surmount them.

Chief Justice Vincent Lunabek, Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika, Justice Leonard Maina and Justice Kathleen Salii collaborate at the Regional Judicial Leadership Workshop

MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN PNG



An interactive workshop at the Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence's (CJE) aimed to **support and enhance the Centre's management and leadership capabilities**. Attended by all staff, we

explored computer literacy, monitoring and evaluation, time management, support in undertaking a Training Needs Analysis and legal research skills. The CJE management team said the workshop contributed positively to their capacity to lead, deliver and monitor activities using established processes, methods and tools.



ICT IN MAJURO

ICT Adviser Tony Lansdell consulted with the Chief Justice and His Honour's team on their computer and data systems. During the visit, he focused on **improving the quality of data collected** and how it is recorded. He also discussed how data can be used more efficiently moving forward through the development of 'Case Management Systems'. Tony provided training with court judges and staff to enable the Marshall Islands judiciary to more confidently use its technology.



ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN COOK ISLANDS



OCT 2018

A 3-day workshop on ***court-community access to justice*** included community groups, members of the public, as well as judges and court staff from the Cook Islands Ministry of

Justice. We focused on enabling rights and supporting unrepresented litigants. This included discussions about community perceptions about access to justice, the challenges faced by unrepresented litigants and possible solutions, as well as how to address the unmet needs of justice.

Community consultations were undertaken in Rarotonga, Atiu, Mangaia, and Aitutaki. Both the workshop and the consultation sessions, provided open forum for individuals to share their experiences with the Court and to communicate directly with the legal community.

The workshop created a bridge between courts and the communities they serve. It resulted in increased public awareness and trust in the courts, formulated drafts of an Unrepresented Litigants Guide and Access to Justice Plan, and conceived of juvenile protection initiatives.



ADDRESSING GENDER & FAMILY VIOLENCE IN KOROR

A 2-week workshop for Judges, lawyers and court staff in Koror focused on ***the nature of gender and family violence and judicial responses to it***. Following sessions about what gender-based and family violence is, and how to address the needs of victims, participants discussed perpetrator accountability, self-assessment and planning, and ways of moving forward through providing better services.



NOV 2018

An action plan was developed by participants to increase court engagement in the areas of primary prevention, victim focus, perpetrator accountability and collaboration with agency, victim services and FPA Partners.

MANAGING DATA ACROSS THE REGION



NOV 2018

A Building Capacity in Court Data Management Workshop was held in Port Moresby, was attended by thirty-five participants from 13 Pacific Island Countries.

Across the five days, participants shared, exchanged, and developed their knowledge and expertise. Court Management Plan were development, which will assist in the effective collection and analysis of court data in their home country. Participants were left equipped with a firm understanding about how ***data enables efficient management, performance monitoring and accountability***.

Greetings from the Building Capacity in Court Data Management Workshop!

My name is Talasa Saaga and I am the Principal Judge of the Family Violence and Family Court of Samoa. This is the first time that I have attended a PJSI workshop. The workshop was both informative and practical. I thoroughly enjoyed learning about the Efficiency toolkits and Court Performance reporting indicators that the Family Violence Court can use to measure and report on its performance and effectiveness. In the administration of justice, our people and our community require a high level of accountability and transparency. Conversion of data into useful information through Reports and effective data managements enables the Court to ostensibly discharge that obligation.



I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to our internationally recognised facilitators for your time and knowledge shared. I have been enriched and transformed a feat you have accomplished within a week. You have definitely raised the benchmark for the FVC Court.

I am also grateful for the opportunity to form partnership with our colleagues from across the Region and join hands with them in our quest to see into fruition our data management plans.

Finally, I personally wish to thank Lorry and Issy our hard working and committed co-ordinators of this Conference. You have hosted a truly Pacific and family oriented workshop that has far exceeded our expectations. Undoubtedly, the benefits will outlast the end of this conference. I wish you and the PJSI family all the best in your future endeavours.

May you all have a wonderful Christmas and a productive and prosperous New Year.

Judge Talasa Atoa-Saaga

Principal Judge, Family Violence and Family Court of Samoa

OUR FIRST WEBINAR



The first remote Webinar on Gender & Family Violence went live on 1 November with 5 Pacific Island Countries participating. The aim of the Webinar was to trial and **evaluate live webinar technology to geographically dispersed courts** throughout the Pacific as an effective training method to disseminate knowledge on gender and family violence. In addition, participants were introduced to the PJSI [Gender and Family Violence Toolkit](#).

By hosting a Webinar via the internet, participants were able to interact and ask questions in real time. The use of a Webinar is an efficient and effective means of providing judges and court staff with training and professional development. We look forward to hosting many more PJSI webinars in the future!





TWO NEW TOOLKITS

PJSI is delighted to announce two new additions to our Toolkit Resources:

The ***Efficiency Toolkit*** assists courts to increase their ability to efficiently manage the disposal of cases in a way that is just, timely and fair.

The ***Judicial Mentoring Toolkit*** has been developed and will be piloted in 2019.

All Toolkit resources can be found and downloaded from the PJSI website:

<http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/pjsi/resources/toolkits>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Upcoming Activities

A number of upcoming activities are scheduled this year, including:

- *Gender & Family Violence Visit: FSM, 7-18 January 2019*
- *Local Orientation Visit: Kiribati, 17-25 January 2019*
- *Efficiency Output Visit: Nauru, 18-26 January 2019*
- *Human Rights Visit: Tonga, 4-15 Feb 2019*
- *Project Management & Planning Visit: Vanuatu, 4-15 February 2019*
- *Regional Decision Making Workshop: Solomon Islands, 20-22 February 2019*
- *Access to Justice Visit: Vanuatu, 18-29 March 2019*
- *4th Chief Justices' Leadership Forum: Palau, 1-3 April 2019*
- *Efficiency Output Visit: Papua New Guinea, 29 April-10 May 2019*

Leadership Incentive Fund (LIF)

The LIF aims to support the achievement of national courts objectives. Please email your applications to: nicole.cherry@fedcourt.gov.au

Comments and Feedback

We welcome and appreciate comments or contributions from everyone involved in the PJSI. If you have any feedback or require further information please contact our PJSI team on: pjsi@fedcourt.gov.au

For a complete list of upcoming PJSI activities and locations, please visit our website: <http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/pjsi>