

Pacific Judicial Development Program (PJDP) Newsletter

Issue 1

March 2007

PJDP Background

NZAID in partnership with AusAID has launched the Pacific Judicial Development Program (PJDP) in January this year. The PJDP is a comprehensive program designed to build on the achievements of the former Pacific Judicial Education Program (PJEP). The PJDP extends its focus to include the development of processes, systems, regional sharing of resources and networking across the 15 participating Pacific countries:

- ◆ Cook Islands
- ◆ FSM
- ◆ Fiji Islands
- ◆ Kiribati
- ◆ Marshall Islands
- ◆ Nauru
- ◆ Niue
- ◆ Palau
- ◆ Papua New Guinea
- ◆ Samoa
- ◆ Solomon Islands
- ◆ Tokelau
- ◆ Tonga
- ◆ Tuvalu
- ◆ Vanuatu



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Over the next 5 years, the PJDP will run a range of activities which will draw on expertise from within the Pacific, ultimately aiming to strengthen governance and the rule of law in the participating nations. The focus of the PJDP is on lower and remote courts.

The Team

Ms Natalie David, the Program Director, is responsible for the strategic direction of the Program and is supported by the Service Provider.

The Service Provider manages the provision of resources for implementation of the Program and is comprised of:

- ◆ Ms Helen Burrows as Programme Coordinator;
- ◆ Mr Enoka Puni as Senior Faculty Member;
- ◆ Dr Rowan Barnsley as Capacity Building/Technical Specialist; and
- ◆ Mr Glenn Crannage as Justice Sector/Technical Specialist.

If you have any queries or require further information, please to contact Helen Burrows at helen.burrows@fedcourt.gov.au



Left:
Helen
Burrows



Right: Dr
Rowan
Barnsley



Above:
Natalie David

Left:
Enoka Puni



PJDP Focus Areas : This Year

- ♦ **Orientation and Refresher Programs** to enhance skills, knowledge and professionalism in key competencies associated with the roles of judicial and court officers within the particular courts they serve.
- ♦ **Community and Social Context for Justice** which informs and empowers Pacific judiciaries to contextualise and contend with issues of national and regional importance. These include: traditional and innovative systems of dispute resolution; the rights of women and children; family and sexual violence; and HIV/AIDS.
- ♦ **Judicial Independence** to bolster the strength of the judiciary as an unfettered branch of government able to uphold the rule of law particularly in the face of national and regional instability.
- ♦ **Sustainable Systems and Processes** to enable Pacific judiciaries to function efficiently and effectively
- ♦ **Information and Communication** to ensure Pacific judiciaries to remain abreast of national and regional legal, policy and systemic developments. This will include providing access to; regional and national information databases, publications, law reports, precedents, legislative and policy instruments.
- ♦ **Pacific Judicial Development Network** of coordinators and trained educators who identify, design and deliver national and regional activities.
- ♦ **Regional organisational structure** that supports cooperation, contributes to policy development, and facilitates networking and cooperation between judiciaries and other agencies to enhance judicial functions and independence.

Recent & Current Activities

Orientation workshop, Nauru: The Orientation workshop was a big success, providing a refresher course for judicial officers of the District Court in Nauru.

Benchbook Translation, Kiribati: The benchbook translation process is underway thanks to the hard work of four single Magistrates and a Judicial Educator. The Chief Justice and Chief Register have generously given the Magistrates a dispensation from some judicial functions and worked to ensure cases are still being managed. The final translated benchbook will be presented at the Orientation in May this year.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Scoping, Kosrae and Pohnpei, FSM: Technical expert David Robson is accompanying Senior Faculty Member, Enoka Puni, on a visit to the FSM to conduct initial workshops on ADR. An implementation plan will be produced over the coming weeks and we look forward to being able to use what we have learnt to help other PICs.

Judicial & Court Support Staff Educators' course, Pohnpei, FSM and Marshall Islands: A continued initiative of the PJDP's successful predecessor, the PJEP, the Educators' Course is taking place now, providing training for legal educators and technical experts from FSM & Marshall Islands.

Upcoming Activities

Over the next few months we will be running more exciting activities as listed below as well as working towards building a Pacific Judicial Educators network:

- April:**
- Court Registry Scoping Plan, Kiribati:** An expert will review aspects of the Registry including filing systems, procedures, practices and customer service, as well as the Registry's role in reducing backlog. The expert will then develop a plan to implement changes in line with what the registry in Kiribati would like to achieve.
 - Court Data Scoping Plan, Kiribati:** An expert will investigate current systems in place to collect and analyse data and work with judicial and court officers in Kiribati to determine ideal processes for data collection at various levels.
 - Alternative Dispute Resolution (Mediation), Samoa:** A consultant will visit Samoa to conduct initial awareness activities and research, and to develop plans to implement ADR.
 - Decision Making Workshop for Land & Titles Court, Samoa:** Training of judges of the Land & Titles Court on court procedures and processes required to make judicial decisions.
 - Decision Making Workshop for Senior JPs, Cook Islands:** Training for Justices of the Peace on court procedures and processes required to make judicial decisions.
- May:**
- Court Registry Scoping Plan, Niue:** An expert will review aspects of the Registry including filing systems, procedures, practices and customer service, as well as the Registry's role in reducing backlog. The expert will then develop a plan to implement changes in line with what the registry in Niue would like to achieve.
 - Court Data Scoping Plan, Niue:** An expert will investigate current systems in place to collect and analyse data and work with judicial and court officers in Niue to determine ideal processes for data collection at various levels.
 - Regional Judicial & Court Support Staff Educators' course, Nadi:** Judicial officers will undergo Level 1 training to become legal educators.
 - Benchbook Translation, Tuvalu:** The Tuvalu Island Court Benchbook translation process will begin.
 - Orientation, Kiribati:** Workshop for members of the Magistrates Court. Also the presentation of the translated Kiribati Benchbook
- June:**
- "The Family and the Law" workshop, Chuuk, FSM:** The workshop will focus on the social and human rights contexts of many important issues, including Duties and obligations of the family, sexual abuse, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and the rights of women and children.
 - Decision Making Workshop, State & Municipal Judiciaries, Pohnpei, FSM:** A judicial refresher and training course on judicial decision making in the areas of criminal, civil and land law.

Feedback

We are welcoming feedback from everyone involved in the PJDP; we are not experts on what each Pacific Island Country wants to achieve and the best ways of achieving those objectives. We are therefore relying on input from a large range of stakeholders across the region — this includes you! We would like to know about what you would like to see happen in your country. We would also be grateful for any feedback you have about the PJDP, particularly what you think is, or has or has not worked well. We also seek contributions of photos to be used for future editions of the newsletter and other materials related to the Program. Please ensure these are in jpeg format so we can print them.

Please provide all comments and photos to
Helen Burrows:
Email: helen.burrows@fedcourt.gov.au
Phone: +612 9230 8040
Fax: +612 9230 8989



Technical Pool - Expressions of Interest

The team are developing a pool of technical experts who can be called on during the life of the PJDP to provide technical assistance. The technical pool will comprise a list of individuals and judicial training institutes, universities, courts, advisers, and other expertise as identified. Criterion for acceptance into the technical pool include: capacity to provide support, demonstrable understanding of PJDP, experience in relevant areas, cross-cultural experience, general methodology and approach. The PD/PC will seek expressions of interest (EOI) in the PJDP and request each potential provider to complete a form which responds to these criteria. The Selection Committee will then consider the applications and determine which applicants will be approved to enter the technical pool.

We are always looking for new participants in the Technical Pool - If you are interested please contact Helen Burrows. The team is particularly interested in working with experts from within the Pacific.

