

# PACIFIC

## JUDICIAL STRENGTHENING INITIATIVE



### Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative Newsletter

Issue 10 | September 2021

#### *PJSI Update!*

Dear Chief Justices,

The PJSI team are excited to present this snapshot of recent PJSI activities. Some recent highlights include: support to the High Court of Niue to implement a Case Tracking System; launch of a community engagement guidance note for the region; awareness and identification of judicial stress and practical strategies to respond; and ongoing discussions to review and implement the collection of Sustainable Development Goal data.

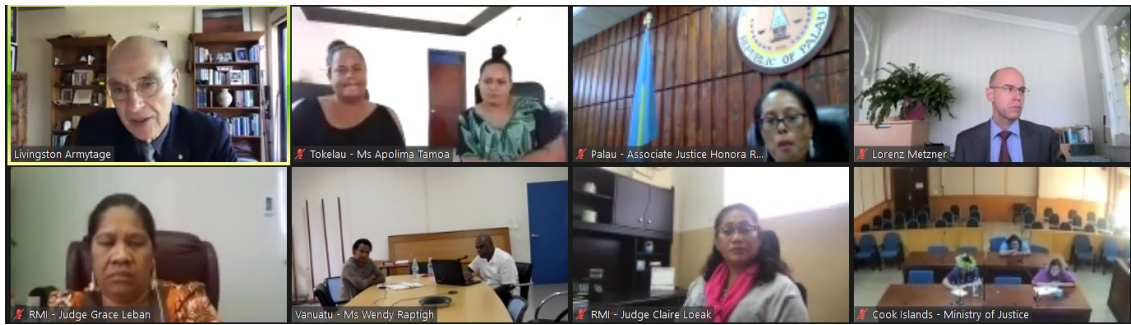
Read more below!

**Mr Lorenz Metzner**  
PJSI Team Leader

#### ***Community Engagement Guidance Note Webinar Launch***

In June, PJSI delivered a 2 hour webinar to Judges, Magistrates and Court Staff from Partner Courts in the region to introduce and explain PJSI's new guidance note: [Conducting Community Consultations Guidance](#). The webinar was presented and facilitated by Dr Livingston Armytage with co-presentations from Mr Motiti Moriati Koa, Executive Director, Corporate Services Division of Judiciary Kiribati; and Ms Wendy Raptigh, National Judicial Training and Development Coordinator, Judiciary of the Republic of Vanuatu.

The guidance note aims to explain why and how courts should conduct community consultations to promote access to justice and improve the quality of judicial service delivery. It offers a range of useful public information, community education and outreach activities. A recording of the webinar is available to be viewed on the [PJSI website](#).



## **Access to Justice: Pamphlets Launched in Vanuatu and Kiribati**

The Courts of Vanuatu and Kiribati have recently launched access to justice pamphlets which have been made available to the public. The Supreme Court of Vanuatu has developed 8 pamphlets (each in 3 languages: Bislama, English and French) explaining various aspects of the Court's roles and functions, and covering key topics such as Family Protection Orders, Child Maintenance and Criminal Proceedings. With support from PJSI's Leadership Incentive Fund, several thousand pamphlets have been printed and provided to court users of the Supreme, Magistrates and Outer Islands Courts. In Kiribati, the pamphlets were produced as part of the Courts' Access to Justice Plan developed with PJSI. They explain the key roles and functions of the court and outline the rights of courts users. They are offered in both Kiribati and English and have been distributed to the outer islands of Kiribati during Access to Justice outreach programs.

By providing increased awareness of the roles and functions of the courts, and basic-level education on legal rights and responsibilities, these pamphlets contribute directly to PJSI's goal of enabling the more accessible delivery of justice. The pamphlets are available on the [PJSI website](#).



## ***Judicial Wellbeing For Pacific Partner Courts Webinar***

PJSI conducted a regional webinar on judicial wellbeing in partnership with the Judicial College of Victoria in July. Judicial Wellbeing Advisers, Ms Carly Schrever and Ms Sally Ryan, delivered presentations on identifying and managing judicial stress and provided practical strategies to respond to managing the forms of stress that Judicial Officers experience in their role.

Participants enjoyed engaging with the material presented and found that the webinar was successful in legitimising individuals' experiences of judicial stress. One participant commented, *'Thank you and your team for organising the Webinar. Sometimes we don't realise what we go through and how to minimise and control stress.'*

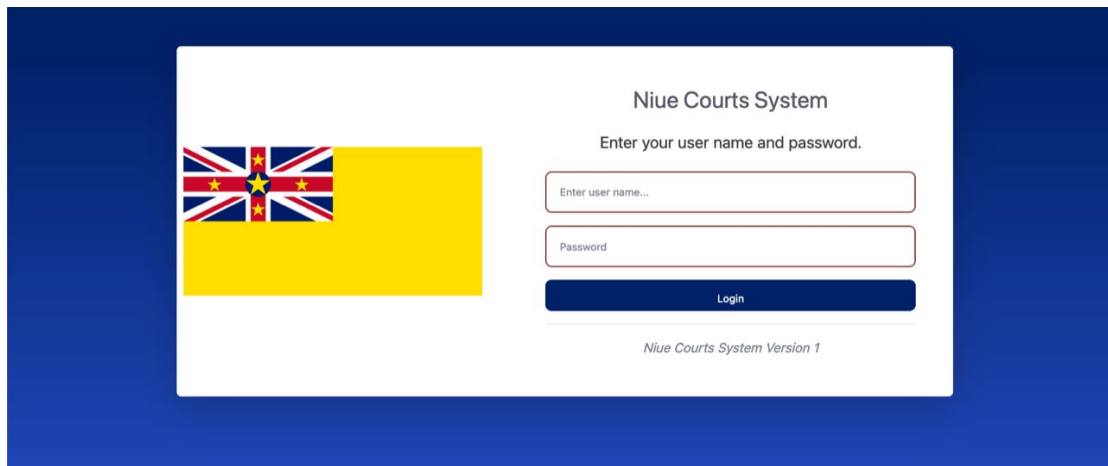
The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Judicial Integrity Network has delivered a similar presentation: Judicial Wellbeing and its implications for Access to Justice. A recording of this presentation is available on their [website](#). The UNODC Global Judicial Integrity Network are also conducting a survey on judicial wellbeing. The survey is anonymous, and primarily intended for judges and magistrates. It aims to get a deeper understanding of the experiences of judges and members of the judiciary around the world, specifically where their judicial duties and physical and mental wellbeing intersect. If you would like to participate, please complete the survey by 2 October 2021. You can take the survey [here](#).



## ***Niue Case Tracking System Implemented***

PJSI has successfully delivered a fully functioning Case Tracking System (CTS) to the High Court of Niue. PJSI ICT Adviser, Mr Tony Lansdell and ICT Developer, Mr Karae Vurobaravu, worked closely with the Chief Justice, the Registrar of the Niue High Court & Court of Appeal, the Assistant Court Administrator, and court staff to establish the CTS.

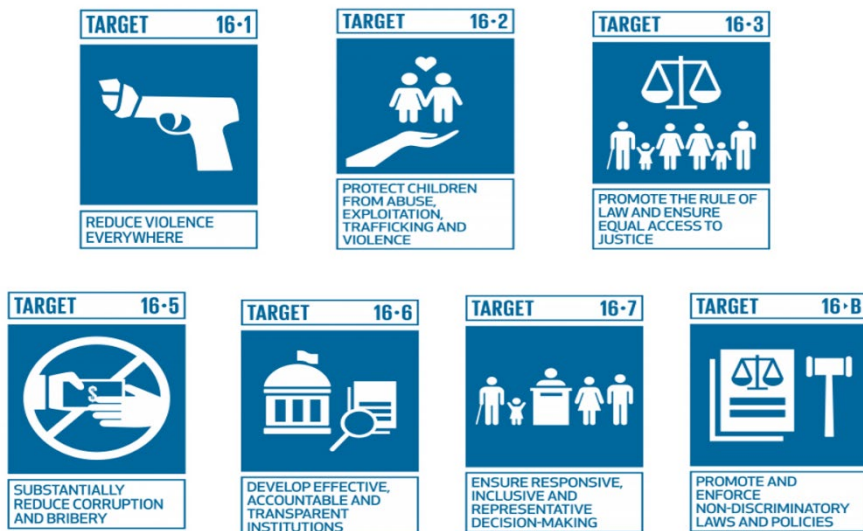
The court staff unanimously agreed that the CTS will be a much better vehicle in which to enter, update and manage their cases. For the first time, it will allow the judiciary to be able to easily access their own case records, across all case types. The High Court of Niue is one of 5 Partner Courts that have moved beyond manual/excel to case tracking systems with PJSI, joining a total of 12 Pacific Partner Courts who are now working from an electronic case tracking or case management system.



## ***Sustainable Development Goals Follow-Up Webinar***

In June, PJSI Advisers Ms Helen Burrows and Mr Lorenz Metzner, facilitated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Follow-Up Webinar. The discussion follows on from the [PJSI SDGs Webinar Series](#) that took place between September-November, 2020.

Working with participants from three Partner Courts, the webinar provided an opportunity for an in-depth discussion to review the data currently being collected, and to consider ways forward. Participants demonstrated a commitment to the SDGs, and improving their Court's ability to report on them. Additional discussions are occurring with Partner Courts to identify practical ways in which SDG data may be captured and reported on.



## ***New Resource: Scholarship for the Legal Community***

The Judicial College of Victoria have recently launched a new online resource, Scholarship for the Legal Community. It contains a curated selection of research summaries of recently published academic writing from local and international journals. This resource aims to foster greater engagement between the judiciary, the academy, and the legal profession by enabling a shared experience of the latest pieces of doctrinal research in significant and emerging areas of the law. The research summaries are available on the [Judicial College of Victoria Website](#).

## Coming up in 2021

The following activities are scheduled for delivery:

### **Court Annual Reporting Support: August-October**

Support to Nauru and Tokelau in the development of their next annual court reports.

### **Remote Court Proceedings Follow-up Discussions: September**

Following on from the launch of the [Remote Court Proceedings Toolkit](#), follow-up discussions with Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga and Solomon Islands are being held to discuss progress against the earlier developed action plans.

### **Remote Human Rights Workshops: 20-24 September; 5-7 October**

Remote Human Rights Workshops are being held in Vanuatu and Samoa to empower participants to apply human rights standards and approaches in their daily work through introducing the use of the [Human Rights Checklist series](#).

### **Eighth Chief Justices Leadership Forum: 3 November**

The remote eighth Chief Justices' Leadership Forum will provide an opportunity for PJSI to engage with the heads of jurisdiction in our Partner Courts to present PJSI's final completion report and evaluation of 10 years of consistent support. It will allow PJSI to formally farewell the region's Chief Justices and for MFAT to officially transition to the new project team.

### **Eleventh Initiative Executive Committee Meeting: 4 November**

The remote eleventh Initiative Executive Committee Meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the Final Project Completion Report, the progress of activities and the transition to the new project team.

For a complete list of our upcoming activities, please see the [Activity Schedule](#).

## Leadership Incentive Fund

The LIF aims to support the achievement of national courts' objectives not otherwise met by PJSI, through the provision of grants. LIF applications are currently open on a first come, first served basis. Please note, with PJSI due to end in December, all LIF supported activities will need to be locally implemented, acquitted and reported on **by 15 October, 2021**.

Please email your applications and any enquiries to: [Nicole.Cherry@fedcourt.gov.au](mailto:Nicole.Cherry@fedcourt.gov.au)

## Comments and Feedback

We welcome and appreciate comments or contributions from everyone involved in a PJSI activity.

If you have any feedback or require further information, please contact our PJSI team on: [pjsi@fedcourt.gov.au](mailto:pjsi@fedcourt.gov.au)

**Issue 10 | September 2021**

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