



PACIFIC JUDICIAL STRENGTHENING INITIATIVE

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

ACCESS TO JUSTICE - ENABLING RIGHTS

2016-2021

Report by

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**FEDERAL COURT
OF AUSTRALIA**



*PJSI is funded by the New Zealand Government and
implemented by the Federal Court of Australia*

1. Introduction

As outlined in PJSI's Activity Design Document, the objective of this project was to improve access to justice. Its purpose was to support legal empowerment through outreach and community legal education by the courts informing the public on the role of courts, the rule of law, and the exercise of legal rights.

2. Activities/Inputs & Outputs

The inputs and outputs are documented in the attached activity schedule and relevant activity completion reports previously submitted. In particular, these inputs and outputs relate to a number of activities to enable the exercise of legal rights through outreach, ToT, community legal education and legal empowerment, building on the Unrepresented Litigants Toolkit across the region in particular in Kiribati, RMI and Vanuatu.

3. Results

Building on that documentation, this report will focus in particular on the results, outcomes and impact of this project.

Over the course of this 5-year phase (2016-2021), and building on earlier related work supported by PJDP (2011-2015), PJSI has contributed to a number of results, outcomes and/or impacts, many of which are confirmed in other reports, as detailed below: -

- a. This project has been transformative for court-community relations. Participating courts across the region have consistently adopted a more community-focused outlook to service delivery and accountability as the result of engaging in this project.
- b. Courts have initiated a range of actions to promote access to justice through legal awareness and enable greater exercise of legal rights. These have included court open days, community awareness-raising seminars in remote communities, public education and information brochures on the role and function of the courts.
- c. Taken together, these outcomes are visibly contributing to improved public confidence and satisfaction in the performance of the courts which positively impact the wellbeing of citizens needing access to justice on a day-to-day basis across the region.

4. Lessons, recommendations, conclusions

The courts have demonstrated through their behaviours that they are often more readily adaptive to proactive community engagement than the expected stereotype of being insular and reactive. Once mutual respect and confidence has been established, future designs can and should go further.

