



PACIFIC JUDICIAL STRENGTHENING INITIATIVE

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

INSTITUTIONALISING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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 enable cost-effective and sustainable in-region professionalisation of Pacific judicial/court officers. Its purpose was to support providing structured career development to judicial and court officers across the region and to build the capacity of a judicial training institution in the Pacific.

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 related to collaborating with USP's School of Law to design and conduct initially a Certificate and Diploma of Justice for court officers and others working with the courts across the region.

In particular, these inputs and outputs also related to building the institutional capacity of PNG's Centre for Judicial Excellence to start to operate as a regional provider of continuing judicial and court professional training at the completion of PJSI through a series of ToT and curriculum development support activities.

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: -

USP Certificate/Diploma of Justice

- a. This project has been transformative in providing entry-level training to court officers across the region.
- b. For the first time, courts have engaged actively in the professional development of staff through participating first in the Certificate and secondly the Diploma of Justice.
- c. Clerks are starting to enrol in law degrees heralding promotion and building career progression in the justice sector; in the not too distant future, it is now credible to anticipate indigenous justices and ultimately chief judicial officers on jurisdictions that have never previously had such human capital.
- d. Lawyers appearing in the courts across the region have described a 'culture change' in the professional outlook and competence of court staff.
- e. 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.



PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence

- a. Support has been provided to building the capacity of PNG's Centre for Judicial Excellence to provide regional-level training services.
- b. The staffing of PNGCJE has been increased tenfold and trained (from 2 > 20 officers)
- c. The National Court has built dedicated training infrastructure and facilities
- d. The National Court has underwritten the budget for the first 3 years of regional operations
- e. While still a work in progress, these results establish credible foundations for the start of in-region delivery of judicial education and training during 2021, which augurs very positively for sustaining continuing judicial development across the region.
- f. 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 and conclusions

The Certificate and Diploma of Justice project provides the foundations for PJSI's sustainable legacy in justice sector capacity building, provided that the challenge of affordability can be assured.

The project working with the PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence is a major structural achievement which transforms the dependence of Pacific judiciaries on official development assistance (ODA) to self-reliability. It enables the transfer of responsibility for continuing judicial education to the Pacific region. This transformation is however nascent and will require ongoing monitoring and support to embed sustainability.

