

# **Minutes of Meeting**

## **Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) meeting**

### **Enhancing Access to Justice in the Solomon Islands Project**

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**Date:** 04 July 2019  
**Venue:** Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, Kalala Haus  
**Time:** 09:00 am – 12:00pm

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#### **Background:**

The Local Project Appraisal Committee meeting for the Enhancing Access to Justice in the Solomon Islands Project was held on 4 July 2019 in the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs Conference Room.

The objective of the meeting was to present to all stakeholders (Government and donor) the final draft Project Document and its desired outcomes. Further the Committee was tasked with appraising, validating and providing their endorsement of the project. The agenda for the meeting can be found at Annex I.

The meeting was conducted as part of the regular Access to Justice Technical Working Group ('TWG'). The TWG is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. The LPAC component of the TWG held concurrently was chaired by Ms Barbel Riti, the assigned representative of UNDP Solomon Islands. The participants of the meeting included the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, representatives from the Law Reform Commission, Correctional Services Solomon Islands, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the donor DFAT as well as the project formulator and a representative from UNDP. A complete list of participants can be found at Annex II.

Permanent Secretary (PS) MJLA Ethel Sigimanu welcomed the TWG. Given some new faces a roundtable introduction was undertaken, followed by an opening prayer.

Following this, PS Ethel Sigimanu described the history of the TWG and the progression towards this particular Project from Mapping to Study and finally to the Project Document to be presented and appraised by the Committee. She highlighted the role of the TWG in leading and owning each step of the process. She suggested that the Paralegals Project before the

Committee was proof of the huge progress made as a group. She particularly lauded the fact that this Project is based on concrete evidence collected through the Mapping and Baseline Study exercises.

The desire of the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs was to have a tool to move activities concerning Access to Justice forward. PS Ethel suggested that this was just the beginning, with the Paralegals Project being the first of a wider reform agenda. It was in her words a small but tangible step in the right direction, something small but urgent and necessary.

Mr Mark Rowe, the Access to Justice Specialist who formulated the Project Document and oversaw the Study gave a short update on the Study and next steps. He noted that the Report was completed and now in Graphic Design phase and is set to be launched at the end of July. He further signposted that all report data will be available to all Ministries and interested parties. Mr Rowe thanked the Law Reform Commission and PSO for their support in lending Staff time and expertise and for their candid views and data sharing. Mr Rowe also thanked the Ministry for their leadership of the whole process, without which the Study could not have occurred.

### **Discussion & Recommendations:**

UNDP's designated representative for the LPAC process, Ms. Barbel Riti Ziku, briefly explained the Purpose of the LPAC meeting -project appraisal process and noted that it is a mandatory requirement of UNDP for all projects prior to implementation. She emphasized the importance of LPACs as part of a robust quality assurance process and encouraged all participants to voice any views and/or concerns they might have with the Project.

She underlined that this meeting is designed to provide an opportunity for the committee members to review and discuss project outcomes, outputs, activities, budget and workplan and to recommend that the Project be approved, rejected or approved subject to certain amendments. As with all other Projects implemented in Solomon Islands by UNDP, the project will use the Direct Implementation Modality.

Mark Rowe made a presentation on the salient features of the project to the committee. He built upon PS Ethel Sigimanu's description of the background of the Project and presented an overview of the Development Challenge, Project Interventions, Lessons Learned, Strategy, the Theory of Change, RRF, Multi-Year Workplan, Staffing, Budget and Risk Management. The Chair then opened up the floor for

Committee members to comment on the presentation and the hard-copy Project Document that was circulated previously including the Social and Environment Screening Procedure Documents, Quality Assurance documents and Risk Logs.

The following issues were raised by the Committee:

- Mr Andrew Kelesi of the ODPP enquired into the number of paralegals that would be trained under the Project.
  - Mr Rowe clarified that there would be 12 Provincial Paralegals trained in the project and a number TBD (likely around a dozen) under the Community Legal Advocates Pilot.
- Ms Alice McGrath of SIJP inquired as to how the Sector as a whole would benefit and not just the individual target agency, in this case PSO.
  - Mr Rowe highlighted the inclusive nature of the Materials Panel which would aim to increase coordination and achieve economies of scale in messaging throughout the sector.
- Mr Andrew Kelesi further enquired into how ODPP and other agencies could benefit from the paralegals project, noting the desire to not strengthen one Agency at the expense of others
  - Mr Rowe suggested that the aim of the paralegals project is to strengthen sector wide outcomes and increase sector wide efficiency. For example, he suggested that subject to the priorities of the inclusive Materials Panel it would be indeed possible to have PSO paralegals stationed permanently or several days a week in correctional facilities. This, he noted would aim to increase the capacity of the Sector as a whole to work together, reducing remand times, increasing access to advice and information and ultimately saving money for government and those accessing justice sector services. He highlighted that within Solomon Islands and indeed around the world, the most viable model has been to house the paralegals in a particular agency. Mr Rowe suggested that in his view the paralegals would be for the benefit of the sector and in many instances once a model and culture of paralegalism is embedded within a justice system many agencies would seek to employ such models as well noting the cost saving and efficiency increases that paralegalism has been shown to be able to achieve in the region and around the world.
    - PS Ethel Sigimanu agreed with this point and suggested that insofar that it is not already highlighted in the Project Document, she suggested that it should be.

- Mr Philip Kanairara of the Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission asked how the LRC could make the most of paralegals given their extensive outreach work in communities.
  - Mr Rowe mentioned the provision made within the Project Document for Standard Operating Procedures to be formulated and agreed between Ministries on how best to employ the paralegals. He further noted the role of the Materials Advisory Panel in employing the paralegals in a way that improves coordination and service delivery for the whole of the sector. Moreover, he flagged the complaints procedure to be developed as a key part of the process.
    - Mr Kanairara noted that the Commission would welcome the role of paralegals given that they have difficulty in organizing work in the Provinces and currently rely on PSO lawyers and ODPP prosecutors to link them to communities.
  - Mr Rowe also emphasized the need to have unified messaging and not duplicate across the sector
- Ms Alice McGrath and Ms Ethel Sigimanu both noted the importance of increased coordination and a more uniform and efficient approach to messaging.
  - Ms McGrath welcomed the notion of paralegalism and suggested that the Materials Panel could be a good vehicle through which to work on a more sector wide approach to outreach as per the priorities of the SIJP in the years ahead.
- Ms Alice McGrath asked about the approach to be taken in deploying paralegals and any priority tasks to be undertaken
  - Mr Rowe noted that the priority tasks would ultimately be the decision of the Government. He, however noted that a human rights framework with gender equality and social inclusion at its heart. He noted that there is lots of scope for gender equality in provision of services, noting that the services provided by PSO presently are largely in the criminal space which is predominantly male.
  - Mr Rowe also noted that conversations had been held with CSSI and RSIPF who were both broadly supportive of the Project and keen to take part in formulating a model and SOPs that work for Solomon Islands.
- The PAC engaged in a long discussion on whether justice is really being served in many cases.
- PS Ethel Sigimanu suggested that the Project Document should perhaps define what it defines Access to Justice to actually comprise. She suggested looking to JSSF for a definition.
- PS Ethel Sigimanu further noted that regarding Community Legal Advocates that tracking and M&E are key, particularly given that people move around. She suggested that it would be good to acknowledge *ab initio* the movement of CLAs noting that this should be seen as an opportunity and not a loss

- Mr Rowe noted that Human Resourcing Strategy to be developed and the in-depth M&E procedures that will be developed, noting important lessons learned from the WB and RRRT projects in this space.
- PS Ethel Sigimanu lauded the Sustainability Strategy presented noting that the Project Team had listened to the points emphasized by government about sustainability.
- PS Ethel Sigimanu suggested that the Project should hire the local Deputy Project Manager position first and get going quickly.

### **Endorsement**

Ms Barbel Riti, UNDP's appointed representative for the LPAC outlined the process of endorsement and the options before the LPAC.

PS Ethel Sigimanu asked the assembled Committee whether subject to an opportunity to write further written comments, would the Committee endorse the Project Document and give UNDP the go ahead to continue towards signature and implementation?

Ms Alice McGrath suggested that they would not stand in the way and would follow the Ministry's lead. DFAT similarly noted their qualified endorsement subject to further comments provided and the incorporation of the comments from the LPAC proper.

The Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs suggested that the PAC endorse the project.

The LPAC Members made the decision that the Project Document is of sufficient quality to move to the implementation stage. The SESP, Quality Assurance (QA) and Risk Logs were duly endorsed. The Direct Implementation Modality ('DIM') was also endorsed.

### **Next Steps:**

The Committee agreed on the following next steps:

1. Any written Comments of Committee members should be sent to Mr Mark Rowe by Thursday 11 July 2019.
2. UNDP should circulate a project document based on any comments and the minutes of the meeting to the Committee members the week after

Signed:



Ms Ethel Sigimanu

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs

Date: 30/07/19

Signed



Mr Berdi Berdiyev,

UNDP Country Manager a.i

Date 05/08/2019

**Annex I:**

**Agenda: Local Project Appraisal Committee Meeting  
Enhancing Access to Justice in the Solomon Islands Project**

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**Date:** 4 July 2019

**Time:** 9am – 11:30am

**Venue:** Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, Kalala Haus

**Chair:**

- 1. Opening Remarks by PS Ethel Sigimany, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs**
- 2. A2J Study Updates**
- 3. Introduction to Paralegals Project: Project Methodology, Theory of Change**
- 4. Discussion, Q&A, Project Appraisal Committee Requires for Endorsement**
- 5. Tea & Coffee**

**Annex II**

**List of Participants: LPAC meeting – Solomon Islands  
Enhancing Access to Justice in the Solomon Islands Project**

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**Date:** 4 July 2019

**Time:** 9am – 11:30am

**Venue:** Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, Kalala Haus

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| 1. Ethel Sigimanu       | Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs  |
| 2. Florence Dafanisi    | Law Reform Commission                  |
| 3. Philip Kanairara     | Law Reform Commission                  |
| 4. Andrew Kelesi        | Office of Director Public Prosecutions |
| 5. Deltina Solomon Mamu | DFAT                                   |
| 6. Alice McGrath        | SIJP Head of Program                   |
| 7. Mark Rowe            | UNDP                                   |
| 8. Barbel Riti Ziku     | UNDP                                   |

**Apologies:**

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| 1. Mr Howard Lawry | Public Solicitor |
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Mr Lawry was unwell and noted he would endeavour to provide written comments ASAP.