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# LOA MO SOSEL JASTIS TOKTOK

*The newsletter from the Justice and  
Community Services Sector*



MINISTRY OF JUSTICE &  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Brought to you by:

## JASTIS, SEFTI, DIGNITI, RISPEKT MO GUD FASIN BLONG EVRIWAN

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The purpose of this Newsletter is to share information, news and data among our Sector. You can keep up with more news at the Ministry of Justice & Community Services (MJCS) website and other Sector agencies websites.

### SECTOR UPDATES

#### CHILD DESK

##### Introduction

Over recent years the reported levels of child abuse and violence in Vanuatu have increased to alarming levels. This highlights more than ever the need for effective coordination and collaboration of all child protection actors and the strengthening of our Child Protection systems.

The Child Desk plays a vital role in collaborating with Child Protection actors to build partnerships to strengthen Vanuatu responses to protecting our children from abuse and all forms of violence.

**There is lots of good news to share about the work of the Child Desk for example did you know that:**

The National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG) has been reconvened with a number of new members nominated by the Heads of Agencies. The NCPWG's purpose is to act as a national level coordinating body to work towards ensuring that all children in Vanuatu are protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect at all times including during



**Figure 1-Child Protection training  
Targeting Provincial stakeholders**

emergencies. In addition to strengthen child protection systems and institutions and mechanisms to protect the rights of vulnerable children. NCPWG meets quarterly.

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Members of the newly convened NCPWG have formed a Children's Day committee to organise activities. This year the theme is "the right of the Child to safety and protection at all times and at levels of society- Home, Community, Province and Nationally" and the focus is on the community of Mele".

Koloka Wilfred and Sonia Runga our two Child Desk officers in the Pilot sites of Tanna and Erramnago who are funded by UNICEF contract for this period has come to an end [ June 30]. They have worked so hard to promote the safety and protection of children throughout their communities undertaking so many initiatives such as the establishment of Community Child Protection Committees and the Provincial Child Protection Working Group. It has been these committees and working groups that have informed so many programs in their communities and the National Child Protection Working Group. The Ministry thanks Sonia and Koloka for their excellent work and contribution to the protection of our children.

As result of this great contribution of Sonia and Koloka in the two pilot sites, **UNICEF will be funding 9 new Child desk officers** and these positions will be advertised soon.

The recruitment of the new National Coordinator of the Child Desk position is underway.

A MJCS Child Safeguarding Policy is currently been developed .The purpose of the policy is to reflect the MJCS

commitment to protecting children from harm, abuse and exploitation. And to clearly articulate the Ministry's approach to protecting children from harm in the course of our work.

Louise Nasak Sector Capacity Development Coordinator and Child Desk officer James Agna joined the DG Henry Vira- Ministry of Youth and Sport in Fiji recently for the Pacific Regional workshop on Child Protection for the Social Welfare Sector conference.

Child Protection training was conducted in partnership with UNICEF and the Ministry of Youth and Sport to Area Secretaries and Local Councillors in Shefa and Sanma provinces.

The groundwork has been completed for the establishment of the Shefa and Sanma Provincial Child Protection Working Group.



**Figure 2: MOJCS thanks Kaloka and Sonia [middle] For the great work they have done**

## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

### REGIONAL COOPERATION IN CORRECTIONS

The Department of Correctional Services has again shown its commitment to professional development of senior staff, following the return of two officers from Papua New Guinea.

Acting Principal Correctional Officer John Jack George and Senior Corrections officer Daniel Nakou spent 14 months in Papua New Guinea to undertake training with the Papua New Guinea Correctional Service Academy and the University of Papua New Guinea.

"Their achievement in being awarded a Diploma in Corrections Administration is the first of its kind for Vanuatu", said Director of the Department of Correctional Services, Mr Johnny Marango. "It is a high academic level of learning. The training targets middle managers and officers in higher ranks, such as Managers, and Prison Superintendents. The training covers subjects including Corrections Administration, Operations, Intelligence, National Security, Joint Forces Frameworks, Communications, Strategic Planning and Finance".

"This training will not only benefit us, but the whole Department of Correctional Services in Vanuatu", said trainee John Jack George. "We are back to serve the Government and the People of Vanuatu to rehabilitate

offenders who have broken the law and prepare them for exit from prison back to society".

This is the Department's second time to work with its Melanesian neighbours to provide professional training for its senior officers. Five officers have also completed a Certificate in Corrections Administration with the Solomon Islands Correctional Training Centre.

We have been very fortunate to work with the New Zealand Department of Corrections for many years" added Mr Marango. "However it is important we also work with our Melanesian neighbours who operate in a very similar context to us in Vanuatu. My Department plans to continue to build a strong relationship with other correctional administrations in Melanesia and the Pacific".



**Figure 3 Director Johnny Marango & Officers John Jack George (Left) and Daniel Nakou (Right).**



## DISABILITY DESK



Shefa Provincial Disability Officer had Collaboration with other partners from VSPD, Health Officers doing CBR activities and out-reaches team doing mobile services to the off-shores islands such as

- Mangaliliu Village
- Lelepa Island
- Mosso Island
- Meten Villages
- Malafau Village
- Tanoliu Village

Malampa Provincial Disability Officer had collaboratively joint with Motivational Australian and VSPD with other partners had conducted baseline survey for mobility in Malekula for Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP)

Motivation Australia was contracted by Vanuatu Skills Partnership for commissioning and facilitating this study on investigating options for increasing access to mobility device services in Malekula. Vanuatu Skills Partnership collaborating partners the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MOJCS), the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities(VSPD),and the Malampa Provincial Government. Each agency has contributed significantly to the planning and implementation of the stud



## REGIONAL RIGHT RESOURCE TEAM

### Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Mock Session 17 – 18 January 2019

The two-day mock session was facilitated by the Pacific Community's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) on 17-18 January in collaboration with the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). The session was held as part of the UK-funded Pacific Commonwealth Equality Project. The session was attended by the Minister for Justice, Honourable Don Ken, who will lead a ministerial delegation to Geneva for the UPR process.

Nineteen participants from the Vanuatu government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) took part in a mock Universal Periodic Review (UPR) session in Port Vila. The Vanuatu government will be undergoing their third UPR at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on 24 January 2019, where the nation's performance in protecting and promoting human rights, and the progress made in implementing recommendations from its previous review will be assessed.

Director General of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, and Head of National Human Rights Committee, Ms Dorosday Kenneth echoed this sentiment after the conclusion of the session, "the mock session provided the delegation with the opportunity to understand the scope of what is expected in Geneva and it has also allowed them the chance to understand what UPR is as an international forum to openly discuss the issues of human rights in the country," adding, "The high attendance by representatives of the different government sectors at this mock session indicates the Vanuatu government's commitment to implementing human rights recommendations across all divisions."

The session in Vanuatu is part of RRRT's wider ongoing work in Pacific to support countries engagement in the UPR processes. Mr Miles Young, Director of RRRT, highlighted the importance of these sessions for the region saying,



Figure 4 UPR mock session, port Vila Vanuatu 2019

“mock sessions are a vital part of preparation for State delegations as it gives them a chance to rehearse their answers and receive critical feedback on their presentation and responses. The session which has concluded in Vanuatu will help ensure the dialogue in Geneva is richer, leading to more relevant recommendations and increased impact on the ground.”

### **Convention on the Rights of People Disability (CRPD) Mock Session 11 – 12 March 2019**



**Figure 6** Participants for CRPD Mock Session at the Melanesian Hotel 11 – 12 March 2019

The Pacific Community's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) in partnership with the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat and the Pacific Regional Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) held a

refresher workshop on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) with a mock session for the government delegation preparing to travel to Geneva to report on Vanuatu's implementation progress of the CRPD.

“The CRPD provides the legal framework to which State Parties are assessed on their commitments to upholding, promoting, defending and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. It is one of the core human rights treaties and was open for signature and ratification in 2007. Like other core human rights treaties, State Parties must submit a periodic report a year or two after ratification and a periodic report between two to four years thereafter,” said Romulo Nayacalevu, the Program Manager for Governance and Legal Affairs at the MSG, who facilitated the two-day event.

In this CRPD mock, the government delegation was asked questions regarding the implementation of various Articles in the CRPD including issues of accessibility, non-discrimination, and reasonable accommodation. The delegation responded to these questions and provided updates on what the Government has done since ratifying the CRPD. Some of these positive acts include undertaking a comprehensive CRPD legislative compliance review in 2016, the moves to amend discriminatory laws against persons with disabilities, the formulation of national policies and frameworks including inclusive education and access to health care and various other initiatives relating to employment for persons with disabilities, their habilitation and rehabilitation, access to assistive devices and their participation in political and public life as well as cultural, recreation, leisure and sports among others.

### **Family Protection Act Training for State Prosecutors -13 – 15 March 2019**

Vanuatu Police Prosecutors and other law enforcement officers participated in a three-day training (13 to 15 March), aimed at strengthening their role in the implementation of the country's Family Protection Act.

The training was organised by the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, through its Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti Programme, and the Pacific Community's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), with funding support from the Australian Government.

Statistics show that around 60 % of women in Vanuatu have at one point in their lives experienced domestic violence.



**Figure 5** Sitting row- far left Mr. Albert Seluka (Senior Human Rights Advisor, SPC RRRT), Mrs Dorosday Kenneth (DG of Ministry of Justice and Community Services), Mr. Smithy Obed (Inspector – Unit of State Prosecutor) and far right Mrs. Mia Rimon (SPC Regional Director Melanesian) and the State Prosecutors Standing with Ms. Donna Marie PUNE-NARAI, Vanuatu Country Focal Officer for SPC RRRT (far left standing).

Women who experience domestic violence are prevented from engaging and participating fully in their families and communities. Enacted in 2008, the FPA defines and criminalises domestic violence namely physical, sexual and psychological abuse between family members. The FPA further provides for Family Protection Orders.

The Director General of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Dorosday Kenneth opened the training with the presence of SPC's Regional Director for Melanesia, Mia Rimon. In her opening remarks, the Director General called on Police Prosecutors to believe in the cause legislated under the Family Protection Act.

Inspector Smith Obed, a participant at the training said the Act was there for years but not fully implemented due to lack of knowledge on the role of Police Prosecutors under the Act. “With this training, we learnt so many new things and it strengthened and equipped us in what to do. For instance, to have a common understanding of the “No Drop Policy”, not to be influenced by custom reconciliation and to have a system or mechanism in place to prioritise domestic violence cases,” he said.

The training is part of SPC RRRT's regional judicial strengthening programme, which provides tailor-made training programmes to support judges, magistrates, lawyers and prosecutors in implementing family violence legislation. In 2017, RRRT worked with the Chief Justice of Vanuatu to support the Vanuatu Magistrates to get a better understanding of the Family Protection Act.



“On-going support to Justice Service Providers to better understand their roles under Family Protection and Domestic Violence Legislation is a core part of SPC RRRT’s work on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls. Police Prosecutors provide an important service in the justice

continuum to ensure that the pursuit of effective remedies for victims of domestic violence can be realised through the services they provide,” RRRT Senior Human Rights Advisor, Albert Seluka said

## STRETEM ROD BLONG JASTIS

### Women of the policing, justice and community sector: Inspiring leaders of the future

The Vanuatu Justice, Policing and Community Services sector continue to demonstrate their commitment to gender equality through connecting women’s voices to leadership. With the support of Heads of Agencies across the sector, female sector officers are coming together regularly for short, inspirational ‘Storian tugeta. Leftemap vois.’ lunch-time sessions. Some officers are also part of a 12-month formal mentor-mentee program. These initiatives, part of the Women in Leadership Mentoring Program (WiLMP) are coordinated by a cross-sectoral Oversight Group with the support of the Australian Government-funded Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program.

The first lunch-time session for 2019 was held on 28 March and attended by 73 officers from across the sector. Three current female leaders in Government and Tertiary Education - Mrs Dorosday Kenneth Watson, Director General, Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Lieutenant Dora Sahe, Vanuatu Mobile Force and Ms Ketty Napwatt, Facilitator in Language-Preliminary & Foundation Language courses for Pacific TAFE, University of the South Pacific – shared the highlights and challenges of their careers to date and offered advice to women in pursuit of

their professional and personal dreams. Participants felt the session was ‘empowering and encouraging’, full of ‘interesting, powerful stories from [the] panellists’. Each set their own goals following the session, including to work more closely with their colleagues to achieve organisational goals, to actively share their knowledge and skills, to look for and take up development opportunities and to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of women in all aspects of their lives. Progress against these goals will be tracked across future 2019.



**Figure 7** Women in Leadership Mentoring Program participants, Ramada Resort Ballroom, 28 March 2019



**Figure 8** Guest speakers (L-R): Mrs Dorosday Kenneth Watson, Lieutenant Dora Sahe, Vanuatu Military Force and Ms Ketty Napwatt

## VANUATU LAW REFORM COMMISSION

### VLRC undertakes School Awareness and Provincial Consultations.

Most people in Government Departments and Ministries in Vila seemed to have never heard of the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission. If that is the case in Port Vila, then what do we expect of people in the provinces? This is evident when the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission engaged with Schools within the vicinity of provincial headquarters and provincial Councils at the end of April and beginning of May 2019.

The Consultation with provincial councils was on proposed changes to the Law Commission Act.

As to the schools, the visits was to undertake the following:

- (a) Provide awareness on the role of the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission;
- (b) Engage senior students on a Logo competition (assist in the review of the current logo); and
- (c) To provide motivation to students to study harder for a bright future

In the first session, students were informed of the Mission and Vision Statement of the Vanuatu law Reform Commission, when was the office established and what is the role of the Vanuatu Law reform Commission. It is the primary purpose of the awareness is to inform the students

on the role of the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission and to provide an opportunity for these students to ask questions about the institution as well as the sessions were used as a Career talk to inform students about law reform and areas of study leading to careers in law reform.

The other reason behind the awareness is to engage Senior Students on a competition to design a new logo for the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission. The dateline of this logo competition is the 31st of July 2019. If one looks at the current logo of the Vanuatu Law reform Commission, it does not reflect any aspects of law reform.

In terms of the motivational sessions, topics that were covered include Struggling and growth, being optimistic, no need to be a genius but do your best in all subjects and stop procrastinating.

It is believed that these awareness sessions have increased the public relations of the VLRC and students throughout all six provinces know about the Law Reform Commission. After the schools, consultations were also undertaken with the six provincial councils within the first week of May 2019 on proposed changes to the Law Commission Act.



*Figure 9 Senior Students of Baldwin Lonsdale Memorial School during a VLRC school Awareness session, April 2019*



Thank you for reading the June edition of Loa mo Sosel Jastis Toktok.

If you have any feedback for the newsletter please send to [mjcs@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:mjcs@vanuatu.gov.vu). If you have any information to share for next month's newsletter please also email us.

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