

## HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMME (SPC RRRT)

### Family Law and Human Rights Skills and Practice Course



*PDLP students in class, April 2014*

**Location:**

USP, Laucala Campus, Fiji

**Duration:**

1998 - ongoing

**Goal:**

To introduce newly graduated lawyers to human rights to encourage them to consider basic human rights in their work in the future, whether in government, private practice or civil society organisations.

**Partners:**

University of the South Pacific (USP)

**Project details:**

RRRT is a module coordinator and instructor for the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) offered by the University of the South Pacific's (USP) School of Law. The twenty-two-week course is designed to prepare students for entry into legal practice. It is run at the Laucala Campus in Fiji twice a year.

RRRT facilitates the two-week LWD06 'Family Law and Human Rights Skills and Practice' module of PDLP by designing content, providing tuition and assessing students. Additionally, two students from each PDLP cohort receive internships with RRRT to further develop their human rights legal research and analysis skills.

The LWD06 module is an important component of the PDLP. It raises awareness on important issues such as international human rights norms and standards, domestic violence, gender equality, HIV and the law, and states' human rights responsibilities. The course introduces law graduates to the skills they will need to handle human rights and family law matters.

PDLP graduates are recruited to fill policy and legal positions throughout the region. Nearly all will encounter issues concerning human rights within their professional practice, from filing proceedings for divorce to appearing before the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

**Success in numbers:**

598 student enrolment from 2008-2014 across 14 Pacific Island countries. On average, approximately 70 students enrol at the institution each year to undertake the PDLP course.

**Success in words:**

*'I realised that the cases presented during the training as exercises or assignment topics are real life scenarios to prepare us for the real world of legal practice. The topic of climate change and human rights is also new subject matter highlighted in the training. This is very relevant to the Pacific context and I am so grateful to SPC RRRT for introducing me to this topic and many other human rights issues'* **Mohini Pillai of Fiji (2014 course participant)**

*'The RRRT unit was one of the units that I really enjoyed. It gave me a greater awareness of the human rights issues. This was a useful tool when dealing with issues and challenges I face when dealing with cases involving children, women and persons with disabilities. It helped in not isolating the issue but addressing it with a holistic view'* **Evelyne Robert, lawyer, Vanuatu (2009 course participant)**

*'The training helped developed and broaden my views on the application of the law in relation to the issues of violence against women and children and the rights of everyone under the law irrespective of gender'* **John Finau, Solicitor, Solomon Islands (2009 course participant)**