



UNODC IN THE PACIFIC

July - December 2021 Newsletter



Pacific leaders push integrity at Global Anti-Corruption Forum

The world’s major anti-corruption conference began on 13 December in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, with Kiribati, Samoa, Nauru and Papua New Guinea joining 149 other countries to advance the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and strengthen integrity responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kiribati President His Excellency Te Beretitenti Taneti Maamau delivered a statement online at the Conference of the States Parties to UNCAC (COSP 9), as Head of a delegation that included the Secretary for the Public Service Office and the Chair of the Leadership Commission. This is the third successive COSP where H.E. Te Beretitenti attended.

“As Leaders and representatives of Pacific nations, we know how powerful our local actions can be as they lead to greater regional impact. Our ocean, our fish and our weather do not worry about national boundaries on a map, nor do transnational crimes, corruption, climate change and pandemics,” Te Beretitenti Taneti Maamau (above right) told the conference, which included a record 2,133 participants from governments, regional and intergovernmental organizations, parliaments, civil society, academia, and the private sector, in person and virtually.

Samoa’s Honorable Prime Minister Fiaame Naomi Mataafa (above left) delivered Samoa’s official country statement online, underscoring the importance of strong political lead-



13-17 DECEMBER 2021 SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT
9TH CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION

ership that observes the standards and values of good, trusted governance, at all levels, which was needed to weed out corruption.

“Since accession (to UNCAC in 2018), the government has committed itself to several initiatives aimed at further strengthening our anti-corruption policy and legislative landscape,” the Prime Minister said.

The Kiribati delegation has also co-sponsored the COSP Resolution “Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption at regional levels” to enable Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to reinforce the importance of the Teieniwa Vision in the global context of anti-corruption efforts.

UNODC Pacific Anti-Corruption Adviser, Mrs. Marie Pegie Cauchois, commended Kiribati, Samoa, Nauru and Papua New Guinea (PNG)’s commitment to participate in the COSP virtually, despite the major time difference and logistics.



Focus moves to implementing integrity gains



Samoa’s Auditor-General was one of a number of major integrity stakeholders to present in the very first Special Event at the COSP on Monday 13 December 2021, titled “*Implementing a Pacific Pathway Against Corruption*”, with Samoa delegation member, the Controller and Auditor-General, Mr. Fuimaono Camillo Afele, sharing Samoa’s progress on strengthening its supreme audit institution.

Other panelists included UNCAC Secretary and Chief of the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch, UNODC, Ms. Brigitte Strobel-Shaw; Chair, Kiribati Leadership Commission, Mr. Uriam Timiti; Policy Adviser Regional Security / Team Leader, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Mr. Terio Koronawa; Independent ICAC Commissioner (Papua New Guinea) Mr. Thomas Eluh; Private sector representative, President of the

Palau Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Irene Olkeriil; Pacific media representative, President of the Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI), Ms. Georgina Kekea; and Mrs. Marie Pegie Cauchois. UNODC’s Anti-Corruption Adviser, Ms. Annika Wythes moderated the panel.

The Chair of the Kiribati Leadership Commission detailed the country’s commitment to strengthen integrity in the nation through Teieniwa Vision, the national Anti-Corruption Strategy and other projects.

Mrs. Marie Pegie Cauchois commended Pacific stakeholders’ commitment to participate in the COSP virtually, despite the major time difference and logistics.



Summit for Democracy listening to Pacific voices

On International Anti-Corruption Day, 9 December, UNODC and the Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalists Network (PACJN) organized a webinar from Fiji as part of US President Joe Biden’s international Summit for Democracy.

President Biden hosted a virtual Summit for leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector, focusing on challenges and opportunities facing democracies, including strengthening democracy and countering authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights.

The panel featured PACJN and Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) managing editor, Ms Makereta Komai; Public Prosecutor of Vanuatu, Mr. Josaia Naigulevu; Special Prosecutor of Palau, Ms. April Cripps; Interim Independent Commissioner Against Corruption of Papua New Guinea, Mr. Thomas Eluh; Deputy Commissioner at Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption, Mr. Rashmi Aslam; UNODC Regional Anti-Corruption and UNODC Pacific Anti-Corruption Advisers including Mr. Graeme Gunn, UNODC Anti-Corruption Adviser – Papua New Guinea, who moderated the session.

The Pacific Law Enforcement on Tackling Corruption @ the Summit for Democracy was one of 110 town hall / community Summit for Democracy events held around the world.





Palau entrepreneurs strengthen ethics and ease of doing business

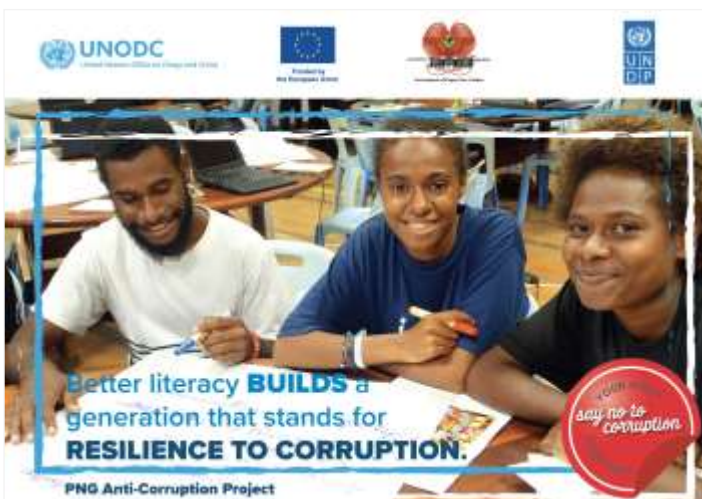
Palau’s private sector entrepreneurs reviewed their integrity commitments and strengthened internal business control mechanisms during a two-day Palau Chamber of Commerce (PCOC) workshop in Koror on 3-4 November.

Supported by UNODC and the United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) Project, the workshop was part of a series of integrity-strengthening efforts led by the PCOC during 2021.

“We continue to advocate for businesses in Palau as we strive to strengthen our domestic industries and while being part of a global economy, we work hard for all businesses to be transparent and in line with international integrity standards. PCOC is delighted to be collaborating with UN-PRAC to use Codes of Conduct and other tools to help beat corruption,” said PCOC President, Ms. Irene Olkeriil.

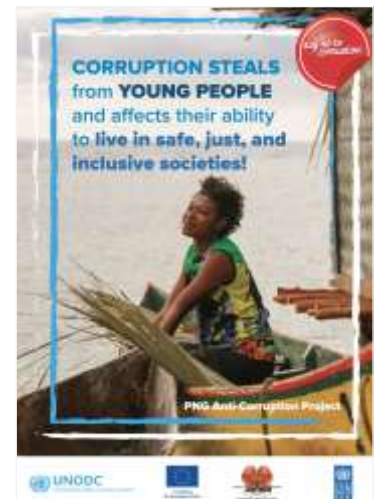
The workshop reviewed existing and new Codes of Conduct, business start-up and operation requirements, as well as private sector interaction with integrity agencies, including the Office of the Special Prosecutor and the recently enacted new Corporations Act.

“Local entrepreneurs are keen to learn what laws and institutions are used to prevent and fight corruption, and who you can ask for help, in line with international best practice found in the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the Teieniwa Vision,” said regional Mrs. Marie Pegie Cauchois. The workshop included presentations from Palau’s Special Prosecutor, Ms. April Cripps, former Palau President Johnson Toribiong, PCOC Board member Mr. Francisco M. Ueki, Jr and Palau business operators, facilitated locally by Mr. Fabian Iyar and Ms. Lisa Abraham-Rengechel.



PNG ...Say NO To Corruption!

This was the theme in Papua New Guinea for IACD on 9 December, when two new posters were produced as part of the PNG Anti-Corruption Project.





Tackling money laundering to reduce deforestation in PNG

UNODC continues supporting Papua New Guinea in fighting and preventing money laundering to reduce deforestation.

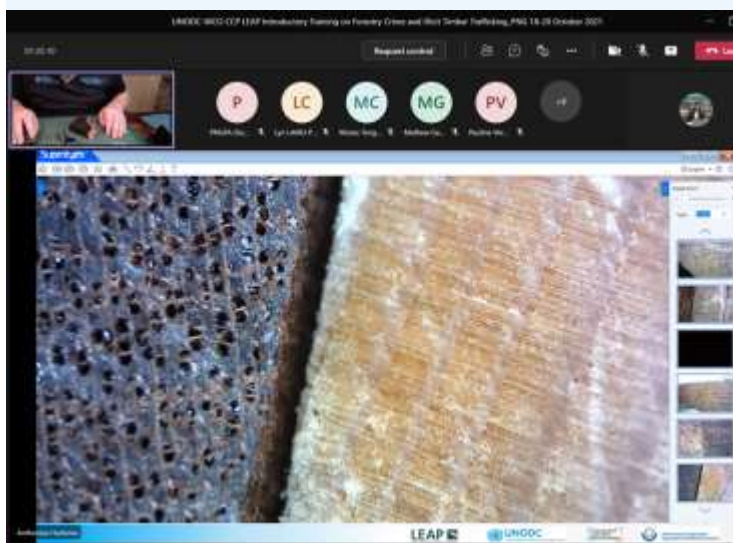
UNODC is continuing to work with the Financial Analysis and Supervision Unit (FASU) and the National Fraud and Anti-Corruption Directorate (NFACD) of the Royal PNG Constabulary as well as other relevant government agencies.

UNODC through the Law Enforcement Assistance Programme (LEAP) to reduce deforestation, funded by Norway, provided FASU with 2 new laptops to be used by its analysts for searches of open source information. Access to open source data is recognized as a best practice also by the Financial Action Task Force for investigating money laundering offences (pictured at right, FASU Director, Mr. Benny Popoitai and UNODC Adviser, Mr. Fabrizio Fioroni). Furthermore, UNODC completed the first in-country mission in PNG since the surge of the COVID-19 pandemic and provided mentoring support to the NFACD investigators enrolled into a UNODC-LEAP mentoring programme aimed at increasing the investigative capacities against money laundering.

In addition, UNODC has provided training to more than 50 employees of the Bank of South Pacific (BSP) for increasing their



capabilities in addressing risks related to typologies of money laundering from forestry crimes. The training is part of the ongoing UNODC activities focusing on the dialogue with the private sectors for preventing and detecting money laundering for reducing deforestation.



Above: UNODC WCO CCP LEAP's Trainer is showing wood identification technique to participants

Identifying illegally trafficked timber

UNODC through its Container Control Programme's component in LEAP (CCP-LEAP), promoted interagency cooperation by conducting combined training with law enforcement agencies in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

In September and November, CCP-LEAP held two three-day virtual trainings for the PNG Customs Service and PNG Forest Authority (PNGFA). These events were designed to enhance the capacity officers to identify and interdict illegally trafficked timber and provided with specialized training on customs risk assessment and special timber risk indicators.

In early 2022, it is planned that CCP-LEAP will conduct practical training with both agencies to further enhance their capacities in inspecting and targeting illegal timber shipments at major ports in PNG.

RTI workshop boosts open government skills in Samoa

Employees from across the Samoa public sector joined UNODC and UN-PRAC on 15 November to enhance their skills in open government, right to information (RTI) and freedom of information (FOI). The Samoa Public Service Commission - the focal point for UNCAC - are working on the development of the RTI policy and legislative framework.





Global Maritime Crime Programme active in the Pacific

Equipment Handing Over Ceremony - Tonga Navy:

The UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) provided equipment to upgrade the maritime surveillance capability of the Maritime Coordination Centre at the Tonga Navy based in Nuku'alofa, pictured at right. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Handing Over Ceremony was conducted virtually on 13 August. The GMCP looks forward to more collaborative engagements with the Tonga Navy.



Conducted Study on Maritime Bougainville, PNG

The GMCP conducted a study on Criminality in Maritime Bougainville to better understand the maritime issues in the region. The study highlighted emerging trends in maritime crime, including crossborder criminality off the coast of Bougainville Island in Papua New Guinea. A discussion was held with UN officials in Papua New Guinea highlighting the findings of the report.



Tuvalu Police Services Aided by New Equipment

The GMCP provided IT equipment to upgrade the maritime surveillance capability of the Tuvalu Police Maritime Unit (TPMU). The handing over ceremony, pictured at left, was conducted virtually on 12 August. The virtual ceremony saw the participation of the Acting Police Commissioner and Commander TPMU of the Tuvalu Police Service. The GMCP looks forward to more collaborative engagements with the Tuvalu Police Maritime Unit.

National Coordination Centre of the Kiribati Police Services gets IT, Radar Boost

The GMCP provided IT equipment and X-band maritime radar to upgrade the maritime surveillance capability of the National Coordination Centre of the Kiribati Police Service. The Handover Ceremony was conducted virtually on Wednesday 11 August. UNODC GMCP looks forward to more collaborative engagements with the National Coordination Centre of the Kiribati Police Service.

UNODC GMCP partners to deliver MDA Demonstration Training to Nauru

The GMCP in Partnership with Vulcan Skylight delivered Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) demonstration training for the Nauru Police Services on 06 July. The training was delivered by GMCP MDA Expert Robert Tremlett. The GMCP notes the existing maritime surveillance program in place and looks forward to greater collaboration and partnership on equipment and capacity building support.



Freedom of Information gains FSM traction

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) President His Excellency David W. Panuelo submitted the proposed FSM Freedom of Information Act for the 22nd FSM Congress' consideration in October. UNODC and UN-PRAC contributed to the review of the Bill twice last year and welcome processes underway leading to its full adoption and implementation.

"The proposed Freedom of Information Act intends to institutionalize the disclosure of public information by establishing suitable procedures, and appropriate remedies, that ensure the implementation of the principles of transparency, openness, and accountability in public service," said President Panuelo.

"Of all the rights FSM citizens do and do not have, as laid out in the FSM Constitution, there is no explicit right for citizens to receive information from their Government. The Freedom of Information Act would seek to explicitly state that right, and to provide the appropriate mechanisms, people, processes, funding, and tools to support that right.

"The legislative intent of the Freedom of Information Act is to enhance transparency in public service, establish a culture of openness and accountability in Government, and encourage the disclosure of public information," said President Panuelo.

In order to promote accuracy of information being disclosed, and to attain efficacy of the intent of the act, handling of information shall be centralized to the extent possible for consistency purposes, and to minimize any misinformation.





PACJN story grants make impact

PACJN aims to boost the quantity and quality of anti-corruption and accountability reporting in the Pacific and empower at-risk communities by informing them about anticorruption issues and amplifying their voices in the media.

Supported by UNODC and UNDP, through the UN-PRAC Project, four leading Pacific journalists received grants to undertake in-depth anti-corruption investigations.

Stories were published under the grant scheme by: Ms. Rosi Dovi-verata, Digital Managing Editor Fiji Sun newspaper, Fiji (at right) on alleged corruption in Biosecurity Authority of Fiji; Island Times newspaper, Palau, by a collective led by Ms. Bernadette Carreon on a fraud investigation into the US Cares Act's pandemic unemployment fund ; Mr. Ofani Eremae, Island Sun newspaper, Solomon Islands, on alleged corruption in a logging contract on Isabel Province; and from Talanoa 'o Tonga, a probe into culture versus common law in Tonga's criminal justice system, by Mr. Kalafi Moala.



Pacific media connect to Pandora Papers

Right to Information, parliaments, procurement, COVID-19, youth and private sector stakeholders were just some of PACJN's engagement fields for Pacific media in 2021. Partnerships with in-country UN offices and national organizations enabled UNODC and UN-PRAC to bring local participants into a live workshop, augmented by online webinar involvement by other Pacific colleagues and communities.

"OCCRP & Pandora Papers - Investigative Journalism in the Pacific" was presented on 15 October. The webinar came about after local PACJN journalists expressed interest in upskilling following the release in October 2021 of the Pandora Papers.

Coordinated by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), over 600 journalists from around the world, including more than 75 from OCCRP's network, spent two years sifting through nearly three terabytes of documents. OCCRP is one of the media partners of ICIJ, entrusted with some leaked source data to investigate.

The latest leak ends forever the idea that abuses of the offshore system are the work of a few bad apples. Instead, the files expose a vast and often interconnected system that is feeding crises and discontent across the world. OCCRP will publish a broad range of stories based on the Pandora Papers. Frequently, the documents show that the biggest beneficiaries of the offshore systems are people in power, as well as their friends and family.





Pacific videos are now online @UNODC

<https://www.unodc.org/southeastasiaandpacific/en/pacific/videos.html>



Youth as Game Changers

"I don't accept bribes"



Corruption risk in Climate Change



A Pacific story on corruption and human rights



A collective effort to build a corruption free pacific



Corruption Risks in Pacific Health

Corruption risks in public procurement tackled by Pacific Island Countries

Corruption risks in public procurement in the context of COVID-19 have been tackled by Pacific Island Countries (PICs), following publication of a new briefing note.

As a critical function of government, the value achieved from public procurement in many countries directly impacts the well-being of its citizens as it provides healthcare, welfare, education and other essential services. However, the impact of public procurement has been heightened with the COVID-19 pandemic requiring governments to respond rapidly to the immediate social and public health challenges, as well as enact sweeping and sizable economic support and stimulus measures to respond to the economic impacts.

While already in pre-COVID-19 times, there was substantial corruption risk in public procurement due to the large amounts of money that governments spend every day, the increases in spending in order to address the economic, social, and health impacts of COVID-19 appear to have also led to a governance crisis and created more opportunities for corruption to flourish. Additionally, the need to disperse such large amounts quickly to respond to the urgent needs of citizens, has led to regulatory, budgetary and accounting safeguards often being relaxed to allow for more rapid assistance, increasing the risk that public funds may be diverted into private hands.

The brief was produced following consultations with stakeholders and assessments of how associated anti-corruption policies such as whistleblower protection laws, introducing "e-Procurement" and improving public sector integrity were being implemented. Training webinars were also held with officials from the Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu.

UN-PRAC publications available

Information Notes:

- Holistic Integrity Frameworks to Address Corruption
- Economic and Social Impacts of Corruption in the Pacific
- Public Service Excellence to Prevent Corruption
- Status of the Right to Information in the Pacific Island Countries
- Civil Society Engagement to Address Corruption
- Action taken by Pacific Legislatures to Address Corruption

Papers:

- Holistic Integrity Frameworks to Address Corruption
- Status of the Right to Information in the Pacific Island Countries
- The Role of Non-State Actors and Citizens in Corruption Prevention in the Pacific

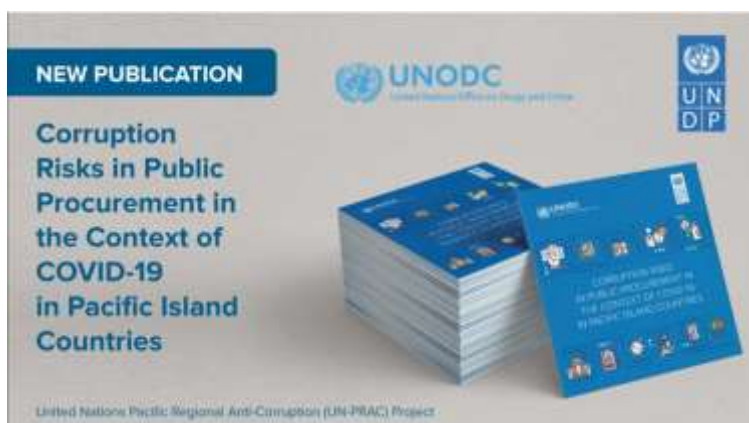
Factsheets on UNCAC:

- UNCAC (An Overview)
- UNCAC Chapter II: Preventative Measures
- UNCAC Chapter III: Criminalization and Law Enforcement
- UNCAC Chapter IV: International Cooperation
- UNCAC Chapter V: Asset Recovery

Other publications:

- Briefing Note: Public Service Excellence to Prevent Corruption
- Advisory Note: COVID-19 and Corruption in the Pacific
- UN-PRAC's Submission to the Australian Parliament's Inquiry into strengthening Australia's relationships with countries in the Pacific Region
- UN-PRAC's Submission to the Australian Parliament's Inquiry into Australia activating greater trade and investment with Pacific Island Countries
- UN-PRAC's Submission to the Australian Parliament's Inquiry into the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia's foreign affairs, defence and trade
- Anti-Corruption Toolkit for Women-Owned Micro, Small and Medium Businesses in Fiji

Please contact the UNODC team listed on page 9 to get a copy of these documents or <https://www.unodc.org/southeastasiaandpacific/en/pacific/resources.html>





Samoa women entrepreneurs strengthen ethics and compliance

Samoa women entrepreneurs met in Savai'i and Upolu in July to share their experiences in strengthening internal business control mechanisms, ethics and compliance in women-owned/managed businesses at three separate workshops.

Supported by UNODC and UNDP through the UN-PRAC Project, the workshop was part of a series of integrity-strengthening efforts led by the Samoa Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), assisted by the UNDP Samoa Multi-Country Office (MCO).

"This women entrepreneurs workshop offers practical guidance on what constitutes corruption in Samoa, what laws and institutions are used to prevent and fight corruption, and who

you can ask for help, in line with international best practice found in the UNCAC and Sustainable Development Goal 16," said Ms. Annika Wythes.

SCCI, UNDP Samoa MCO and UN-PRAC have worked together to produce a Samoa Women Entrepreneurs Anti-Corruption Guide, which was developed after consultations with local Samoan women entrepreneurs on how to safeguard their businesses and not fall prey to corruption risks.

"Women entrepreneurs not only play a crucial role in our community but also contribute positively to the national economy," said Mr. Lemauga Hobart Vaai, Chief Executive Officer, SCCI. UN-PRAC has also undertaken integrity strengthening with women entrepreneurs in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Palau.

Vanuatu prosecutors supported with 5 new trainings

UNODC supported Vanuatu's Office of the Public Prosecutor through training courses and the drafting of a new corruption investigation manual. UNODC delivered five courses on investigating corruption and preparing a case for trial were delivered between August and September to the investigative staff.

Topics covered were investigation of onshore and offshore corporations, corporate finance, cross-border financial investigations, and mutual legal assistance. A hypothetical case study was included that incorporated elements reviewed during the first four sessions. UNODC also drafted an investigation manual that is a tool for investigating officers to investigate corruption cases, standardize procedures, and provide a systematic and professional approach to investigations. The aim is to enhance knowledge of policies and good practices of corruption investigations.

Tuvalu youth sports tackle integrity

UNODC in association with the Tuvalu Youth Department - Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports presented a Workshop on Integrity & Sport for Tuvalu Youth on 16 December. This introductory workshop builds on UNODC's work within the UN-PRAC Project, developing an Integrity & Sport for Pacific Youth Toolkit.

Tuvalu partners for UNODC included Mr. Tovia Faalo Tovia, Sports Manager, Department of Sports, Ministry of Education Youth and Sports and Mr. Elu Tataua of the Tuvalu Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee.





UNODC partners with GOPAC on integrity at 9th Forum of Parliamentarians at COSP

On the final day of the COSP9 on 17 December 2021, UNODC partnered with the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption to present a Special Event, the 9th Forum of Parliamentarians: Implementing Integrity.

Pacific participants included former Palau Governor and legislator, Ms. Leilani Reklai, (right) who spoke on the role of the media in anti-corruption, Ms. Annika Wythes and GOPAC Secretary Mr. John Hyde. The panel, which also included parliamentarians from Asia, the Middle East and Africa, proposed UNCAC-aligned actions to boost national integrity.



UN Convention against Corruption in the Pacific	
Pacific States parties to UNCAC	Date of ratification/accession
Cook Islands	17 October 2011
Federated States of Micronesia	21 March 2012
Fiji	14 May 2008
Kingdom of Tonga	6 February 2020
Kiribati	27 September 2013
Nauru	12 July 2012
Niue	3 November 2017
Palau	24 March 2009
Papua New Guinea	16 July 2007
Republic of the Marshall Islands	17 November 2011
Samoa	18 April 2018
Solomon Islands	6 January 2012
Tokelau (New Zealand)	
Tuvalu	4 September 2015
Vanuatu	12 July 2011

New anti-corruption posters launched for the Pacific

The UN-PRAC Project produced a series of new posters to link in with International Anti-Corruption Day 2021.

The posters aim to raise awareness of people in the PICs on the importance of preventing and fighting corruption and the anti-corruption efforts undertaken in the Pacific region. The posters convey universal messages on the values of anti-corruption and effective governance and promote implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, as well as UNCAC. The posters communicate the stories and voices of people about the anti-corruption efforts in the Pacific societies in the spirit of the Teieniwa Vision.

The anti-corruption posters cover seven key integrity fields relevant to the Pacific.



For more information, please contact:

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The United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) Project is a joint initiative of UNODC and UNDP, supported by the New Zealand Government.



The Papua New Guinea Anti-Corruption Project



The Strengthening Integrity and Countering Corruption in the Pacific (SICCP) Project is implemented by UNODC for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) - Australia