

Sharing the Initiatives of 3 Communities in Jiwaka Province of Papua New Guinea in Developing their Community laws



Conference on Codification of Customs and the Creation of Community bylaws (ANU, Canberra)

Lilly BeSoer & Joe Wusik
Voice for Change, Jiwaka Province
Papua New Guinea

PROCESSES INVOLVED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY LAWS

Initial Contact with communities that took part in Voice for Change Community Baseline on the prevalence of violence against women and girls in Jiwaka Province in 2013.

One of the questions from the baseline survey was how can communities address issues that affects women/children and every one towards safer homes/communities

Responses were

Leaders are weak, Laws are not used

A lot of bribery involved in the Village and Peace Courts

Accessing court are costly/Many do not know their rights

Requested for education and awareness on issues discussed

From the Baseline Survey, VfC Developed Educational Toolkits on:

Gender

Ending Gender Based Violence/Human Rights

Conflict Prevention and Peace Building

Building A Community Safety Network

Tool Kits are in visual forms currently used for community education on peace building, ending violence against women/children and how can we make home and community safe for our women and girls

At the end of every trainings, participants make 2 commitments.

One: Individuals make a personal Commitment to promote equality in families, homes and community to protect the rights women, girls and the vulnerable members of the community.

Two: A community action plan, how they can collectively improve their communities and making safe for women and children

VfC keeps a copy and a reflection for beneficiaries after 3-6 months to check against their commitment.

A Personal Commitment from a man young

PERSONAL COMMITMENT
KILIP COMMUNITY-CONER STONE CHURCH GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING
DATE: 25th -29th JUNE 2018
VENUE: VFC-RESOURCE CENTRE- KILBAG STATION MINJ- JIWAKA.
I, Pastor/Mr Mrs: Ms: CHRIS MININGA bilong KILIP
I am making the following promises to myself:
1. MI NONAP PAITINA MARI BILONG MI, TAIN
MI GO BEK LONG HAUS. HELPIM EM LONG ME
HAUS WOK OSEM KUKIM KAIKAI NA SAMPLA
MI GIUIN MANI IONG MERI BLO MI, OSEM MI
BA MI GIUIN K30:00 IONG EM NA MI BA
INSAIT IONG DISPLA K20:00 BA MI BAIM KAIT
NONAP RAUN NATING NATING, NA PASIM
R POROMAN. TAIM MANAGEMENT BAI S
MI, BA MI WORK IONG TAIM RAUN IONG

Most Community Plans indicates:

Participants want to share information learnt with the community and seek support to address social problems such as gambling, video houses, production and consumption of marijuana, tribal and family conflicts, violence relates to sorcery accusations, Violence against women/girls.

As of 2014 and 2015, VfC carried out education on peace building, human rights, gender and ending violence against women/girls in 15 communities and out of that, 3 returned and sought support to mobilize their communities to come up with the idea of developing a community law. The communities are:

Dambex, Jima and Warawau from South Whagi District of Jiwaka Province

Why Community Law?

When there are already existing laws?

The reason is that, the communities say they want to feel a sense of ownership over the laws.

Laws that they themselves make

Laws that directly respond to community needs,

and laws that they feel responsible for.

Community Mobilisation/Consultations

Setting Working Committee

What would be their ideal community be in 10 years time?

Identifying of common issues in homes and communities.

Schedules for consultation for matured men/ women/young men/women and older men/women/widows/orphans

- separately consultations to gather issues affecting them
- Come together to cross check and verify issues
- Discuss on penalties

Community Mobilisation/Consultations

The processes took nearly 2 years for 2 communities and 3 years for 1 community to finally come up with a Community Law. 1 full time staff was working with the 3 communities through this processes.

The community listed cases that can be directed to the formal court
Penalties for first time offenders, different offences and the process for complainant to follow through

The Community Law banned certain activities such as gambling and drinking in public etc. Production and consumption of marijuana,

Developed roles of the Working Committee, main task is to ensure the Community Laws are put to use.

Challenges

- Leadership- difficulties working together
- Politics – divisions
- Conflict of interest
- Tribal competitiveness
- No support from law enforcement institutions
- Lack of government support



Lessons Learned

- Strong leadership needed
- The use of the law sends a message to the community (charges and convictions)
- Other Communities are watching to see if the laws are being adopted
- Communities need ongoing support
- Early indication of fewer sorcery accusation, less drug use and gambling.
- Involment of churches
- Setting a standard bride price resulted in heated debate but all did not come to a compromise?



For Community Laws to function as intended

- This needs a long term approach
- All members of the community have a role to play in supporting the law committee and leaders in putting to use the laws developed.
- Need support from law enforcing institutions
- Government to support such initiatives
- Women of the community need to keep issues affecting ;
- Our work is supported by the International Women Development Agency,