

Mapping UNSW Impact Global Development

Primary SDG	10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES
Broad theme	Educating about human rights
Research	Educating human rights defenders in the Pacific to advocate for better working conditions and community protections
Impact region	The Pacific
Faculty	Law
School/Institute	Law
Academic	Associate Professor Justine Nolan
Project partners	Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)
Related SDGs	16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
	12: Responsible Consumption and Production
	4: Quality Education

Elevator pitch

Justine Nolan and the DTP are training human rights defenders in the Pacific to develop advocacy strategies to deal with companies in the region and achieve better terms and conditions for local workers, better protect community and Indigenous rights, and sustain business activity.

The Challenge: Foreign companies are exploiting Pacific Island countries and communities

Pacific Island countries are undergoing rapid development. Some corporations in the region are engaging in exploitative practices to the detriment of locals and their environment in areas such as mining, forestry, tourism and land ownership. Keen to attract business investment, local governments are hesitant to regulate corporate behaviour and are not adequately consulting Indigenous peoples.

The UN has indicated support for the private sector in its Sustainable Development Goals (8: Decent Work and Economic Growth) yet it also aims to protect the rights of workers and Indigenous peoples. How can these goals coexist in The Pacific? The area of human rights and business is underdeveloped in the Pacific region. The UNHCR regional office is starting to pay more attention, recognising that local NGOs do not have the requisite resources or training.

UNSW's solution: Train local NGO workers to lobby for better rights and sustainability

Calling on her extensive experience researching and advising in the area of business and human rights, Justine, in conjunction with the DTP, is training Pacific human rights advocates in how to hold companies accountable. The training will be run by the DTP over five days in Fiji, and address topics such as rights awareness and remedies for rights abuses. How can they negotiate for better terms and conditions? What power do local regulatory authorities have, and what role can the UN play? Participants will include NGO

workers from the region. They will be encouraged to network post training, and in three years' time, a second training program will be held to address issues and embed knowledge.

Justine is also researching modern slavery in Australia and advising on related legislation the Federal Government is set to introduce in 2018. She is examining what can be done to effect meaningful change to protect people from indentured work and unjust working conditions.

The Impact: Educate local NGO workers to improve local rights and company sustainability

In the Pacific, Justine and the DTP are looking to enable local organisations and workers to negotiate with foreign companies doing business in the region to achieve better terms and conditions for locals and their land. The training will shine a spotlight on the issues, connect regional organisations, and encourage these organisations to spread information among the community. Locals and Indigenous peoples are set to receive more just and equitable outcomes, and company activity will be more sustainable for the population and environment.

Researcher

Justine Nolan is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean (Academic) at UNSW, and a Visiting Professorial Scholar at NYU's Stern Center for Business and Human Rights. Prior to joining UNSW in 2004, she worked as the Director of the Business and Human Rights program at the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (now Human Rights First) in the USA. She co-authored *The International Law of Human Rights* (OUP, 2011), and more recently, *Business and Human Rights: From Principles to Practice* (Routledge, 2016), and she is an editor of the Australian Journal of Human Rights, Business and Human Rights Journal and the Human Rights Defender.

Ben Falkenmire 07.03.18