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# Integrating Community-Oriented Policing and Traditional Justice Systems as Police Reform and Development in Post-Conflict Countries

A research project presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of International Development

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## Abstract

Police reform in post-conflict countries has seen the increasing implementation of the community-oriented policing model as a means to introduce democratic policing as a component of the peace building process. However, in many post-conflict countries the situation of legal pluralism exists, where multiple justice systems operate in the same space. Many communities often rely on customary or traditional forms of justice as the formal state justice system does not extend to their location or have any real influence or authority.

This research project used document analysis to investigate the contribution community-oriented policing can make to those communities that rely on traditional justice systems. This report introduced two community-oriented policing mechanisms, *tara bandu* ceremonies in Timor-Leste and the Community Officer Project in Solomon Islands, as case studies. These two mechanisms were analysed and compared with a specific focus on their respective levels of community participation and how they responded to raising awareness of the principles of human rights.

The case study analysis found that the *tara bandu* ceremonies had high levels of community participation and support due to them being an endogenous social structure and the extensive involvement the communities had in developing their respective *tara bandu* ceremonies. This was in contrast to the Community Officer Project which is an introduced structure and one in which the community appeared to have no real input into the design and implementation process. These findings led to the conclusion that in integrating community-oriented policing and traditional justice systems, consideration should be given to utilising pre-existing traditional structures that have the support of the community.



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## Glossary

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Arbakai           | Pashtun tribal security system in Southeast Afghanistan                |
| <i>Horok</i>      | Symbol of prohibition, hung from a tree                                |
| <i>Kastom-law</i> | Customary law  |
| <i>Maklehat</i>   | Person who holds the highest authority in <i>tara bandu</i> ceremonies |
| <i>Nehe biti</i>  | Traditional resolution process   |
| <i>Suco</i>       | Village  |
| <i>Tara bandu</i> | Traditional community resolution ceremony                              |
| <i>Xefe suko</i>  | Head of village  |





## Acronyms

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| CAP      | Community Auxiliary Police                                  |
| CO       | Community Officer   |
| COP      | Community-Oriented Policing                                 |
| BCPP     | Bougainville Community Policing Programme                   |
| IMF      | International Monetary Fund                                 |
| NGO      | Non-Governmental Organisation                               |
| NZAID    | New Zealand Agency for International Development            |
| PLA      | Participatory Learning and Action                           |
| PNTL     | Policía Nacional de Timor-Leste                             |
| PPF      | Participating Police Force                                  |
| RSIPF    | Royal Solomon Island Police Force                           |
| RAMSI    | Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands              |
| UN       | United Nations  |
| UNCIVPOL | United Nations Civilian Police (prior to 2003)              |
| UNMIT    | United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste            |
| UNPOL    | United Nations Police (post 2003)                           |
| UNTAET   | United Nations Transitional Administration in East<br>Timor |



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