The Centre for Democratic Institutions’ Political Party Leadership Program (PPLP) was held in Canberra from the 27 to 31 May 2013. The PPLP replaces the Political Party Development course, which was run by CDI for six years, from 2006 to 2011. In 2012 the first PPLP was held, focusing on Southeast Asian political parties from Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia. This year, it was the Pacific’s turn, with 19 officials attending from the four Melanesian countries – Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. The one-week PPLP course was based at University House at the Australian National University, and was presented by CDI Associate Dr Norm Kelly.

The PPLP is a peer-to-peer dialogue designed to encourage participants to:

- better understand the contribution that political parties can make to democracy and good governance;
- better understand political party leadership in Melanesia and Australia;
- increase their knowledge of how to manage and promote internal party democracy, policy development and lay party/parliamentary party relations;
- better appreciate their role in leading the development and operation of their parties;
- develop strategies for successful party leadership; and
- establish peer support networks for continuous improvement.

Course Participants

Seventeen senior party officials, and two party regulators from four Pacific countries attended the program:

**Fiji (3)**
- Monica Raghwan – Fiji Labour Party
- Isoa Kamarusi – SoDelPa
- Raman Singh – National Federation Party

**Papua New Guinea (10)**
- Moses Kar – Peoples Progress Party
- Albert Tagua – PNG Party
- Rose Kepo – PNG Country Party
- Dorothy Tekwie – PNG Greens Party
- Allan Marat MP – Melanesian Liberal Party
- Edward Jondi – Peoples National Congress
- Barbara Toiya – THE Party

**Solomon Islands (4)**
- Walter Schnaubelt – National Alliance
- Alphonse Gelu – IPPCC
- Ila Pala - IPPCC

**Vanuatu (2)**
- Christopher Waiwori – Solomon Islands Democratic Party
- Derick Manu’ari – Green Party of Solomon Islands
- James Mekab – People’s Alliance Party
- Kristina Sogavare – OUR Party
Eric Pakoa – National United Party  Hosea Bani – Vanua’aku Party

Participants hold senior positions in their respective parties, and the group included several officials with current or previous parliamentary experience. The group included five women.

Structure & Outcomes

The emphasis of PPLP is on peer-to-peer dialogue, and to help facilitate this, meetings with Australian political parties were again a major component of PPLP, with half-day sessions conducted with and by the Australian Labor Party, The Liberal Party of Australia and the Australian Greens:

- **Australian Labor Party** (Peter Yates, international Project Officer; and Elias Hallaj, ACT Branch Secretary);
- **Liberal Party of Australia** (Bruce Edwards, International Secretary); and
- **Australian Greens** (Brett Constable, National Manager; Anna Reynolds, International Liaison; Erin Farley, Director of Campaigns; and Ellen Sandell, ACT Campaign Coordinator)

PPLP participants found these sessions particularly useful, noting that the opportunity to dialogue with key officials of these parties directly on all aspects of party management, structure and processes in the context of how to lead and develop a party, generated many ideas, links and plans for the participants to take home and consider in respect to reforming and strengthening their own parties.

The group also visited Parliament House and met with the Chief Government Whip, Chris Hayes, and Chief Opposition Whip, Warren Entsch. Building on the meetings with the Australian Parties, PPLP participants reported that these sessions further spurred debate and conversation within the PPLP group about how to best manage the relationship between the parliamentary and administrative wings of political parties, as this was a key challenge many faced in their work.

During their visit to Parliament the group also observed Question Time, and met with several Members and Senators over lunch, including: Senator Anne McEwen, Senator Claire Moore, Phil Ruddock MP, Bronwyn Bishop MP, Roy Wyatt MP, Richard Marles MP, Kelvin Thomson MP, Patrick Secker MP, Jane Prentice MP, Janelle Safin MP, and Louise Markus MP.

Sessions were also held with ANU academic experts on the politics of the Melanesian countries represented:
• Professor Brij Lal – Fiji
• Dr Bill Standish – Papua New Guinea
• Terence Wood – Solomon Islands

Further sessions and discussions on political leadership, policy development, internal party democracy, and women in politics were led by Norm Kelly. Cate Thomson, from the Australian Electoral Commission, provided assistance in some sessions. Dr Alphonse Gelu, Registrar of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea and a participant in the workshop, also led a session on the engineering of political party systems. See the PPLP Full Report and Program in the sidebar for all the details.

Participants also used their time in Canberra to further their links with Australian parties and organisations, as well as interacting with their diplomatic and expatriate communities. New friendships were made within the group, and it is expected that participants will remain in contact into the future.

Conclusion

Due to the overall political party development program, of which the PPLP is a significant part, CDI has established very strong links with parties and government officials in the Melanesian region, which is beneficial for identifying suitable applicants for future courses, and other potential in-country CDI activities.

The support and involvement of the Australian political parties and their parliamentarians is critical to the success of the course, and CDI acknowledges the parties’ participation. The PPLP sessions also help Australian parties to gain a better understanding of some of the issues and challenges that confront political parties throughout the region.

Eight Years of PPD/PPLP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women part.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>