

AORE/MALO AWARENESS/LEGAL CLINIC REPORT

The Aore and Malo awareness and legal clinic (See attach program) is to start on the 5 – 9 July 2010, and the team going consist of Kevin and myself.

On Sunday 4 July 2010, Kevin and myself left by vehicle, Luganville around 4 o'clock to go to Naonepan. At Naonepan, we went to our place of residence by boat, which is about 4 meters from the sea.

Once at our place of residence, we set up our beddings for the night and had an early sleep.

Monday 5 July 2010

Morning session at Aore Academy Adventist

Awareness

Around 7:30am, we left by boat to go to Aore Academy Adventist (AAA), where we were greeted by the deputy principal. We started around 9am as the students were in class. The awareness goes for about 2 hours where Kevin and I gave a talk to students from year 7 to year 12.

We informed the students that we will be conducting a law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any students who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, witchcraft which was common in the school, employment matters and so fort.

Students in attendance were 275 students and 6 teachers. So we had to use the church to do the awareness and later the library for the legal clinic. 100 brochures were distributed to the students and staff.

Students were still eager to asked questions but were stop by the teacher because of time limits

Questions asked by the students are;

- child maintenance which is the main issue of the morning asked by majority of the students,

- school rules and punishments,
- Assaults.

Legal clinic

We conducted the legal clinic in the schools library. At times, we had to see a student about 2 times because after when he left, another question pops in his mind and he will come to seek advice again.

18 students came to seek advice from Kevin with one opening up a new file. That student opening up a new file is seeking damages against a teacher in a previous school for assaulting him. 19 students in total plus 2 staffs saw me.

The wide range of questions that the students came in to seek advice are;

- questions on child maintenance and its effect in the long run,
- what to do with teachers assaulting students,
- process of complaint, and how to stop such actions,
- food conditions and hygienic foods,
- strict rules,
- whether suspended students can access us to help them,
- whether pregnant students can after birth go back to school
- Rights of woman at work,
- About how they can follow the path to become a lawyer.
- Teachers having affairs with students.

After that we had a light refreshments of juice and biscuits and we left by boat to go to Nandiutu secondary school. Once at the Nandiutu school beach, we had rice and chicken for lunch.

Afternoon session at Nandiutu Secondary School

Awareness

At Nandiutu school, again we informed the students that we will be conducting a law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any students who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

Students in attendance were 90 students and about 9 staffs. So we had to use the dinning hall for the awareness and later the legal clinic. Few brochures were also distributed to the students and staff.

Questions asked by students and teachers are;

- maintenance of children which is the main questions asked for that afternoon,
- stealing,
- damage to school property,
- School rules with some saying that the rules are too strict.

Legal Advice

3 students came to seek advice from Kevin with 2 teachers opening up a file as someone has owed the school debts and on another issue of breach of agreement. 2 students came and saw me with another staff member following up on her case that the office is handling.

The wide range of questions that the students came in to seek advice are;

- Family issue – custody of a child,
- Child maintenance,
- Whether pregnant students can after birth go back to school
- Assistance provided to them with their essays with regards to the law on smoking and alcohol.

After the awareness and legal clinic program for the day, we headed back to our place of residence.

Tuesday 6 July 2010

Morning session at Ambakura village

Awareness

That morning, we traveled by vehicle to Ambakura village, it was about an hours drive. When we arrived we were greeted by the councilor and the paramount chief from that area.

Again we informed the villagers that we will be conducting law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

Villagers in attendance were around 50 plus others sitting outside and listening through the windows. We used a small church for awareness and later the legal clinic. 50 brochures were also distributed to the villagers.

Questions asked by the villagers there concentrated on this issues;

- issues of land,
- issues of child maintenance,
- issues of restraining orders,
- power of chiefs,
- family issues concentrating on divorce,
- custom law,
- fee's to register a file in the office and the courts,
- location of office

Legal Clinic

Four persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one has to open a new file, as he seeks to claim damages against a certain person who has damaged his marriage life,
- four others who responded to our letter issued against them,
- two other persons seeking advice on the bylaws of the chief, and what the office can do in assistance, and whether the office can do in assistance to the law of the chiefs

Two persons came to see me;

- With one seeking advice on what steps to do if his garden was damaged by a group of people,
- Another person sought land advice,

After the legal clinic, we had rice and roasted pig for lunch with the councilor and chiefs, and we were also given a parcel of laplap yam and local fowl before setting off.

Afternoon session at Jinaore School

Legal Awareness

Because of the road conditions, it took us almost 45 minutes to reach Jinaore School. We were welcome to the school by the principal and its students mainly in class 6, 7 and 8.

Again we informed the students, teachers and villagers that we will be conducting a law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

Students in attendance was around 25 -30 plus about four staffs and about fifteen villagers who came to listen. 50 brochures were also distributed to the villagers.

Questions asked by the students, teachers and villagers there concentrated on this issues;

- Rights of children in schools and villagers as the main issue raised and questions put to us,
- School rules and punishment of children,
- Penalties of school rules,
- Whether students have a right to school if parents fail to pay their school fees,
- Maintenance of children,
- Theft – whether unsuspected theft can be reported?
- Family maintenance

Legal Clinic

Two persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one has to open a new file, as he seeks to make an employment claim,
- Another also sought advice on collection of business license.

Two persons (elderly husband and wife) came to see me;

- On issue of a family issue, with regards to seeking custody of a child whom their mother had ran away with to North Pentecost. Since the kid's father is not present, I advised that the proper person to see us is the father himself.

After the awareness and legal clinic program for the day, we headed back to our place of residence.

Wednesday 7 July 2010

Morning session at Atariboe village

Legal Awareness

That morning, we traveled by vehicle to Atariboe village, it was about an hours drive. When we arrived we were greeted by the chiefs of the village.

Again we informed the villagers that we will be conducting a law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

Villagers in attendance were around 35 – 50. We used a small church hall for awareness and later the legal clinic. 50 brochures were also distributed to the villagers.

Questions asked by the villagers there concentrated on these issues;

- Location of office, and why all lawyers in Vila?
- Listing of courts cases and why it takes for so long to deal with cases,
- Abortion and killing of a child,
- Distribution of property,
- Assaults – types of assault
- Comparing PSO and other private legal firms, we also had to explained the roles of both offices,
- Land tribunal act

Legal Clinic

Two persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one to follow up on his case,
- Another also sought advice for Kevin to clarify on bylaws of the chiefs,

Two persons came to see me;

- One on advice of how to claim if some one was injured (injury claim),
- One on advice on how to access a restraining order should some one trespass into their property.

After the awareness and legal clinic program for the morning, we had baked laplap yam and fried tuna for lunch with the chiefs before heading to the next location.

Afternoon session at big Nanuku

Legal Awareness

Because of the road conditions, it took us almost 45 minutes to reach Big Nanuku village. We were welcome to the village by the chiefs. Again we informed the villagers that we will be conducting a law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

In attendance were around 25 villagers who came to listen. 50 brochures were also distributed to the villagers.

Questions asked by the villagers there concentrated on these issues;

- Why their cases sleeping in the office,
- Problems in Village – Law & Order, whether they can report to the Police and to us,
- Maintenance of children,
- Location of the office,

- Law on Marijuana and its penalty,
- Law smoking and why its introduced,
- Damage to property and how they can claim.

Legal Clinic

Two persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one opening up a new file as he intends to claim damage that was done on his property,
- one seeking advice on the bylaws of the chiefs,

Two other persons saw me as follows with;

- One following up on his case that the office was handling,
- And, another person seeking advice on what to do should some one trespass on his property.

After the awareness and legal clinic program for the day, we headed back to our place of residence.

Thursday 8 July 2010

Morning Session at Avunatari village

Legal awareness

We were welcome to the village by a Pastor residing at the village, and we used the village hall for the legal awareness and later the legal clinic.

Again we informed the villagers that we will be conducting law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

In attendance were around 40 year 6, 7 and 8 students Avunatari School plus around 5 teachers with about 30 villagers who came to listen. 100 brochures were also distributed.

Questions asked by the students, teachers and villagers there concentrated on these issues;

- Penalty of death sentences
- Students disobeying and what to do with them
- Location of PSO office in Luganville
- Why prisoners were released quickly and why?
- Discipline of students – kinds of punishments
- Amount of work in criminal cases
- Whether leaders are different from being prosecuted, if suspected of committing a crime,
- Why the Correctional Act was different from the laws before the correctional act came into place,
- Difference between private and public lawyers,
- What would happen to persons who committed a crime and yet approach the police to admit it,
- Powers of Magistrates Court
- Powers of Appeal Courts
- Why the Correctional Act was changed?
- What happens to those who pay other persons to kill other people,
- Law of witchcraft
- Law on trespass
- Why Members of Parliament never pass in court
- Law on Marijuana.

Legal Clinic

Two persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one opening up a new file as he intends to claim damage that was done on his property,
- one seeking advice concerning the Land Tribunal Act,

Six other persons saw me as follows with;

- One came for us to open up a new file to assist him in doing a restraining Order,
- One sought our help to draft a letter backing up the decision of the chiefs,
- Another one sought help about his contract
- Three other persons sought advice regarding trespass if a restraining order can be made, damage to property and if a claim can be made, and assault and how to claim.

After the awareness and legal clinic program, we had simboro, boil yam, rice, fried tuna, and soup of tin meat, water cris, cakes and coconut for lunch before heading off to out next area.

Afternoon session at smol Nanuku village

Legal awareness

We were welcome to the village by the chief of the village, and we used the Church hall for legal awareness and later the legal clinic. Again we informed the villagers that we will be conducting law awareness and we will give time for questioning, and in case, any persons who wish to seek legal advice or to open up a file with the office may do so after the awareness talk.

Our topics cover the role and services of the Office, the means test, the merit test that the office will require from the people needing assistance.

Our range of topics during the awareness program includes Criminal offences committed, its penalties, and its effect in the long run. We also talked about the rights of students, villagers, children, accident claims, personal injuries, employment matters and so fort.

In attendance were around 50 villagers who came to listen. 100 brochures were also distributed.

Questions asked by the villagers there concentrated on these issues;

- Explaining the roles of the court, police, prosecution and Solicitors offices,
- Land issues,
- Laws of threats/ Threatening to shoot somebody with a gun,
- Divorce and its grounds,
- Law on child maintenance.

Legal Clinic

Three persons came to see Kevin as follows;

- one opening up a new file as he intends to press injury claim against certain people,
- one seeking advice on the roles of the Ombudsman,
- Another seeking advice on the responsibilities of teachers towards students and students towards teachers.

Four persons saw me as follows with;

- one opening up a new file on making a WILL,
- One opening up a file to apply for a restraining Order,
- One opening up a file on employment issues,
- Two clients also came and follow up on their cases that the office is handling,

Four other persons came and sought advice as follows;

- Rape – what a girl should do if she is raped,
- If a girl loves a boy whom she is related to and wants to stay with him, but the girls parents refused, can the office helped?
- If a girl gets pregnant, then runs away from the boy, can the boy still pays child maintenance?
- What is a restraining Order?

After the awareness and legal clinic program for the day, we headed back to our place of residence.

Next day, we had laplap yam, fried tuna, boiled local chicken, and fried pig before heading off to Naonepan and to Luganville.

Comments

Kevin and I also have concerns about the time limits 12pm – 1pm before the afternoon session starts. We had to stick to, the lunch and traveling at the same time. After mornings session, we were always invited to the lunch by the village leaders and after that, we had to travel by vehicle in some places the roads are bad and so it slows down the vehicle causing us to arrive late at the next area of awareness/legal clinic.

After all, the tour was successful and 500 brochures were distributed at Aore/Malo area. In all areas visited, the leaders of the area expressed their thankfulness stating that it is the first time for a law office to visit their area, and the awareness and legal clinic has made a lot of people aware about their rights and about what they can do, and that there is a office that is in place to help them.

The people, pastors and chief's stated that it was the first time for a law office to visit their people doing awareness and greatly appreciated it, and that the office would once again in the future visited them.

Henzler Vira