Justice for the Poor Overview
Justice for the Poor (J4P) is a World Bank program that engages with justice reform as a cross-cutting issue in the practice of development. Grounded in evidence-based approaches focused on the perspective of the poor and marginalized, the program aims to improve the delivery of justice services and to support sustainable and equitable development processes which manage grievance and conflict stresses effectively.

Solomon Islands Background
Following seven years of civil conflict, stability returned to the Solomon Islands in 2003, underwritten by the regional security and justice presence in the form of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands. This stability has enabled the return of economic growth largely fuelled by an expansion of logging and increases in aid flows. But many of the stresses that precipitated the conflict remain, including: resentment at the centralization of power and resources, uneven development, the retraction of state social services and governance institutions, the weakening of community level social cohesion and systems of authority, and disputes over land.

Solomon Islands Program Areas
Established in 2009, the J4P program in Solomon Islands works to support the emergence of legitimate institutions for mitigating conflict and redressing grievance. Current activities focus on three critical areas: Justice Delivered Locally (JDL), Access to Advisory Services, and Urban Public Land Governance.

Justice Delivered Locally
The J4P program supports invigorating local-level justice and governance systems through the JDL initiative of Solomon Islands’ Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. The initial phase of JDL (2009-2011) included: research and community consultation on local justice across five provinces; an evaluation of a Community Officer program designed by the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) to trial a new model of community policing; and a South-South learning event on hybrid justice systems. Building off this initial work, current activities include (1) working to develop a more structured and supported phase two of the community officer and (2) supporting national level policy dialogue around the functioning of state justice systems at the local level.

Access to Advisory Services
A key challenge associated with generating growth while managing risks of conflict in Solomon Islands will centre on improving the equity and durability of dealings in land and natural resources that are held under customary ownership. J4P research on access to advisory services examined the impact of access to advice during the negotiation of access agreements in relation to mining, marine resources and forestry, for both customary landholders and investors. This research demonstrated that landholders negotiating transactions rarely have access to quality advice. Future activities focus on the development of governance arrangements, financing and capacities that are required to increase parties’ access to good advice around land and natural resource transactions.

Urban Public Land Governance
Managing growth in Honiara in a way that supports the economic and social development of Solomon Islands as a whole, and mitigates against the prospect of conflict and grievance is critical. J4P is collaborating with AusAID and UN-HABITAT to support the Solomon Islands Government to establish a national Taskforce on Urban Public Land Governance which would provide a platform for addressing issues relating to the poor management of urban land (the underlying title of which belongs to the state).