Water for Women is partnering with Plan International Australia in Solomon Islands for the New Times, New Targets project, which is supporting improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, access and practice in rural communities, schools and health clinics in western Guadalcanal Province.

In 2021, this project was awarded an Innovation and Impact grant to further strengthen the use of new evidence, innovation and practice in sustainable and inclusive WASH and, in doing so, contribute to improved learning and practice globally.

Achieving socially inclusive and climate-resilient WASH in rural communities in Solomon Islands requires a catchment level approach. Led by Plan International Australia, this project is building on existing project work to strengthen inclusive community-level water planning by developing approaches that link community-scale WASH action planning with catchment-scale thinking and deliberation by applying a ‘water stewardship’ concept.
In Solomon Islands, individual communities are responsible for their own WASH systems, however, these are affected by, and impact the WASH systems of other communities within the same catchment.

Conversely, community and catchment land-use activities also impact WASH systems. Policies and practices that consider catchment-level links between communities and WASH systems are likely to increase the sustainability and resilience of those systems. Such policies and practices are presently weak or absent in Solomon Islands.

This Innovation and Impact project builds on the ongoing Water for Women partnership between Plan International, Live & Learn Environmental Education, the International WaterCentre at Griffith University, and Solomon Islands National University.

The project is developing approaches linking community-scale WASH action planning with catchment-scale thinking and deliberation by applying a ‘water stewardship’ concept.

Through this project, partners are developing, documenting and sharing a locally-suited, innovative water stewardship approach, combining action and formative research, that achieves complimentary community and catchment-based actions and outcomes by:

1. Enhancing the Community-based Water Security Improvement Planning approach developed by IWC, Plan International and Live & Learn Environmental Education to improve sustainability, inclusivity, and opportunity to plan for future scenarios.
2. Exploring opportunities and piloting approaches to promote inclusive catchment-level water and WASH stewardship.
3. Developing a framework and facilitator guide for integrated, inclusive, climate-resilient WASH and water resources that provide a structured, evidence-based approach to support civil society programming and projects across Asia-Pacific.

This project introduces an innovative application of the ‘photo voice’ methodology to facilitate intergenerational and inter-gender perspectives on water resources management and climate-change adaptation, using creative approaches to community cultural engagement.

This project is producing diverse, user-focused outputs, including policy briefs, case studies and facilitator guides, which are contributing to improved, climate-resilient WASH and water resource management evidence, and sector policy and practice in Solomon Islands.

The Australian aid program is investing in innovation and learning to deepen impact throughout Asia and the Pacific through the Innovation and Impact grants. By supporting partners to further their innovation and impact, we can not only improve WASH outcomes in this region, but also contribute to improved WASH policy and practice globally. Water for Women is proud to be partnering with Plan International, Live & Learn Environmental Education, the International WaterCentre at Griffith University, Solomon Islands National University, and Earth Water People in Solomon Islands.

Links to: New Times, New Targets: supporting Solomon Islands Government WASH transition and resilient WASH for all

Find out more at waterforwomenfund.org