



Transitioning to Safely Managed Water Services: Risks and Opportunities of Self-supply for Vulnerable Populations

Water for Women is the Australian Government's flagship Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program aimed at improving the health, gender equality and wellbeing of Asian and Pacific communities through inclusive and sustainable WASH.

Research is an important element of Water for Women. It is a key pathway for development innovation and helps to inform policy-making and program delivery.

Led by the **Institute for Sustainable Futures – University of Technology, Sydney** (ISF-UTS), this research project will evaluate risks and opportunities associated with on-premises, self-supply water sources and support policymakers and practitioners to engage with how self-supply sources might support or undermine transitions towards safely-managed services for poor households across Asia Pacific. The work focuses on areas lacking piped water, including densely populated low-income urban areas in Indonesia and small climate-affected islands in Vanuatu.





ISF-UTS / Tim Foster (Vanuatu)

How should transitions to safely-managed water services for all respond to widespread on-premises self-supply in Asia Pacific?

More than 800 million people in the Asia Pacific region depend on self-supply sources that are owned, managed and invested in by individual households.

However, they are unregulated, unmonitored and little is known about the extent to which they provide safely-managed water services to poor households.

Indonesia and Vanuatu have both made significant progress in access to basic and improved water sources. Hence, it is timely to define pathways to safely-managed services that will benefit all.

Densely populated settlements in Indonesia (using shallow groundwater) and small islands in Vanuatu (using rainwater and shallow groundwater) where water supplies are managed at a household level, present challenges faced widely across the region.

This research aims to support policymakers and practitioners to engage with self-supply water services and the associated risks and opportunities to help transition to

safely-managed services for all. The research focuses on areas lacking piped water, in parts of urban Indonesia and islands in Vanuatu.

“*This research collaboration will shed light on the water quality and reliability issues that poor households face – including the potential adverse impact of poor sanitation and climate change – and chart a pathway forward for governments at multiple levels to engage with this issue. The research outcomes will also contribute to regional and global discussions around practical guidance for incremental improvements in service levels to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.”*

Mitsu Odagiri,
UNICEF Indonesia

The work seeks to understand self-supply water sources in the study areas and at a national and sub-national level as well as providing a regional and country comparison.

The collaborative research process also aims to support improved government capacity in Indonesia and Vanuatu to monitor quality and reliability of non-utility supplied water sources, as well as support skills development amongst university research partners in both countries.

This transdisciplinary research is a collaboration between Water for Women and academia (**Institute for Sustainable Futures - University of Technology, Sydney**, The University of the South Pacific, the University of Indonesia and Universitas Muhammadiyah Metro), government (Bappenas Indonesia and the Department of Water Resources in Vanuatu) and development partners (UNICEF in both countries and at a regional level, and SNV in Indonesia).

The research team will also work closely with local government in all study sites, including Kota Bekasi and Kota Metro in Indonesia.



Australia believes that equitable WASH access is of crucial importance to develop communities. Water for Women and our partners provide innovative solutions to WASH delivery and use research to contribute evidence to the global WASH sector. By working together and building evidence, we can create better, more sustainable WASH outcomes whilst also contributing to strengthened gender equality and inclusion.



Type 1 Awards comprise research that answers critical sector questions and examines emerging challenges and trends. They support research that serves the needs of partner governments, donors, CSOs, international agencies and sector stakeholders.