

PACIFIC GIRL



Pacific Girl is a multi-country program to support adolescent girls in Pacific Island countries achieve their full potential. Evidence shows that 'educated, healthy and skilled adolescent girls will help build a better future, advance social justice, support economic development and combat poverty.'¹ Pacific Girl demonstrates Pacific approaches to supporting adolescent girls and Australia's commitment to focus on their needs, rights and opportunities.

Managed by Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*), the \$4.5 million Pacific Girl program funds projects with selected civil society organisations in Pacific Island countries. These Pacific Girl partners are working to equip adolescent girls to make informed decisions, while engaging with the boys, parents, carers and communities in their lives to build more supportive environments.



Partner	Project
Chuuk Women's Council, Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk)	Young Women's Empowerment Program
Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Fiji	Girls Arise
Equal Playing Field, Papua New Guinea	Safe Schools, Strong Communities
Young Women's Christian Association, Solomon Islands	<i>Girls Rise Up!</i>
Talitha Project, Tonga	My Body! My Rights!
CARE, Vanuatu	'Laef blo mi, vois blo mi'

Pacific Girl has been designed by and for adolescent girls

Pacific Girl recognises the principle of 'nothing about us without us' and seeks to address the underrepresentation of adolescent girls in decisions that affect them. This includes through involving adolescent girls in program design and delivery:

- 220 adolescent girls in six countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) participated in focus group discussions, with some recording their thoughts in the Pacific Girls Speak video.
- 88 people from 16 countries completed an online survey (including 20 under the age of 20).
- 20 adolescent girls from Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu participated in the Pacific Girl design workshop, bringing their priorities and solutions to a wide network of stakeholders (35 people from Australia and Pacific Island countries).

Why work with adolescents?

Young people are 56% of the Pacific population.²



RIGHTS

Pacific girls identified sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to education, climate change and freedom from violence among their priorities. These are now the priorities for Pacific Girl partners working with girls, governments and service providers.



VOICE

Pacific Girl partners are amplifying the voices of adolescent girls, through national advocacy forums and leadership training.



LEARNING

The Pacific Girl regional learning network brings together adolescent girls and organisations who support girls to share their research, encourage advocacy and learn from each other.

¹ 'Accelerating Efforts to Advance the Rights of Adolescent Girls: A Joint UN Statement', United Nations: ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO (2010).

² 'A Measure of the Future', Family Planning International (2009). Of a total Pacific Island country population of around 10 million, about 56% are 24 years of age or less and 37% are believed to be 14 years of age or less. Pacific Girl focuses on adolescent girls aged 10 to 19 years.

Pacific Girl supports civil society in six countries

Chuuk Women's



In the Federated States of Micronesia, Chuuk Women's Council is reaching 150 marginalised girls through a young women's empowerment course. The curriculum focuses on sexual and reproductive health, mental health, healthy relationships and developing future goals.



In Fiji, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement's (FWRM) Girls Arise program is working with girls aged 10–12 to build their life skills and confidence. Pacific Girl is enabling FWRM to extend activities to girls outside of the capital Suva, share the organisation's approach in a toolkit and raise the profile of girls' issues with decision makers.



In Papua New Guinea, Equal Playing Field (EPF) Safe Schools, Strong Communities program seeks to reduce violence by educating girls and boys about the importance of respectful relationships, using sport as an entry point. Pacific Girl assists EPF to reach adolescents in 40 schools (up to 6,000 girls) and work with teachers on establishing Safe Schools Frameworks.



In the Solomon Islands, the *Girls Rise Up!* project, led by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in partnership with CARE International, is reaching 200 at-risk girls to develop their confidence, skills and knowledge and establish supportive peer networks. Girls are provided the opportunity to safely advocate on issues that affect them, while service providers are engaged to support the needs and priorities of the girls.



In Tonga, the Talitha Project's My Body! My Rights! program is reaching 375 girls aged 10–14 in four locations around Tonga, including outer islands. The program will improve community perceptions of girls' value, amplify girls' voices through creative media and train girls on health, sex and sexuality education and self-esteem.



In Vanuatu, CARE's 'Laef blo mi, vois blo mi' program works with girls aged 12–19 in rural and remote areas of Tafea province. Pacific Girl is enabling CARE to extend life skills and respectful relationships education to younger adolescents in schools, including around 800 adolescent girls. The program includes male peers, teachers and families to ensure girls are safe and respected.

Adolescent girls and COVID-19

Pacific Girl partners are working to support the specific needs of adolescent girls as they feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by crises such as COVID-19, facing even higher than normal rates of violence and sexual abuse, loss of income and increases in unpaid domestic work in their homes and communities. The 'Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent girls in the Pacific' Thematic Brief draws on data and information from several sources including the 'Pacific Girl Speak Out: COVID-19 Survey'. The survey includes responses from Pacific girls aged 14–19 about how they are feeling, what they are doing and how they are being affected by the pandemic. In October 2020, a webinar was held to amplify the key concerns of young women and girls while discussing ways to support their increased involvement in response and recovery. For more: www.pacificwomen.org/our-work/initiatives/pacific-girl/

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