

# Formal qualifications for women leaders

Solomon Islands Leadership And Decision-Making

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Project name: Leadership Skills for Women

Project partner: Australia-Pacific Training Coalition

Total funding: \$245,000

Funding timeframe: 2017–2018

Pacific Women has supported 44 women in Solomon Islands to complete internationally-recognised Certificate IV training in leadership and management through the Australia-Pacific Training Coalition. The course was offered in a women-only classroom and aimed to increase the pool of trained mid-level women leaders who are able to have a positive impact in their workplaces.

The course was conducted in the capital, Honiara, and regional centres Auki and Gizo. Using industry-developed competency-based training principles, the course provided participants with leadership and management knowledge, skills and expertise.

Betty Maesua Ramolelea from the National Referral Hospital was one of the students who completed the course. 'I wanted to take the leadership and management course because it helps me and other new leaders in our organisation to improve our leadership styles,' she said. 'I feel that a lot of women need this training because I see gender equity and equality can make a lot of difference in managing our organisations in Solomon Islands.'



Betty Ramolelea (right) and fellow participant Sharon (centre) with Jemma Malcolm, Second Secretary Gender at the Australian High Commission, Honiara, Solomon Islands (left) on the first day of the course. Photo credit: Australia-Pacific Training Coalition.

Ms Ramolelea is now applying her knowledge from the course to her work in the health system. '[I] am liaising with other managers and leaders in our departments, working as a team in planning projects to work on with timeframes,' she said.

The course facilitator supported students to be more confident in leading a team, to confront issues, speak in front of a group, and collectively find solutions to complex problems. Ms Ramolelea said this approach affirmed 'the importance of empowering me as being a female leader in a male dominated country'.

While the qualification is designed to Australian standards, the course is delivered with an emphasis on Solomon Islands leadership and management challenges.

Nancy Manu leads the Catering Unit at Correctional Services of Solomon Islands. She says the training provided a good mixture of theory and practice which she can apply to her own workplace. 'This course I attended makes me feel proud of myself because of the knowledge and skills I have acquired,' she said. 'I have confidence to advise, make reports and any other related matters on administration and also I have a knowledge on innovation or inventing new things at place of work to make improvement or changes.'