

Minister Payne announced Australian support for Pacific Girl investment with YWCA

Solomon Islands

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November 13, 2019



Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, announced that Australia will support the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Solomon Islands to continue its important work empowering at-risk girls. Australia's support will be funded through its Pacific Girl investment.

Minister Payne made the announcement during a visit to the YWCA's Honiara hostel on Wednesday 30 October 2019.

The Pacific Girl program works to encourage girls to develop expanded peer networks to help them feel less isolated, more confident, to learn from each other and to work together to take collective action to advance their interests. It also supports girls with practical training opportunities to gain alternative income generation skills and opportunities; and connects them to essential health and law and justice services.

Minister Payne said adolescent girls in Solomon Islands face many of the same challenges as girls in Australia and other parts of the world.

‘Through the Pacific Girl program, young Solomon Islands girls will be connected with mentors to help develop their skills and build their support networks,’ she said. ‘Mentorship is a valuable way to empower girls to see all that they can be. Through this exchange girls will learn the essential skills they need to navigate the challenges ahead and build a more positive future, not only for themselves but for the whole community.’

The YWCA Pacific Girl project is part of a larger program, working in six Pacific countries over four years. While adolescent girls will be the primary focus, boys, parents and carers, and communities will also be included to promote gender equality and better development outcomes.

During her visit, Minister Payne also met with women leaders from across Solomon Islands’ private sector and government who are paving the way for the next generation of women and girls by encouraging more female workforce participation, including through the ‘Waka Mere Commitment to Action’ program.

Find out more about the Pacific Girl program: <https://pacificwomen.org/stories-of-change/what-is-pacific-girl/>

