

PACIFIC GIRL HIGHLIGHTS 2018-2021



3,100
GIRLS

6
COUNTRIES

6
PARTNERS

\$4.5
MILLION

DESIGNED FOR AND BY GIRLS, PACIFIC GIRL IS THE ONLY REGIONAL PROGRAM IN THE PACIFIC DEDICATED TO ADVANCING THE RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS.

In 2018, through the inaugural Pacific regional dialogue on adolescent girls and gender equality, and series of workshops and focus groups in six countries, more than 220 adolescent girls set the priorities and program design for Pacific Girl.

Through funding and technical support, Pacific Girl supports six partners across the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu to enhance and scale-up their transformative work with girls.

Adolescent girls participating in Pacific Girl partner project activities are increasing their voice and agency and gaining valuable experience, including employment opportunities as young women mentors and community facilitators.

Pacific Girl is also supporting regional learning about what works and what does not work to empower adolescent girls. Through action research and annual meetings, adolescent girls are provided with a space to engage with each other and advocate for changes to how families, communities and governments can better respond to their needs.

Pacific Girl partners now have mechanisms to engage adolescent girls more meaningfully in project delivery as a result of the organisational and technical support provided by the program.

Adolescent girls spoke about the experiences of girls in the Pacific at the 84th Session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Samoa in 2020. Pacific Girl partners Talitha Project (Tonga), Fiji Women's Rights Movement, and Equal Playing Field (Papua New Guinea) collaborated to support adolescent girls to prepare their submissions for the event.

Since 2018, members of CARE Vanuatu's Adolescent Girls Advisory Group (AGAG) have taken up leadership roles in their schools as Prefects, Class Captains and as Head Girl. After graduating high school, a member of the AGAG has successfully applied to become a Community Facilitator with CARE Vanuatu.

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Solomon Islands *Girls Rise Up!* project has trained 50 mentors (including two with disabilities). Young women engaged as mentors report that the project helped them to 'think differently' in terms of differences between culture and safeguarding adolescent girls.

Research on unplanned pregnancy in the Pacific in 2019 found that girls in Chuuk State, Tonga and Vanuatu are missing out on learning about the biology of reproduction, puberty, and how pregnancy occurs, revealing significant educational gaps for girls and young women. The research was supported by *Pacific Women* and Australia's Gender Equality Fund, and conducted by the University of New South Wales in partnership with Pacific Girl partners Talitha Project, Chuuk Women's Council and CARE Vanuatu. As a result of the research, Talitha Project was invited to conduct awareness sessions on topics related to reproduction and menstruation that are still considered taboo, for over 1,200 students in Tongan high schools.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, girls are experiencing disruptions to their education and their access to menstrual hygiene and sexual health services, coupled with increased pressure to undertake more domestic labour and care responsibilities for their families. Through the Pacific Girl Speak Out: COVID-19 Survey, 21 Pacific girls aged 14 to 19 years provided valuable insights into the issues adolescent girls are facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

PROGRAM GOAL

Adolescent girls in the Pacific will have voice and agency and their rights will be increasingly respected and upheld.

To support adolescent girls in Pacific Island countries to achieve their full potential, Pacific Girl has been designed by and for girls as a multi-country initiative. It is funded through an AUD 4.5 million investment by the Australian Government and supports six partners across six Pacific Island countries. The Pacific Girl program team provides dedicated resources and technical expertise to partners to accelerate the impact of their work and share the learning across the region.

KEY ISSUES

Global evidence and the 2018 Pacific Girl design identified the following key issues as limiting the potential of adolescent girls:

1. Self-esteem, agency and voice.
2. Discriminatory social and cultural norms.
3. Access to education, employment, and information and communications technology (ICT).
4. Access to health information, education and services.
5. Gender-based violence, coercion and exploitation.
6. Climate change and natural disasters.

Will reach
9,000
adolescent girls and boys

6
Civil Society Partners

6
Countries



Make and share your own avatar with the "Pacific Girl Maker":
https://picrew.me/image_maker/1229720

PACIFIC GIRL HAS REACHED 3,138 GIRLS SINCE 2019*

1,817 girls had formal opportunities to share ideas and learn from each other from July 2019 to June 2021.

1,183 girls participated in advocacy activities at sub-national, national and regional levels from July 2019 to June 2021.

138 girls were supported to take on leadership roles at the community, provincial and national levels.

17 advocacy initiatives were undertaken by adolescent girls at sub-national, national and regional levels from July 2019 to June 2021.

6 girls with disabilities were supported to participate in advocacy activities and virtual forums in COVID-19 pivot responses in 2020.

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

HERSTORIES: A PROGRAM DESIGNED FOR GIRLS, BY GIRLS

Adolescent girls who participate in Pacific Girl partner projects are also taking up the challenge to build a better world by leading and directing their programs as mentors and facilitators in their communities.

I STARTED AS A COMMUNITY FACILITATOR WITH LITTLE KNOWLEDGE ON GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES. I HAVE BEEN PRACTISING WHAT I AM LEARNING THROUGH THE VOIS BLO MI PROJECT... I AM HAPPY ABOUT THE CHANGE I SEE IN MY FAMILY AND MYSELF. I CAN ALREADY IMAGINE HOW IT COULD BE FOR MY OTHER FRIENDS AND THE ADOLESCENTS WE HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH.

Young woman Community Facilitator,
CARE Vanuatu.



Jayrene Engichy Chuuk, FSM



Starting as a volunteer on the front desk at Chuuk Women's Council (CWC), Jayrene rose to the challenge to become a facilitator for the Young Women's Empowerment Program (YWEP). She is inspired by the CWC President, Christina 'Kiki' Stinnett, and her colleagues. Jayrene's main motivation is working with the girls in the program to help them learn, as well as improving her own skills.

Pacific Girl has taught Jayrene how to improve the YWEP by listening to girls. She now asks what they need and how they want to learn, so that the program is relevant and effective for the girls, and in turn the CWC as a whole.

I FEEL LIKE IT (PACIFIC GIRL) HELPS ME, HELPS CHUUK WOMEN'S COUNCIL MAINTAIN WHERE WE ARE GOING AND HOW WE ARE GOING TO GET THERE.

After six years of participating in FWRM GIRLS activities, Roselyn interned with the FWRM's Intergenerational Women in Leadership Programme team in 2020. She now mentors girls in the FWRM GIRLS program, and helps set up and facilitate sessions.

She is inspired by the strong women she works with and her two older sisters.

From the start, Roselyn's family was supportive and gave her the opportunity to learn more about her rights and responsibilities as a girl and build her confidence and self-esteem. She has appreciated learning different ways of life and problems that were unknown to her through meeting prominent and older people, girls from other Pacific Islands, and rural communities.

I FEEL IT'S VERY IMPORTANT (TO HAVE PROGRAMS LIKE FWRM AND PACIFIC GIRL) BECAUSE...THEY PROVIDE GIRLS THE PLATFORM TO GROW, TO FIND A SELF-WORTH, AND ALSO TO BUILD UP THEIR SELF-ESTEEM AND JUST APPRECIATE WHO THEY ARE.

Roselyn Sidal Fiji



Claudia Robert
Papua New Guinea



Claudia joined the Equal Playing Field (EPF) program after her big sister, who was also a graduate of EPF, encouraged her to take part so she could learn.

Attending Pacific Girl partner events enabled Claudia to experience new ideas and make new friends in Papua New Guinea and from other countries in the Pacific. This has motivated her to be a more empathetic and positive influence in her community.

For Claudia, programs like this have had a big impact on her. She would like to see programs like EPF run throughout Papua New Guinea. She encourages young girls to join and improve their situation now and in the future, resist peer pressure, and surround themselves with a supportive environment and good friends.

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE GIRLS IN THE COMMUNITIES LIVING PEACEFULLY. I SEE A LOT OF VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA. SO I WANT CHANGE FOR THEM.

Some months after joining the YWCA Solomon Islands' *Girls Rise Up!* project, Larisha was offered the opportunity to become a youth mentor. She is inspired by the change she sees in her life and for other girls involved in the YWCA.

Larisha believes it is important to provide girls in the Solomon Islands with opportunities to speak about and share their problems and challenges in life and find solutions to their own problems.

MY VISION FOR THE FUTURE IS FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TO BE LEADERS AND I WANT TO SEE THE GOVERNMENT TO BE MORE ACTIVE ON THE LAWS THEY SET FOR WOMEN, LIKE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Larisha Temangutaua
Solomon Islands



'Ana Malia Falemaka
Tonga



'Ana Malia first became involved with the Talitha Project four years ago when she attended an empowerment camp with her friends. Since then, she has also become a mentor for girls in Tonga. Knowing she could help make a change in her world was a great motivator. 'Ana Malia actively participated in the design of Pacific Girl, travelling to Fiji and meeting girls from other Pacific Island countries.

She appreciates the platform Talitha Project provides for girls to highlight the issues they face.

Her advice to girls in Tonga, as well as in the Pacific, is to express their opinions and to be the change they wish to see in society.

MY VISION FOR THE FUTURE IS TO SEE A TONGA WHERE GIRLS FEEL SAFE AND SECURE, TO SEE A PLACE THAT GIRLS FEEL FREE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WITHOUT THE FEAR OF GOING AGAINST OUR CULTURAL BELIEFS AND OUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

When Rachel participated in a CARE Vanuatu young women's leadership program in her community in Tanna, it inspired her to want to step up and speak for her friends. She then became a member of the program's Adolescent Girls Advisory Group and is now a Community Facilitator.

Rachel was drawn to the way the program was delivered and its content and messages for girls. She wants to share what she has learnt and build the confidence of girls. Now she talks in schools and in communities on healthy relationships and how girls can make good decisions.

I SEE MYSELF AS A FEMALE LEADER IN MY COMMUNITY TO ENABLE THE SUPPORT TO REACH ADOLESCENT GIRLS. I WANT PROGRAMS LIKE PACIFIC GIRL TO CONTINUE IN TANNA, AND IN MY COUNTRY VANUATU, SO THAT I CAN CONTINUE IN MY WORK AS A LEADER TO CONTINUE TO EMPOWER ADOLESCENT GIRLS ACROSS OTHER COMMUNITIES.

Rachel Lume
Vanuatu



GIRLS IN THE PACIFIC

Young people account for more than half of the Pacific population.¹ Their experiences and identities are diverse, and they are spread across urban, remote and small island states within the world's largest ocean.

The larger Pacific Island countries face high population growth, growing urban inequalities, and weak distribution of benefits from resource-led development. In the small island states of the North Pacific, geographical remoteness from major markets, population pressure on limited land resources, overfishing, environmental damage, and the threats of climate change, all impact on the prospects for young people to earn a decent living. Countries like Samoa and Tonga face similar resource constraints, providing a narrow set of future economic options for the fast expanding younger generation.²

Global evidence shows 'educated, healthy and skilled adolescent girls will help build a better future, advance social justice, support economic development and combat poverty'.³

ONLY A FEW GIRLS HAVE THE ADVANTAGE TO COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES BECAUSE THEIR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS ARE VERY SUPPORTIVE IN INVESTING IN THEIR EDUCATION.

Adolescent girl,
Papua New Guinea

- 1 Family Planning International. (2009). *A measure of the future*. 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.
- 2 UNICEF Pacific. (2011). *State of Pacific youth report*.
- 3 United Nations: ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, & WHO. (2010). *Accelerating efforts to advance the rights of adolescent girls: A joint UN statement*.

PROGRAM LEARNING: WHAT WORKS TO ENGAGE ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN THE PACIFIC?

- ▶ **Build and maintain an ecosystem that supports girls' participation by working with their parents and community.** Pacific Girl partners found community outreach visits, conducting introductory sessions with parents, and inviting communities to participate in girl-led events, are effective ways to engage families, communities, and leaders to explain what their projects are about, and to provide a space for girls to showcase their leadership.
- ▶ **Provide safe and dedicated spaces, and tailor project activities to meet the needs, interests, abilities, and ages of girls.** Pacific Girl partners found that combining creative approaches such as dance, drama and music with knowledge building sessions keep adolescent girls engaged and build their confidence.
- ▶ **Provide pathways and support girls to transition from learners to leaders.** Pacific Girl and its partners have demonstrated that girls can reach their potential with dedicated support and opportunities for ongoing engagement with projects. Girls have moved from learners to advisory group members, mentors, activity facilitators and project coordinators, through dedicated and ongoing support from partners.

I HAD TO REALLY DIVE INTO UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF DISABILITY...TO LEARN HOW TO ADAPT MY LESSONS 'FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS' TO EACH ABILITY. REALISING ALL THIS WAS A BIG LESSON LEARNED FOR ME.

Coordinator, CWC YWEP.

MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN FOR GIRLS

Supporting personal and collective Empowerment

Working to change structure and systems

Transforming power relations and social norms

Pacific Girl partners work with families, peers, schools, health systems and staff, churches and other religious groups, chiefs and community leaders, and local, sub-national and national governments to change structures and systems that discriminate against adolescent girls. Working with these actors, systems and structures, including providing opportunities for girls to have their own say in their lives and what would make them better, has led to many of the achievements of Pacific Girl since 2018.



OUTCOME 1

Adolescent girls' interests and priorities are becoming more visible in decision making



Pacific Girl has supported an estimated 1,183* adolescent girls to undertake advocacy activities at sub-national, national, and regional levels.

Pacific Girl partners work with government and other agencies to strengthen policies and programs to better respond to the needs and priorities of adolescent girls. The YWCA Solomon Islands is working with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs to improve policies related to adolescent girls and with the Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association and Ministry of Health on sexual and reproductive health and rights advocacy. The CWC YWEP has increased advocacy work with community, municipal and state leaders. In 2020, CWC presented at a leadership summit and encouraged leaders to advocate for the interests of girls in Chuuk.

Adolescent girl leaders have also informed Pacific Girl partners' programming. The validation of the 'Laef blo mi, vois blo mi' toolkits and materials by CARE Vanuatu's Adolescent Girl's Advisory Group ensured the project is guided by the girls.



WE ARE THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD. IF YOU ARE DISCUSSING THE FUTURE, I THINK OUR OPINIONS ARE VERY MUCH NEEDED.

Young woman mentor,
Talitha Project.





OUTCOME 2

Adolescent girls have increased agency (knowledge, skills, and voice)

Since 2018, an estimated 1,817* girls have had opportunities to share ideas and learn from each other by engaging in Pacific Girl activities. Girls have gained leadership skills and experience by participating in public forums and meetings, including Girls' Advisory Groups and School Action Groups.

The YWEP training workshops engaged 165 Chuukese girls aged between 10 and 19 years, including 5 girls with disability and 5 identifying as LGBTQI, between 2019 and 2021. Girls explored topics such as reproductive and sexual health, and violence against women, topics which are often not taught in schools or discussed at home. The FWRM GIRLS Forum held as a virtual event in 2020 was the first of its kind in Fiji. Approximately 50 girls attended and the Forum Working Group included representatives from all three FWRM GIRLS program cohorts. The forum theme 'GIRLS SPEAK OUT' focused on Safety and Security, Quality Education and Access to Information.



THAT IS WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT BEING PART OF THE SPACE, WE JUST KEEP LEARNING AND GROWING.

Adolescent girl participant, Girls Arise program and GIRLS Forum Working Group, Fiji Women's Rights Movement.



OUTCOME 3

Adolescent girls are increasingly respected and valued by communities and stakeholders

Community outreach, and training mentors, teachers and health workers, have helped increase support for girls' participation and leadership. The YWCA Solomon Islands, CARE Vanuatu, Talitha Project, CWC and FWRM expanded their community outreach to community and church leaders, and families, to increase their knowledge of the projects and seek their support for girls to participate in project activities.

The YWCA Solomon Islands *Girls Rise Up!* Project's recruitment and training of mentors living in the same communities as the participating girls has increased parents' understanding of project aims and support for their daughters' participation in the project. Girls report that their parents have become more supportive of their participation following mentors' engagement with their parents in their home and communities.

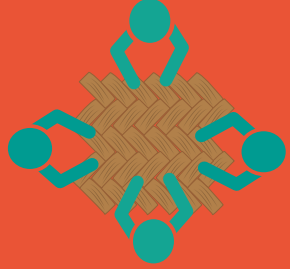
Inclusion of parents in the first three modules of the FWRM GIRLS Arise program has increased their understanding of the program and support for their daughters' attendance. Girls participating in Talitha Project's activities have led community and school-based activities to create a more cyber-safe community for girls.



I LEARNED THAT MEN AND BOYS NEED TO TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR ACTIONS AND THINK ABOUT HOW THEY ARE TREATING GIRLS, WHO ALSO HAVE RIGHTS.

Adolescent boy participant, CARE Vanuatu in-school program.





OUTCOME 4

Adolescent girl programming in the Pacific is connected, strengthened and informed by the interests and priorities of Pacific girls

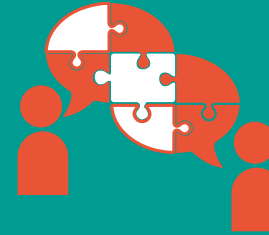
Adolescent girls have influenced Pacific Girl design and programming. Nine adolescent girls from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu attended the regional Pacific Girls Speak Out and *Pawa Toktok* during the Pacific Girl Inception Workshop in 2019. At the *Pawa Toktok*, girls presented on issues that affect them and facilitated a session on effective strategies for engaging adolescent girls for the Pacific Girl Learning Network meeting.

Young women graduates have provided support to existing projects and contributed to the design of new programs. The learning from the CARE Vanuatu and FWRM Girls' Advisory groups influenced the development of similar girl-led leadership groups by Tongan and Solomon Islands project partners.

Partners have strengthened their protection and safeguarding of girls and strengthened their disability-inclusive practices. EPF has increased its training for schools in safeguarding and child protection and in 2021 received an Instrument of Authorisation from the Department of Education providing it with the capacity to investigate and report teachers.

I AM SO THANKFUL FOR THE SPACE TO RAISE OUR CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES. I FEEL RELIEVED THAT I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE FACING THESE THINGS AND I CAN SHARE MY IDEAS TO HELP MYSELF AND OTHER SISTERS.

Adolescent girl participant
in CARE Vanuatu's Participatory Action Research.



OUTCOME 5

Evidence is built and shared on effective gender transformative programming for adolescent girls in the Pacific

Since 2018, Pacific Girl has provided technical support and grant funding to partners to undertake action research and develop resources that promote continuous improvement and strengthen gender transformative practice within projects and within education, health and government systems. Pacific Girl learning events across the region provide partners and stakeholders with opportunities to improve adolescent girl programs by sharing knowledge and exploring approaches and practices that empower girls.

The YWCA Solomon Islands Rise Up! and Umi Gro Leadership toolkits are used to train mentors and equip them with skills to engage with adolescent girls in transformative ways. The FWRM GIRLS Arise program toolkit is a flexible programming guide to working with diverse adolescent girls. CARE Vanuatu has developed comprehensive curricula for schools and health services with its '*Vois Blo Mi*' Adolescent Girl Toolkit, Adolescent Boy Toolkit, Teachers' and Health Workers' manuals. EPF developed a toolkit to support its 8-week Respectful Relationships module and a peer educator toolkit for young leaders.

WE WERE VERY HAPPY TO MEET THE OTHER ADOLESCENT GIRLS...AND HEAR ABOUT THEIR PROJECT. WE CAN NOW FEEL CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE PART OF A BIGGER TEAM AND ARE ALL ENCOURAGING EACH OTHER TO STAND UP AND SPEAK OUT.

'Laef blo mi, vois blo mi' project participant,
CARE Vanuatu

PACIFIC GIRL JOURNEY

2018

FEBRUARY

Pacific Girl design started.



Pacific Girls Speak video developed as part of the Pacific Girl design process.



MAY

The Pacific's first regional dialogue dedicated to adolescent girls and gender equality was hosted in Fiji and brought together 40 stakeholders, including adolescent girls, from across the region to discuss barriers girls experience.

Through the regional dialogue and a series of workshops and discussions in six countries, more than 220 adolescent girls set the priorities and program design for Pacific Girl.

JUNE

Pacific Girl Plan finalised.

2019

MAY

Grants of approximately AUD 3.1 million awarded to six partners: CWC, FWRM, EPF, Talitha Project, CARE Vanuatu, and YWCA Solomon Islands.

Girls Pawa Toktok: meeting with adolescent girls from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu to reflect and share their experiences and challenges

OCTOBER

Pacific Girl Inception Workshop held 21–25 October 2019 in Suva, Fiji. The 70+ participants – adolescent girls, partners, and the program team – learned about partner projects, discussed experiences and challenges, and shared what does and doesn't work to empower adolescent girls in the region.

Pacific Girl Learning Network meeting: regional network established for stakeholders to share and learn about supporting adolescent girls' agency.



Partners Meeting: the six Pacific Girl partners from Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu discussed their programming priorities and strategies.

2020

MARCH

FWRM, EPF and Talitha Project collaborated on a statement and girl-led side event of the 84th Session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Samoa.

OCTOBER

'Pacific Girls and COVID-19' webinar was held and featured three panellists from Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Australia, exploring the impacts of the pandemic on adolescent girls in the region and the importance of listening to girls and young women to develop effective COVID-19 responses.



Pacific Girls and COVID-19 video highlights issues experienced by girls from Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, during and after the pandemic.

2021

MAY-JUNE

A series of meetings held with adolescent girls from the six Pacific Girl partner countries, culminating in the 'Girls Agency: the Pacific Girl Journey' regional panel discussion led by girls, for girls on 2 June. Girls shared their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic with members of the Pacific Girl Learning Network.



OCTOBER

Pacific Girl social media went live



ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND COVID-19

Across the Pacific, COVID-19 has disrupted girls' learning; increased anxiety and loneliness; the increased burden of care on girls; affected their access to menstrual hygiene and sexual health services; and has the potential to significantly increase the risk of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and child labour.

Pacific Girl partners adapted and used the opportunity to engage government agencies and address the challenges raised by COVID-19. FWRM and CWC conducted community surveys to assess the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on adolescent girls. As a result of financial pressures on many at-risk adolescent girls and women from COVID-19, the YWCA Solomon Islands Board reduced rent for rooms in their hostel, which led to more girls and women residing at the hostel.

Following the 'Pacific Girls Speak Out: COVID-19 Survey' in June 2020, Pacific Girl hosted the 'COVID-19 and Pacific girls' webinar in October 2020. This further amplified the key concerns of young women and girls and discussed ways to support their increased involvement in response and recovery.

LOOKING AHEAD

At the 14th Triennial Conference for Pacific Women in April 2021, Australia announced the Pacific Women Lead program. This program will increase Australia's support to gender equality in the Pacific, with AUD 170 million over five years. It will be delivered with Pacific partners, including the Pacific Community (SPC), and women-led civil society organisations. Pacific Women Lead will target women's leadership and women's rights, including safety, health, and economic empowerment.

Since the new program has been announced, the Pacific Girl program team and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) have been working to ensure a smooth transition for partners to SPC, who will be hosting Pacific Women Lead.

Pacific Girl will remain a key program demonstrating Australia's commitment to advancing gender equality in the region and working with regional, national and community partners to support women and girls. It is also an important shared priority that will assist the region's COVID-19 response and recovery. Pacific Girl will build on existing achievements, continue to disseminate program learning and support Pacific Girl partners in their transformative work with adolescent girls in the region.

PACIFIC GIRL PARTNERS



In the Federated States of Micronesia, Chuuk Women's Council is reaching marginalised girls through a young women's empowerment course. With the support of Pacific Girl, the **Young Women's Empowerment Program (YWEP)** aims to build the knowledge of 150 marginalised girls, aged 12–17 years, about sexual and mental health, healthy relationships and developing future goals.



In Fiji, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) **Girls Arise program** is working with girls aged 10–12 years 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, the 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. The project works with youth facilitators known as 'Changemakers' in school and university action groups.



In the Solomon Islands, the **Girls Rise Up! project**, led by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in partnership with CARE Australia, is reaching 200 at-risk girls to develop their confidence, skills and knowledge, and to establish supportive peer networks. Girls are provided with opportunities 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 girls aged 10–14 years 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, and on key issues including climate change, disaster response, and cyberbullying.



In Vanuatu, the CARE '**Laef blo mi, vois blo mi**' program works with girls aged 12–19 years 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.



Imagine an adolescent or teenage girl standing at the fork of a road. One branch will make it more likely that she can fulfill her potential and realize her aspirations. The other branch, however, makes it so much harder and multiplies the risks she may face: child marriage and other harmful practices, dropping out of school, early and unwanted pregnancies, violence and abuse, informal employment, a hostile home environment, and an insecure old age. 'Pacific Girl' is an outstanding initiative at a right time to reinforce Pacific girls' rights to a safe childhood, to decide for themselves, and to education and skills – in short, their right to the future they want.

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MERESEINI VUNIWAQA

FORMER FIJI MINISTER FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN,
AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION.

*All figures in this highlights booklet rely on validity of data provided by partners and projects.

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Pacific Girl has increased the rights and opportunities of over 3,100 adolescent girls across the Pacific through an AUD 4.5 million Australian Government commitment since 2018.

Designed by and for girls, Pacific Girl is the only regional program dedicated to supporting adolescent girls in the Pacific to achieve their full potential.

Providing grant funding, technical support, and cross-regional learning and networking, Pacific Girl has six partners in the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu. These partners equip adolescent girls with knowledge, skills and opportunities to help them make informed decisions. They also work with boys, parents, and communities to help build an ecosystem that supports girls' participation and action for adolescent girls.

To ensure girls could continue to participate in program activities and access services safely, Pacific Girl partners have adapted during COVID-19. Adolescent girls have been supported to raise their issues and concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on girls and women in the Pacific.