

Young women pursuing their leadership goals

Vanuatu [Leadership And Decision-Making](#)

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Project name: Gender Equality Together: Strengthening Women’s Rights in Vanuatu Project

Project partner: CARE Vanuatu

Total funding: \$1,000,000

Funding timeframe: 2017–2018

After finishing Year 8, Jessica Philimon, 16, was forced to drop out of school when hard times fell on her family. Even so, she continued to look for opportunities to grow. With the support of CARE Vanuatu’s Young Women’s Leadership Program, she has developed leadership goals and had the opportunity to speak about the needs of Pacific girls in an international forum.

Ms Philimon is one of 24 adolescents and young women participating in CARE Vanuatu’s pilot project, which is taking a new approach to developing the skills and confidence of young women leaders in Vanuatu. Participants attend workshops to build knowledge about gender equality and gender-based violence. They also develop skills such as public speaking, negotiation and team work, proposal and report writing and using social media for mobilising community action. As part of the project, each young woman is paired with a mentor who has experience in a leadership role and is keen to help the next generation of young women to become leaders.

The Young Women’s Leadership Program was launched on 30 November 2017 at the closing of the Post-13th Triennial Conference Gender Equality Forum. This timing helped to raise the profile of the project and capitalise on the momentum generated during the Triennial Conference.



Guilaine Naudi (left) with two other participants during a facilitation workshop in the Young Women's Leadership Program. Photo credit: CARE Vanuatu.

As part of the project, Ms Philimon was one of five young ni-Vanuatu women who travelled to Fiji to contribute to the Pacific Girl Regional Stakeholders' Dialogue in May 2018.

'It was my first time to ever travel abroad and I know the outcome of the meeting will help meet the needs of adolescent girls like myself and other young girls in my community,' said Ms Philimon. 'I was able to give presentations at the regional meeting because of the workshop on facilitation skills that I attended earlier this year with the Young Women's Leadership Program.'

The Young Women's Leadership Program is one component of CARE Vanuatu's two-year Gender Equality Together project. Gender Equality Together seeks to strengthen the collective leadership, capacity and coordination of civil society and government partners in Vanuatu, to more effectively promote gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls.