

## Pacific WASH Webinars



### Event details:

## Mainstreaming Gender in WASH: Practical tools and tips

18 August 2021

### Presenters:

- **Lusia Sefo-Leau**  
CEO, Pacific Water and Wastewater Association
- **Kate Walton**  
ADB Gender and Development Specialist (Consultant)
- **Georgina Hou**  
WASH National Officer, Solomon Water

### Participants:

- Butterfly Trust – Vanuatu
- Engineers Without Borders
- Institute of Sustainable Futures
- Kwajalein Atoll Joint Utilities Resources
- Manning Laef – Vanuatu
- Ministry of Infrastructure, Utilities and Transport (Niue)
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (Kiribati)
- Nauru Utilities Corporation
- Pacific Water and Wastewater Association
- Pohnpei Utilities Corporation
- Samoa Water Authority
- Solomon Water Authority
- Southern Yap Water Authority
- Water Authority of Fiji
- Water PNG

Event recording and resources available [here](#).

*Worldwide, women, girls and third gender people play a critical role in managing and safeguarding water and bear the burden of collecting water and managing hygiene and sanitation for households. In the Pacific, women and girls in 8 out of 10 households are responsible for off-site water collection. Yet, women and socially marginalized groups are often not considered in the development of WASH services and facilities, despite this pivotal role. This ADB WASH webinar considered the practice of gender mainstreaming in the Pacific, challenges and opportunities to improve WASH outcomes and practical examples of gender mainstreaming in action.*

### Workshop Overview

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been active in supporting gender mainstreaming across the Pacific. In August 2021, this virtual workshop, in association with the Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWAA) was attended by 50 participants from 9 countries across the Pacific region. The workshop provided an overview of gender equality in national and regional commitments, female participation rates in decision making, gender-inclusive WASH management and design, short-term and long-term benefits of gender mainstreaming, and case studies promoting equality. The workshop included a case study from Solomon Water.

### The workshop responded to these key questions:

- ❖ Why is gender mainstreaming important?
- ❖ What is the process to achieve a gender focus in WASH practices?
- ❖ Why is gender-disaggregated data important to improve WASH practices?
- ❖ What are the best examples of gender mainstreaming in WASH?
- ❖ How should we talk about gender mainstreaming to improve



## Workshop Outputs

### Presentation Topics

The 4 stage gender design process included examples of i) global gender WASH practices, ii) guidelines to gather gender data (including qualitative data), iii) sanitation and menstrual health practices in schools, and iv) engagement practices to promote gender-positive outcomes.



- 1. Facilitate participation and inclusion**
  - Actively involve all genders in improving their WASH situation
- 2. Focus on how decisions are made**
  - Use decision-making processes that enable active involvement of all genders
- 3. See and value differences**
  - Recognise, understand and value different work, skills and concerns of different genders
- 4. Create opportunities**
  - Provide space for all genders to experience and share roles and responsibilities

### Case study and online surveys

Solomon Water's national WASH officer provided insights into the organization's approach to gender mainstreaming. This presentation included approaches to **internal workforce practices** including the promotion of women to leadership positions and training women for technical and engineering roles. **External gender mainstreaming processes** include community engagement via training, distribution of menstrual health products at community events and community partnerships with women's groups to promote good gender practices. Participants were invited to take part in online polls and surveys providing insights into **how gender mainstreaming is perceived, common obstacles to gender mainstreaming, ways to increase gender participation and preferences for gender mainstreaming activities.**

## Learning Snapshots

- There is no 'one size fits all' solution to gender mainstreaming.** It is an on-going process which requires adaptation to specific environments and challenges to achieve gender equality.
- Qualitative data on gender practices is a valuable source of information.** While quantitative data is the basis of reporting and evaluation, qualitative data can provide rich and deep knowledge on the effectiveness and impact of gender activities and their outcomes.
- Engaging early helps to design gender practices in collaboration with specific gender groups.** Rather than assuming that WASH facilities will be used in the same way by everyone, early engagement and active involvement in decision-making will assist in designing WASH facilities to suit specific needs.
- Supporting girls' menstrual health will support their attendance at school.** Toilet design, incinerators, awareness training for boys and access to menstrual health products provide the environment to normalize menstrual health and improve girls school attendance rates.
- Sharing knowledge and 'learning by doing'.** Gender mainstreaming is a continual process of learning to test, review and evaluate what works in different environments.

## Upcoming Events

To register for the upcoming 2021 webinar topics, please contact: [lfernando@adb.org](mailto:lfernando@adb.org)

Topic	Date
Non-revenue water	September
Organisational culture	October

ADB continues to support water service providers in the region to build resilience, capacity and knowledge to manage threats in our changing world.