

EVENT SNAPSHOT

EVENT DETAILS

Pacific utilities enabling WASH services in peri-urban areas

17 August 2022

Speakers

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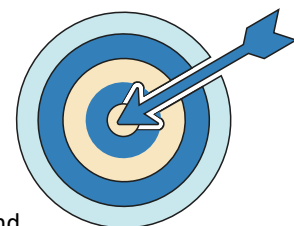
WASH Expert, ADB-Solomon Water Project Consultant

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

Access to water and sanitation services is vital to support the growth, development and well-being of Pacific communities. Rapid urbanization in the Pacific has led to expansion of informal settlements and haphazard urban development. In dense and overcrowded peri-urban communities, WASH services are often inadequate to meet daily needs and maintain health and dignity. Utilities play a crucial role in supporting peri-urban communities to access water and wastewater services and improve hygiene awareness.

Webinar Overview

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is actively supporting water utilities in the Pacific to improve WASH facilities in peri-urban regions. In August 2022, ADB, in association with the Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA), hosted an online discussion about the challenges of peri-urban WASH service provision, highlighting current WASH initiatives from Fiji and Solomon Islands. The event was attended by approximately 70 participants from 12 Pacific countries, including representatives from eight Pacific water utilities.

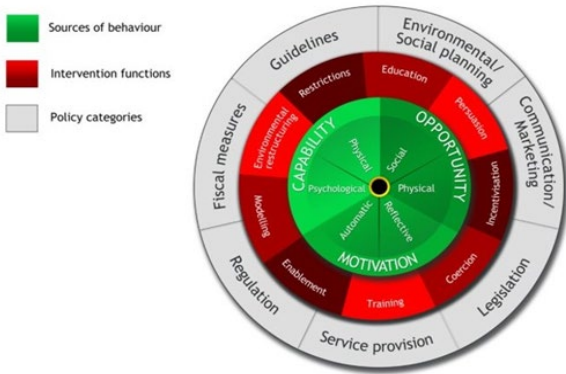


The webinar explored several key topics:

- Practical strategies adopted by Pacific water utilities to increase WASH services in under-served areas
- WASH case studies from Fiji and Solomon Islands
- New models of investment to enable households to improve sanitation facilities
- Use of community-centered design approaches to upgrade sanitation systems
- Coordination between utilities, NGOs, and community leaders to achieve improved WASH outcomes.



In Fiji, WAF works closely with rural and remote communities. (Photo: Vasiti Seruvatu.)



Michie S, Atkins L, West R. (2014) *The Behaviour Change Wheel: A Guide to Designing Interventions*.

<http://www.behaviourchangewheel.com/>

Solomon Water is currently preparing to trial an innovative sanitation investment scheme in greater Honiara. The pilot study targets six settlements with limited sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Eligible households will access small loans to purchase and install sanitation packages ranging from simple slab latrines, pour flush latrines to flushing toilets. The loans are offered on a no interest, no advance fee basis with payment due after 24 months from receipt of materials. Both new and existing Solomon Water customers can access the loans; repayments are added onto their water bills.

The scheme is intended to support development of the sanitation sector and includes training local plumbers and community craftsmen, sourcing materials packages from local suppliers, and an operational manual.

- *“In Fiji, people with disabilities struggle with hygiene.”*
—Vasiti Seruvatu, ADB National Consultant, Fiji.

In many rural and remote communities, people with disabilities are significantly disadvantaged when accessing WASH facilities. Designing facilities with reference to disability standards including ramps, lighting, handrails and toilet heights can significantly improve health, dignity and well-being outcomes for disabled communities across the Pacific.

Case Study: Fiji

In Fiji, the Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) has an active program of engagement to improve WASH practices at household level and to install handwashing stations in public places, with a particular focus on people with disabilities. Commenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, the community-based WASH program is improving facilities in seven villages and six informal settlements in Tailevu and Rewa Provinces. Collaborating closely with community leaders, WAF and ADB have identified the barriers to good handwashing practices using a rapid needs assessment survey. Over 200 residents responded to the survey which found common barriers like lack of handwashing facilities and soap, limited WASH facilities for people with disabilities, lack of household or community water storage, limited hygiene knowledge and inactive community-based Water Committees particularly in informal settlements. The findings have led to several new water and sanitation projects to be progressively rolled out during 2022–2023.

Case study: Solomon Water

Solomon Water’s WASH program has four components designed to improve access to water supply in informal areas, improve sanitation, hygiene awareness and education and WASH in Schools. The program focuses on vulnerable households in Honiara and provincial urban settlements. Live and Learn Environment Education is supporting Solomon Water’s hygiene awareness and education program via data-driven handwashing campaigns, while Plan International is engaged in sanitation sector assessment to plan and develop affordable and sustainable household sanitation options.

Learning Snapshots

Collecting data to benchmark and monitor WASH behavior is key to achieving good WASH outcomes. Using community data, barriers to good hygiene practices can be measured and ground-truthed, leading to targeted and effective education and promotion campaigns. The 6-step behavior change wheel is a planning tool to determine the most effective levers to encourage and maintain good hygiene practices, specific to individual communities.

Upcoming Events



To register your interest in attending upcoming events please contact: llfernando@adb.org.

Past ADB Pacific WASH webinars can be accessed here: [Pacific WASH Webinars](#)

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