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PRIF Week 2022
Empowering Gender Equality & Social Inclusion in Infrastructure
By Ruth Ramoifuila
About Solomon Water (SW)

• State Owned Enterprise (SOE)
• We provide municipal water and wastewater services in Honiara, and municipal water services in the provincial urban centers of Auki, Noro and Tulagi, with plans to expand to Gizo and Munda.
• Customer base: 14,000+ (domestic and commercial customers)
• Workforce: 200+ in operations, projects, finance and corporate service divisions.
Our Vision: “Safe water for a healthy nation”.

Our Mission: “To provide reliable and safe water supply and sewerage services within our area of operations in Solomon Islands, while working in partnership with the community to plan, deliver and operate infrastructure in a manner that seeks to minimise the social and environmental impacts of our activities”.
THE SOLOMON WATER WAY

- Be on Time
- We respect and support each other
  - Make Fair Decisions
  - Acknowledge good work
- Speak out against bad behaviours
- Follow rules, procedures & guidelines
- Work hard to deliver great results
- Strive to achieve customer expectations
- Plan ahead
Waka Mere Program

- Funded by the Solomon Islands Government, the Australian Government, the New Zealand Government, IFC and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce.
- Purpose: To improve business outcomes in Solomon Islands through advancing workplace gender equality.
- Commitment to Action
  - Promoting women in leadership
  - Building respectful and supportive workplaces
  - Increasing women’s opportunities in jobs traditionally held by men
GESI IN SW

• Recruitment.
  – SW also has national and international social safeguards/gender consultants.
  – Diversity in recruitment – for disabled, minority, and young people.

• Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project (UWSSSP)
  – Construction Environment and Social Management Plan obligations (Contractor): Bidding documents stipulate 20% of local workforce shall be female; equal pay for equal work; guidelines on labour standards; training & codes of conduct.

• UWSSSP contd
  – Gender Action Plan (GAP)
  • Staff training in gender equality, prevention of gender based violence, harassment, and STI/HIV – for all staff at all levels.

• Community Engagement
  – UWSSSP Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
  – Women’s participation – monitored in all consultations
  – Focus group discussions include women-only groups
WASH for Vulnerable Communities
- Expanding SW water network system to informal settlements in Honiara and provincial centres.
- Informal settlement households exempted from usual requirement to provide land titles and IDs.
- Low income earners given special payment plans, so connections and service fees can be paid in installments. Policy is designed to make access to water possible for all households regardless of poverty and unemployment status.

Hygiene promotion and WASH awareness Project
- Implements gender-sensitive hygiene and sanitation interventions to six informal communities in Honiara. Includes menstrual hygiene management. Targets are youth groups, schools, and vulnerable groups.
- Implemented by Plan International and Live and Learn Solomon Islands.

Provincial WASH Project
- Water infrastructure upgrade and rehabilitation in urban areas in the provinces.
Women Employees in SW

Promoting Women in Leadership

- Total number of women employed by Solomon Water: 50 out of 228 employees

By levels
- Total Number of Women Team Leaders: 7
- Total Number of Women Coordinators: 4
- Total Number of Women in Executive Leadership Positions: 1

By roles
- Total Number of Women in technical positions: 8
- Total number of Women office based: 42
- Increased women workplace: 2017 – 21% & 2022 – 22%
The Future: GESI in the water utility sector

• Assess Solomon Water’s current GESI situation and build on our lessons learnt.
• Encourage gender diversity and social inclusion in recruitment.
• Research GESI best practices in other water utilities in the Pacific and beyond.
Tagio tumas for listening