



NEWSLETTER

Rural Water Supply, Sanitation & Hygiene

December 2020



2020 has been a very challenging year. The global COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of life and the RWASH Program and sector is no exception. Much of our time and staff were and are still engaged in COVID-19 related activities such as quarantine inspections.

On the contrary, sanitation and hand hygiene has been more important than ever, as it is one of the key ways to prevent COVID 19 from spreading. To ensure that people have access to clean water, the RWASH Program did not slow down its implementation of its projects but went ahead as always. In addition, COVID-19 awareness was ramped up by our sector partners as well.

The RWASH Program wishes to thank two of its advisers who have now completed their input to the EU RWASH Project: Community Engagement Adviser Ross Kidd – who was based in Honiara - and Junior Engineer Pir Bux - who was based in Auki and supported the Malaita WASH program. Their contributions have been very much appreciated and I wish them the best for their future endeavours.

Twenty-three years after the original construction of the EHD building in 1997 – then funded by Australia – a major rehabilitation and refurbishment has taken place in 2020. This was the third part of infrastructural improvements at the headquarters in Honiara to which the EU RWASH Project contributed, after the sealing of the MHMS compound and the new 'Engineer's Office' at EHD. The occasion was celebrated with our key partners present.

As we close 2020 we are working towards a comprehensive exercise to collect data on water access across all Wards to produce a RWASH Sector Performance Review for the period 2015 to 2020. This will also include the results of the 2019 Census where WASH questions were asked.

We are looking forward to a successful completion of the year and fruitful 2021.

Leonard Olivera, Director
Environmental Health Division

RWASH Projects implemented through contracting processes

Four projects included in the bulk procurement were successfully contracted out to NGOs or construction companies, with the balance of the projects being implemented by the Provincial Environmental Health Divisions. The materials were supplied on site through the bulk procurement process, while the contractors were responsible for the construction processes.

Gheghede Water Supply in Guadalcanal Province

This project involved the construction of an improved rain catchment system at a large church building and the construction of a pumped system to top up the rain water tanks from a spring source below the village, supplying about 300 people.



Leaf Beater & First Flush Diverter at Gheghede

This project was contracted out to ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) who carried out the community engagement workshops and construction phase.

Haliatu Water Supply in Guadalcanal Province

This project utilised an existing dam and replaced the entire reticulation system with 30 standpipes supplying about 500 people. This project was contracted out to ADRA who carried out the

community engagement workshops and construction phase.



Standpipe at Haliatu Water Supply

This project involved the construction and of 10 rain water catchment systems at the school buildings

Betikama Secondary School Rain Catchment Project in Guadalcanal

supplying about 500 students. The guttering systems featured the inclusion of Leaf Beaters and First Flush Diverters. This project was contracted out to Up Works construction for the construction phase only.



Rain Catchment system at Betikama Secondary

Manaere Water Supply in Malaita Province

This project involved the construction of gravity feed water supply with 16 standpipes supplying 300 people. This project was contracted out to a former EHD Health worker.

Solomon Islands Better Learning Environment WASH Program

The Solomon Islands Better Learning Environment Program (SIBLE) is a pilot project involving 42 Schools across Guadalcanal Province. This project is



Ablution Block at Mbalasuna CHS

implemented by UNICEF through partnership agreements with Plan Australia, World Vision and MEHRD/Guadalcanal Province Education Authority.

The purpose of this project is to improve the health of boys and girls, improving their learning performance through reduction of diseases and



Hand washing station at Mbalasuna CHS

illnesses that are a result of poor WASH practices.

Central Market WASH Project

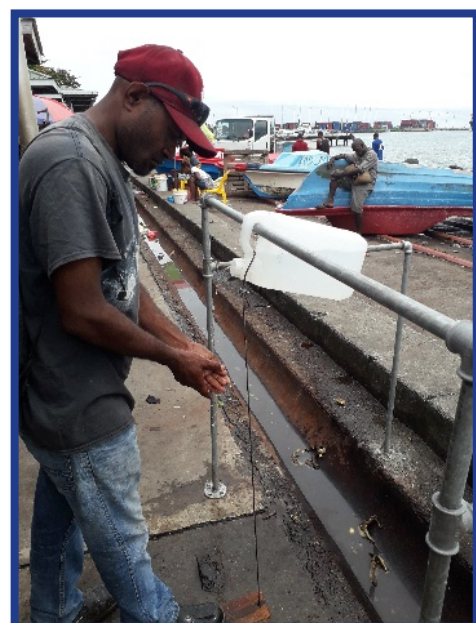
This project aimed to improve the water & sanitation facilities at the Central Market in Honiara, in the context of the global Covid-19 pandemic. With small

(unofficial) road markets closed in Honiara, the Central Market became the only place for people to get fresh produce. The potential risk for a virus spreading is big when many people are gathered.



Activities to improve water access included building seven new tap-stands at existing rain water tanks at the main market building, constructing two additional tank stands with tanks & gutters at the western end of the car park and installing a 5000 litre tank at the Administration building supplied by rain water & the town supply, constructing a group hand washing station and a tippy tap constructed with 20mm GI pipes & fittings.

Activities to improve sanitation included cleaning out all the drains descaling & unblocking toilet facilities in the public toilet block and Administration Building.



Follow up activities include replacement of broken and missing drain covers and training for market



staff on the use & maintenance of the water facilities.

Handover water supply projects Central Island Province

In August of this year, the EU RWASH Project Team Leader Piter Visser attended the handover of 3 water supply projects in Central Islands Province: Voloa, Hadiana and Davala communities. These projects were carried out by the Central Island EHD team led by Ms. Julianne Leinga. Funding came from the national EHD/RWASH Program, which enjoys budget support from the European Union.



Kids using the new water supply at Davala village

The CIP Provincial Government is always very supportive to the EHD and RWASH Program and several dignitaries joined in the celebrations, including: CIP Premier Stanley Manetiva, CIP Minister of Health Edgar Tarai, MPA Kenneth Sagupari, and CIP Advisor Adrian Toni.



PS Susan Sulu (MNPDC), D. Ramo, CIP Minister of Health Edgar Tarai and Premier Stanley Manetiva

Also present were Permanent Secretary Ms. Susan Sulu from the Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination and her colleague Mr. D. Ramo.

Establishing the status of RWASH in the Solomon Islands

Work is well underway and will soon finish on two important censuses for the RWASH Sector: the WASH in Health Care Facilities Census and the



National Population Census. The first is carried out by UNICEF and looks at the status of WASH facilities (water supply, sanitation, hand hygiene and waste disposal) at all health facilities in the Solomon Islands. This will provide an important snapshot on how many clinics can provide basic access to WASH

to the users and will allow for better planning and prioritisation of projects in the future.

The Population Census included the key questions around WASH in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goal framework for WASH. The National Statistics Office has now commenced its data verification phase after which reporting will follow. The results of this census will provide the WASH sector with household level information on access to water supply, sanitation and hygiene (handwashing with soap & water). It therefore will replace the RWASH baseline survey done in 2015, which was a sample survey only.

With the Urban WASH Census and the School WASH Census done in recent years, the RWASH Sector will soon have a complete picture of WASH in the Solomon Islands. This is the first time this has happened and is timely as well, as the RWASH Program of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services needs to renew its Strategic Plan in 2021. The data will be very useful therefore.

The Health Facility Census was funded by the RWASH Program and funding support was provided to the Population Census as well - both around SBD 1 million through the EU RWASH Project.

RWASH is also completing a simple water access survey of all communities based on knowledge provided by the EHD officers. This will provide useful reporting for each Ward.

All the data will be presented in a RWASH Sector Performance Review to be prepared in early 2021 to cover the period 2015 – 2020.

Bulk Procurements

The RWASH bulk procurement in 2019 for 22 projects (total cost SBD5.6 million) was delivered to the respective village sites in April 2020. Project implementation has resulted in the completion of 20 projects to date, with 2 pending completion.

To ensure that the RWASH Program will not delay the implementation of its program, a bulk procurement of 38 projects was submitted in August. This procurement request will go through the normal channels of MTB and CTB approval and open

tender. It is expected that the materials will be delivered to the project sites in the second quarter of 2021 by which time the current works plan of 25 projects will have been completed. The estimated value of the bulk procurement is SBD8.5 million.

Digitising the RWASH Information System

In its continuing efforts to improve the RWASH Information System (RIS), the RWASH Program is



working on the digitisation of its data collection and management. In order to do this, 2 mobile applications are being trialled ODK and mWater.

Google's Open Data Kit is an open source application that can be used by any sector, where mWater is specifically designed with the WASH Sector in mind. mWater is not open source but can be used for free unless specific needs require a paid option. While the user experience in the field collecting data will be similar between the 2 platforms, the way the apps programming and data management work will most likely determine the platform of choice: mWater is more intuitive to use but ODK more flexible.



EHD Officers were trained in November 2020 in the use of the apps and will undertake a survey of all the Rural Training Centres.

CLTS & Hygiene

In September 2020, thirty-three village health facilitators in Ulawa were trained on the CLTS facilitators manual by Plan International, with collaboration from the Makira team (RWASH and HP). This consisted of a one-week training and two weeks pre-triggering program. During the program 18 villages were triggered with numbers expected to increase. Given the enthusiasm in the community many NOD celebrations are soon expected.

Due to the Covid19 global outbreak, Plan International refocused its efforts on hygiene



awareness in an attempt to minimize the spreads of corona should it arrive in the communities.

Caritas continued with the CLTS program in North Malaita but at a slower pace due to delays in funding. The assisted in organizing a Women Leaders Conference with women from Ward 8 gathering in March 2020 to help champion sustainable sanitation in their respective villages. Close to 200 women

leaders from nearly 70 villages in North Malaita joined 3 conferences organised in March 2020.

These women leaders witnessed first-hand the successful models from Year 1 when they were given an exposure to nearby villages which already attained NOD status. Besides seeing various sanitation technology options, from dry to pour flush technologies, the participants were also given handwashing demonstration using tippy taps and soap as part of the behaviour change objective of the project.

The MHMS Health Promotion Unit quickly developed hygiene messages in response to the covid19 outbreak. The messages focus on handwashing practices and ensuring your mouth is well covered when sneezing.

Western Province WASH Plan

In October 2019 a 3-day workshop was held in Western Province, facilitated by the National RWASH team, with the aim of developing the first provincial RWASH plan.



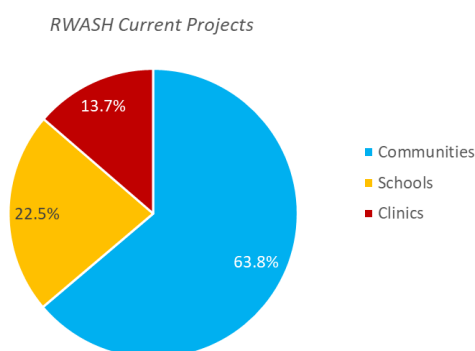
The outcome of this workshop was the 3-year Western Province WASH plan, which prioritises water

supply requests for communities, schools and health facilities over three years. The plan is now being implemented with 21 schools, 5 health facilities and 7 communities across Western Province surveyed. These projects are in the process of being designed.

Following the same process, a Provincial WASH Plan was developed for Central Island Province in November 2019. This plan is also now being implemented, with projects included in the plan being procured through the above-mentioned bulk order for 2021.

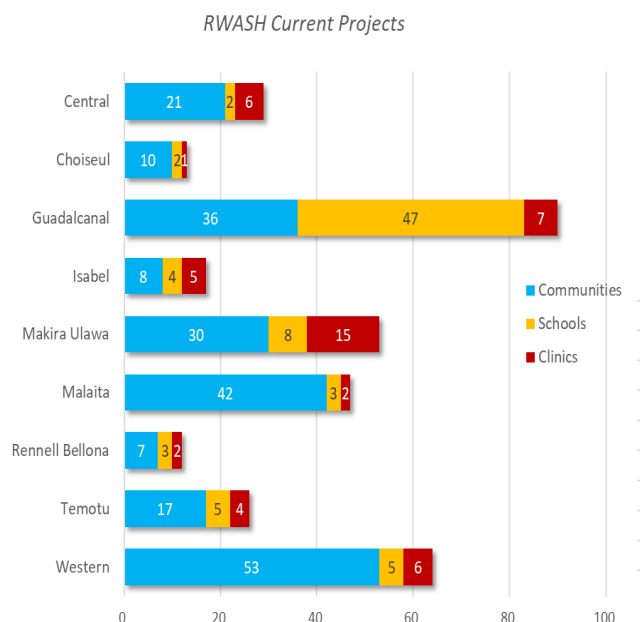
Project Update

Two thirds of projects in 2020 are being done in communities. Followed by schools (22.5%) and clinics (13.7%).

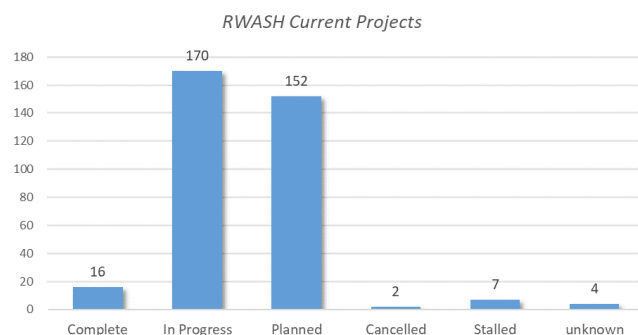


Our current project view include completed projects in 2020, projects in progress and in planning phase. Also and few other minor segments like cancelled and stalled projects.

From Province perspective, Guadalcanal has the most projects while Rennell Bellona the least.



Since we started tracking RWASH Projects there were 916 projects successfully completed but less than 12 percent or just 108 of them are certified. To be certified, a project must comply with both the technical design and construction standards and the required community engagement processes.



Over the past 2 years we have seen better compliance with the engineering standards – indicating that they are more and more established – but adequate community engagement is still lacking too often.