

# Overseas Project Target Fund

"People living with disability are two to four times more likely to die or be injured in a disaster than the general population."

University of Sydney

*Theme: Disaster and Climate Change Management in the Pacific.*

*Project: Building disaster resilience for people with disabilities in Solomon Islands*

The project's theme is Disaster and Climate Change Management in the Pacific. The project specifically aims to build disaster resilience for people with disabilities in Solomon Islands. Due to the increasing impacts of climate change, families living in the Pacific are facing regular events of cyclones and flooding. People living with disabilities are among the most vulnerable groups in such emergencies.

To address this issue, the program is working on establishing local churches as evacuation centers in times of emergency. Anglican Overseas Aid is partnering with the Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CANDO) to build community awareness, ownership and commitment from key community members, including People with Disability Solomon Islands (PWDSI) - the national representative organization. The involvement of PWDSI is crucial in ensuring that people living with disabilities are at the center of the project's activities and facility design.

The program identifies communities in need, many of which are still practicing open defecation. Hence, the program prioritizes the establishment of accessible and secure toilet/shower blocks to be designed and constructed on the church compound, which will support the church building being used as an emergency shelter. The church retrofitting plans also include improved lighting and security.

Moreover, the program also trains community volunteers in protocols that promote the inclusion of people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. In 2024, Mothers Union Australia will also partner in upgrading a local Solomon Islands church into an evacuation center, with a specific focus on the inclusion of people living with disabilities. This project aims to create a safer future for communities and reaffirm the local church as the center of community support during emergencies.

*Implementing Partner: Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) is an overseas relief and development agency of the Anglican Church of Australia.*

*AOA has full Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade accreditation and is a member of ACFID, ensuring the highest level of governance and expertise.*

Below Left: Community gathering to discuss the project. Credit: CANDO

Below Right: An assessment being undertaken in Sign Language in the Solomon Islands. Credit: CANDO

