

Applying the PLANET principles in FSM

The rights-based, gender-sensitive approach used throughout the RENI project is based on SPC's PLANET checklist:

- P = Participation
- L = Link to rights
- A = Accountability
- N = Non-discrimination
- E = Empowerment
- T = Transforming social norms

Training in applying the PLANET approach has been provided at all regional meetings and the approach is referred to often during consultations, national meetings and is incorporated into the Project Design Document for FSM.

The activities in FSM applied particular attention to three components of the PLANET approach: Participation, Accountability and Non-discrimination:

- Participation is the extent to which people affected by the project are able to participate in the project.
- Accountability is the extent to which project implementers are accountable to the people affected by the project.
- Non-discrimination involves taking into account how the project might affect different groups of people.

Participation

In Kapingamarangi, Pohnpei State, all the community participated in the consultations for selection and design. The men in the community played a critical role in the implementation and maintenance training. The local leadership structure involving the Mayor and Senator also participated in all the stages of the project. The State government and the National government were also involved in the design and selection of the measures.

In Yap Proper, Yap State, the men and the women in the communities, through separate consultations, have been involved in the design and selection. Mainly men were involved in the installation, but women also participated in the maintenance training. For the ecological purification systems (EPS) in two communities, a series of community consultations have been held to address community concerns about this relatively new water purification system.

In all the communities in Kapingamarangi and Yap Proper, memoranda of understanding have been signed to confirm the outcome of the consultations, the relative responsibilities of the different partners and the ownership of the water measures. Community/local government leaders participated in the first and second regional steering committee meetings in 2018 and 2019 and would have participated in the 2020 meeting had it not been cancelled.

In Fais Island, Yap State, special care was taken to consult separately with the men, women and youth about the impact of previous water measures installed in 2016.



RENI 2019 Steering Committee meeting: Community representative from Yap Proper (left), Mayor of Kapingamarangi (centre); learning about equity and equality (right)

Accountability

In Yap Proper, the communities of Dugor and Rumuu expressed concern about the use of a local contractor to install the EPS measures. Several meetings were held to resolve the communities' concern, and a specific mission was conducted in January 2020 by the Project Engineer and an EPS expert from Fiji to resolve these concerns.

In addition, the procurement of the materials and equipment required for the EPS measures was delayed until the issues were resolved.

Non-discrimination

Kapingamarangi is one of the most remote, inaccessible, populated island in the FSM. By focusing on water security here the project addressed differential access of this remote community.

In Kapingamarangi, an equitable approach was adopted by addressing the needs of the three most vulnerable groups: the sick, the elderly and the youth as a priority. After their needs had been addressed, the project turned to the enhancement of the communal water systems.

Similarly, in Yap Proper, rainwater harvesting systems were refurbished at two schools and one woman's centre – Tamil Elementary School, Gagil Elementary School, and Tamil Women's Community Centre.

With the assistance of the FSM National Coordinator and other national partners, the consultations with the communities were conducted in the local language.



During the project design phase, one of the planned activities was to establish a grant agreement with a women's group in Yap Proper to implement water conservation measures. Unfortunately, the women's groups in Yap Proper did not fulfill the criteria required for SPC grant awards. An alternative measure was put in place for a local consultant to guide the Tamil Woman's Association in their delivery of water conservation education and awareness activities for youth in Yap Proper.