

Expanding access to solar energy and water in Kiribati

 Kiribati

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PARTNERS



Action on
Poverty



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Australian Government

FUNDING

DFAT

Partners

TOTAL

\$255,279

\$110,232

\$365,511

Overview

The partnership between Action on Poverty, the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK), PowerTech Energy and the Australian Government, through the Business Partnerships Platform (BPP), is improving access to reliable renewable energy and water in remote communities in Kiribati.

Delivered on Aranuka Island, the project has installed solar-powered systems across community infrastructure, providing sustainable access to electricity and safe water for the island's entire population.

Solar systems have been installed at 1 school site and five community halls, enabling essential services and supporting daily life across the island's five communities. Six communal freshwater wells fitted with solar-powered pumps are also being installed, to address Aranuka's longstanding water access challenges.

Women's leadership is central to the project's long-term sustainability, with twenty women trained to lead community Infrastructure Management Committees overseeing the operation and maintenance of the systems.

Highlights



- **1,057 people** benefiting from improved energy and water access
- **214 households** accessing improved community infrastructure
- **6 solar-powered wells** improving access to safe drinking water
- **5 community halls** and **1 school** site with reliable electricity
- Approximately **7,200 litres** of diesel displaced annually
- Around **19 tonnes** of CO₂ emissions avoided each year.

Delivery snapshot



- 12 solar systems installed across community infrastructure
- 11.96 kW total solar PV capacity
- ~39 kWh total battery storage
- Solar pumps installed on six wells, supplying water to 5,000L tanks
- Modular, pre-engineered systems enabling local installation
- Household levy scheme established to provide long-term funding.

Impact

Improved access

The project delivered 12 solar installations that significantly improved access to essential services, strengthening daily living conditions and community wellbeing.

- Reliable electricity now supports households and community infrastructure
- Safer, more convenient drinking water access with reduced travel burden for collection
- Electrified community halls enable cultural, social and religious activities after dark
- Improved lighting and energy access has strengthened community safety and cohesion.

Inclusive impact

Inclusion outcomes were strengthened through women's leadership and broad community participation in infrastructure management and delivery.

- Five women-led Infrastructure Management Committees established in traditionally male-dominated roles
- Women actively managing solar systems, access control and operational decisions
- Reported increases in women's confidence and sense of empowerment
- Local volunteers supported installations and gained practical technical skills
- Benefits distributed widely across households and community groups.

Sustainability and scale

The project demonstrates a strong, locally driven model for long-term sustainability and replication in remote island contexts.

- Solar systems installed by local partners and community members using a modular, pre-engineered approach
- Built local technical capacity and strengthened community ownership of assets
- Reduced reliance on external technicians for installation and ongoing maintenance
- Demonstrates a scalable blueprint for replication across other remote island communities
- Provides a foundation for long-term local management and system sustainability.

Notes from the field

Strong coordination between partners, combining technical expertise, local relationships and program management was critical to success. Regular communication, including real-time troubleshooting via WhatsApp, enabled adaptive problem-solving and kept implementation on track. Observations from the field highlight high levels of community engagement, pride in the infrastructure, and growing confidence among women leaders managing the systems.

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Everyone is excited. Teachers now can use the internet to research the subject that they are teaching. Students can also bring their phones and laptop computers. We will also hold fund-raising events in the school. The fridge will help us to raise funds for maintenance of the solar system.

Principal, Kauke School

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We are happy to be given the trust and responsibility to manage the solar systems. Men usually run projects, but women can do better.

Solar-powered water pumps and electricity will lessen our burden.

Members of the Infrastructure Management Committee

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What's next

Building on this success, the project is well-positioned to expand and replicate the model in other remote communities. Future efforts could focus on scaling the modular installation approach, strengthening ongoing maintenance systems, and further supporting women-led governance structures.

Continued partnership and investment will help sustain impact, deepen local capacity and extend access to clean energy and water across the region.

About the Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships

The Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships are part of the Australian Government's Pacific Climate Infrastructure Financing Partnership (PCIFP), expanding the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific's (AIFFP) climate investments to deliver renewable energy in remote and rural communities across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. They are pilots for [REnew Pacific](#), AIFFP's \$75 million investment to scale off-grid renewable energy across the region.

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