

PAWARIM KOMUNITI

Papua New Guinea Off-Grid Electrification Program



West New Britain Rural Electrification Project

West New Britain Province

Project Area: Kandrian-Gloucester District and Talasea District

Rural LLGs and communities in remote areas of Kandrian-Gloucester District, Bali LLG and Witu LLG

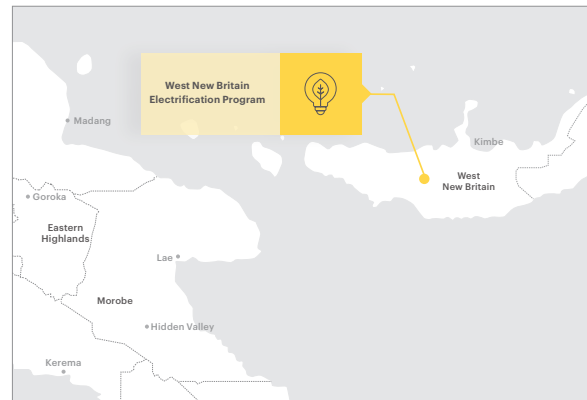
Overview

This project will support the delivery and installation of 15,000 solar home kits in remote parts of West New Britain Province that do not have access to the electricity grid. Each kit can be used to charge mobile devices and will consist of three lights with different intensity settings.

The project was launched by Minister for State Enterprises and Regional Member for West New Britain, the Hon Sasindran Muthuvel MP, Governor for West New Britain, the Hon Francis Maneke, and Australian High Commissioner, HE John Philp, on 9 October 2020. The overall aim is to enhance people's economic, social and development opportunities.

Locally based implementation partner, Barefoot College, will support the success of the project and contribute to its sustainability. It will help install units in households, ensure correct use of the units to extend their product lifetime and support continuity of repair and maintenance services.

The project is guided by a steering committee consisting of representatives from West New Britain Provincial Government and Pawarim Komuniti.



Project Size	Australia contribution: up to PGK5.9 million WNB contribution: up to PGK1 million
Reach	15,000 households
Technology	Solar home kits
Duration	9 months

Anticipated Outcomes

The solar home kits include lighting and charging facilities. The extra lighting presents opportunities for children to do their homework at night, and for those who are less mobile to move about more safely after dark. It also provides additional time for social and productive activities, which may increase social cohesion and lead to new businesses and additional income opportunities.

The use of solar powered lighting eliminates health and safety hazards such as smoke inhalation and fire risk that are generated by burning fuel for lighting. It is also understood to reduce the workload of women, who are often tasked with collecting firewood.

In addition, the kits enable increased connectivity through their charging capability. Mobile devices are increasingly important for personal communication and enabling economic activity.

Partners

Barefoot College is a not-for-profit organisation that conducts training on solar energy for the community. The PNG-based Barefoot College has a training facility in Kimbe, West New Britain, and was previously supported by Barefoot College International. A number of women from Kimbe completed a six-month solar engineer training course in India in 2018. These solar engineers will play a key role in distributing and installing solar products, providing ongoing support and maintenance, and training village-based solar officers, thereby contributing to the project's sustainability.