

New partnerships to energise remote communities across the Pacific and Timor Leste

The Albanese Government is supporting three new partnerships that will deliver off-grid renewable energy to rural and remote communities across Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu.

Access to more reliable and clean energy will have community-wide social and economic benefits, improving household living standards through more cost effective and reliable energy, enabling businesses to operate more efficiently, and creating employment opportunities.

The Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships capitalise on the expertise and technology of businesses, academia and NGOs to address climate change risks and impacts in the region.

The new partnerships include:

- Caritas Australia, Catholic Church Health Services and the Australian Government to improve the energy infrastructure of two essential healthcare services in remote Aitape, Papua New Guinea.
- MEA Power Up, Master Electricians Australia and the Australian Government to enhance four critical health infrastructure sites in Timor-Leste's Cova-Lima Province, including two medical clinics and two water pumping sites, which will benefit from new solar energy systems.
- University of New South Wales, Vanuatu Disability Promotion Advocacy Association, Vanuatu Institute of Technology, Vanuatu Department of Energy and the Australian Government to harness the circular economy to tackle the growing environmental issue of e-waste from solar energy systems.

The Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships are part of the Australian Government's Business Partnerships Platform under the [Pacific Climate Infrastructure Financing Partnership](#) initiative to expand the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific's climate investments.

This announcement brings the total investment under the Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships program to **\$5.8 million** in 13 partnerships across six countries. This includes **\$3.6 million** funded by the Australian Government, with the remaining invested by partners through cash or in-kind contributions.

Minister Pat Conroy said, "These new partnerships show our commitment to bringing clean, reliable energy to communities in Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu. This will help improve living standards and create jobs."

"Working with businesses, universities, and NGOs, we are tackling climate change and supporting sustainable development in the region."

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Reflecting on the Caritas Australia project, **Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia** said, "Rural health centres in Papua New Guinea like the ones in Lemakot and Aitape are the frontline of healthcare for around 80 per cent of the population. Securing a reliable off grid energy source is game changing in terms of the health services these centres can provide. From having guaranteed lighting after sundown and being able to use equipment such as ultrasounds without fail – all of this will ensure people can visit their local health centres in the event of an emergency, or to give birth for example. Before this they faced travel to a provincial hospital in these sorts of situations, which could mean hours of travel in a worsening medical condition."

Sr Jadwiga Faliszek, National Health Secretary CCHS, a Caritas Australia partner in Papua New Guinea, said, “Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) is grateful for the partnership and support. Rural electrification is something that CCHS fully support as we see that lights in the facilities will greatly improve service delivery at the facilities allowing proper use of medical equipment by staff and providing the best medical care. It would also mean patients will benefit for example mothers who attend the health facilities to give birth. Lights would also mean security for both staff and patients. They will no longer worry about the surrounding areas being too dark”.

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