

# PACIFIC MENSTRUAL HEALTH NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN: 2022 - 2026

## Our Vision

Pacific women, girls and all other people who experience a menstrual cycle, realise their menstrual health rights throughout their life course.

## Our Mission

is to create a collaborative platform made up of inclusive and diverse Pacific leaders and experts who drive a menstrual health rights movement. Through this Network the members collaborate, advocate, convene Pacific voice and are creating positive menstrual health and rights change.



## Our Purpose is to



Create Pacific visibility and credibility on menstrual health efforts regionally and globally, through leading a strong feminist and human rights platform that is inclusive and diverse for strong Pacific-led collaboration.



Empower diverse women and girls (from a range of ages, genders, disabilities and identities) to advocate for policies, by influencing policy makers and resources at all levels to bring about systematic change across the region.



Build evidence within the Network and across the region, sharing knowledge of culturally and environmentally appropriate solutions to menstrual health across sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), gender equality, the climate emergency, social enterprises and others to increase menstrual health prioritisation and funding.



Strengthen capacity of Pacific stakeholders to address menstrual health through a Community of Practice.

## Why menstrual health is a critical issue

Addressing menstruation is essential to achieving gender equality and advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), education and other outcomes. However, despite being a common experience, menstrual health remains largely neglected by policymakers, researchers, and practitioners across the Pacific region (Hennegan et al; 2023). The menstrual experiences of people in the Pacific remain challenging, shrouded in stigma and taboo (Mohamed et al; 2018). The Pacific Menstrual Health Network's [report 'Period Poverty in the Pacific: exploring opportunities and barriers to progress menstrual health \(Huggett et al; 2022\)'](#) documented some good progress on menstrual health in the areas of WASH in schools; humanitarian response, disability inclusion and menstrual product development and supply.



# Menstrual health and rights for all

Menstrual health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in relation to the menstrual cycle. The Terminology Action Group of the Global Menstrual Collective has developed this definition for menstrual health based on a global, multi-stage process.

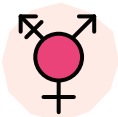
Achieving menstrual health implies that women, girls, and all other people who experience a menstrual cycle, throughout their life-course, are able to:

- **access accurate, timely, age-appropriate information** about the menstrual cycle, menstruation, and changes experienced throughout the life-course, as well as related self-care and hygiene practices.
- **are for their bodies during menstruation such that their preferences, hygiene, comfort, privacy, and safety are supported.** This includes accessing and using effective and affordable menstrual materials and having supportive facilities and services, including water, sanitation, and hygiene services, for washing the body and hands, changing menstrual materials, and cleaning and/or disposing of used materials.
- **access timely diagnosis, treatment and care for menstrual cycle-related discomforts and disorders,** including access to appropriate health services and resources, pain relief, and strategies for self-care.
- **experience a positive and respectful environment in relation to the menstrual cycle, free from stigma and psychological distress,** including the resources and support they need to confidently care for their bodies and make informed decisions about self-care throughout their menstrual cycle.
- **decide whether and how to participate in all spheres of life, including civil, cultural, economic, social, and political, during all phases of the menstrual cycle,** free from menstrual-related exclusion, restriction, discrimination, coercion, and/or violence.

Hennegan, J., et al., 'Menstrual Health: A definition for policy, practice and research', *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2021.

## Our Values

The Network shares and promotes five core values internally and through all our work:



### Feminism and gender equality

We are a feminist solidarity movement supporting women's rights, gender equality, bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.



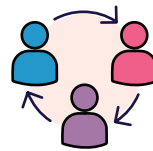
### Equality and respect

We are Pacific-led, inclusive and promote equality and human rights.



### Diversity

We celebrate all menstruators with diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics, disabilities, age and other individual experiences.



### Learning, Collaboration, Movement Building

We build agency and work collectively as local Pacific organisations to gather evidence, facilitate shared learning and knowledge exchange, build innovation, and strengthen social movements through effective mobilisation and organising.



### Climate and Ecological Justice

We champion climate and ecological justice in all that we do.

To learn more about the Network, please visit <https://washmatters.wateraid.org/pacific-menstrual-health-network> or contact: PacificMHNetwork@wateraid.org.au. The Pacific Menstrual Health Network was founded by six local organisations across five Pacific Island countries:

