

UNIVOIS NEWSLETTER

SINU Undergoes Strategic Plan Review Workshop for 2026–2030 Development



Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is currently undertaking a critical review of its Strategic Plan 2021–2025.

This review will directly inform the development of SINU's next Strategic Plan for 2026–2030. Alongside this process, SINU is developing a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework that will ensure its strategic objectives are not only well aligned with national and global development priorities but are also measurable and impactful.

The two-day workshop commenced on 7 May 2025 and will continue on 8 May 2025.

This workshop series, co-facilitated by Dr. Jeanette Baird, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor who is funded by the Australian Government, and Darius Ramo, Director of the Institutional Planning Division, is designed to build the capacity of the Strategic Plan Working Committee by providing the knowledge, tools, and skills required for effective participation in the planning process.

The workshop serve as a structured platform for SINU to reflect on its current strategic direction and institutional performance, consider emerging national and global trends, and shape a forward-looking, results-driven strategy aligned with SINU's mission and the Solomon Islands' development aspirations.

More specifically, the series aims to:

- Foster a shared understanding of the strategic planning process, including key concepts and frameworks relevant to higher education.
- Assess the implementation and impact of SINU's current Strategic Plan to guide the identification of future priorities.
- Enhance capabilities in strategic thinking, environmental scanning, stakeholder engagement, and results-based planning.
- Facilitate meaningful and collaborative input into the development of the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, ensuring alignment with national and regional benchmarks.
- Strengthen ownership and accountability by involving committee members and stakeholders early in the planning process.

Mr Darius Ramo, Director of the Institutional Planning Division, stated, "together through this workshop series, SINU is laying a strong foundation for a strategy that is not only visionary but also practical, inclusive, and measurable. Through these efforts, SINU seeks to strengthen higher education in the Solomon Islands, promote sustainable development, and empower the next generation of leaders."



SINU and MPG Technical Team Hold Productive Talks on SINU Aligegeo Campus Development

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) held a constructive meeting with the Malaita Provincial Government (MPG) Technical Team on Friday, 2 May 2025, to discuss the proposed establishment of SINU's fourth campus at Aligegeo in Malaita Province.

The SINU delegation was led by Pro Vice-Chancellor Corporate (PVCC), Dr. William Parairato, and included representatives from the Council Secretariat, Properties, Facilities and Projects Division, Institutional Planning Division, Marketing and Public Relations Office, and the PVCC Office.

During the dialogue, Dr. Parairato emphasized the need for the official transfer of land from the Malaita Provincial Government to SINU, highlighting this as a significant step toward enabling the development of the new campus.

Dr. Parairato reiterated SINU's commitment to expanding its presence in Malaita Province and noted that the establishment of the Aligegeo campus would be a strategic move that benefits both the University and the Province.

Speaking on behalf of the MPG Technical Team, Deputy Provincial Secretary Mr. Peter Herehura confirmed MPG's strong interest in hosting the SINU Fourth (4th) campus at Aligegeo. He further stated that work is currently underway to complete the necessary documentation for the land transfer to SINU.

It was also noted that both parties will establish a Steering Committee, as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to oversee the implementation of the land transfer process. A draft Terms of Reference (ToR) has already been prepared and, once approved, will allow the Committee to convene and carry out its mandate under the MoU.

The Steering Committee will be tasked with ensuring that all required land transfer instruments are completed in time for the 2025 Malaita Provincial Second Appointed Day in August. The formal declaration of the land transfer is scheduled to be made during this official event in Auki, Malaita Province.

Following the meeting, held at the Premier's Office in Auki, the two teams conducted a site visit to the proposed Aligegeo location.

The meeting builds on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 15 August 2024 between SINU Vice-Chancellor Professor Transform Aqorau and Malaita Premier Elijah Asilaua, during the Malaita Second Appointed Day celebrations. The MoU laid the groundwork for the establishment of SINU's fourth campus in Malaita Province.

SINU Hospitality Students Gain Hands-On Experience Through Field Trips



Students from the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management (STHM) at Solomon Islands National University (SINU) recently took part in two enriching field trips as part of their course assessments, aimed at connecting theoretical learning with real-world practice in the tourism and hospitality industry. On 23 April 2025, students enrolled in the Front Office and Housekeeping Management unit visited Coral Seas Resort. The group observed daily operations within the Front Office Department, Rooms Division, and Laundry section.

They asked questions and engaged directly with staff to better understand how the concepts taught in the classroom are applied in real-life hotel operations.

From 25th to 27th April, students studying the HTE613: Adventure and Sea-Based Adventures unit traveled to Nugu Beach Bungalows, Buena Vista/Sandfly area, and the Ngella Islands. This field trip focused on adventure tourism, particularly sea-based activities and attractions that guests can experience at tourism properties.

Head of Department for Hospitality & Culinary Arts and lecturer for the unit, Ms. Mary Tavava, described the sea-based excursion as “an eye-opener for students,” encouraging them to see the tourism potential in their own environment.

“Even with our local natural landscapes, we can create something for ourselves if there is no formal employment out there in the industry,” she said. “Start little. We have our beautiful clean ocean, beaches, corals, and coastal trees hanging over the sea, we can create activities for guests out of them.”

The field trip brought classroom learning to life and inspired students to explore creative and sustainable ways to turn local natural resources into unique tourism experiences.

Both excursions reflect SINU’s commitment to practical, skills-based education and to preparing students for real opportunities in the Solomon Islands’ growing tourism and hospitality sector.



On Tuesday, 29th of April, two staff members from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), Nixon Panda (Associate Dean Research – Health Sciences and Head of School of Public Health) and Collin Benjamin (Tutor/Researcher, School of Public Health), presented at the “Climate Resilience Pathways: Water Security and WASH in Asia Pacific” conference, held concurrently in Suva and Bangkok.

The event, attended by over 160 participants in Suva, Fiji brought together Pacific Islanders and stakeholders working in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector. It marked the final major gathering under the Australian Government’s flagship seven-year Water for Women Fund.

Since 2018, SINU has been a key partner in this program through its collaboration with Griffith University’s International Water Centre (IWC), contributing to Pacific Community Water Management Plus (the PacWaM+) research initiative.

In the first session, Nixon and Collin co-presented with Tom Rankin (Plan International) on “Localising Water Safety Planning: Practices for Climate-Resilient Water Security in the Pacific Islands”, which reported on the results of Community Water Security Improvement Planning undertaken by Plan and Live and Learn Environmental Education, in collaboration with SINU and IWC. Other participants in the 90-minute session included a representative from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (Fiji) and Vanuatu’s Department of Water.

At the second session, Nixon and Collin presented the results of the latest iteration of the PacWaM+ research program, which focused on decentralisation and rural water management. They were joined by Mr. Erie Sami from the Department of Water, Vanuatu; Dr. Sarah Pene from the University of the South Pacific (Fiji); and Suliati Batikawai from the International Water Centre (IWC). The session was convened by Associate Professor Regina Souter and Dr. Mark Love of the IWC. On Thursday, Collin Benjamin co-facilitated the final plenary session—his first experience facilitating at such a high-level international event. This marked a significant milestone in his emerging role in global dialogues on water and development.

Also attending was Rosie Sanderson, an adjunct at SINU and researcher with the IWC, who contributed to a session on “Sanitation in challenging urban environments.” In addition, Mr. Richard Mole (Director, Water Resource Management Division, Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification) and Mr. Malachi Batee (Chief Climate Resilience Officer, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology) participated in the conference with support from UNICEF. The research on decentralisation, which was undertaken in not only Solomon Islands but also Fiji and Vanuatu, explored the strengths, challenges, and opportunities associated with decentralising water service delivery.

Following the replacement of RWSS with RWASH in 2014, both the National RWASH Policy (2014) and RWASH Strategic Plan (2015-20) advocated the devolution of greater responsibility for health programming, including EHD/RWASH, to the provincial level, with RWASH earmarked to steadily move away from implementation towards a regulatory and monitoring role as more “service delivery partners” – private sector and non-government organisations (NGOs) – took over implementation. This has not materialised as envisioned in the Policy.

Subnational governance has long been a topic of intense debate in Solomon Islands and the wider regions, with Solomon Islands having the weakest decentralisation of the three countries, especially since Area Councils were dissolved in the late 1990s, after which rural service delivery and development faltered.



Key findings include:

- Solomon Islands has one of the lowest per capita WASH expenditures in the Pacific (USD\$1.30 per person)
- Limited financial information and slow procurement processes contribute to recurrent underspends (15 - 51% execution rate 2015–20) and hinder effective decentralisation
- Inactive oversight committees and non-functional stakeholder groups delimit effective sector coordination
- Significant staffing challenges hinder the progress of both decentralisation and rural water delivery
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However, there is some progress: Ward Development Committees (WDCs) signal a shift towards greater decentralisation and hold the promise of correcting the socio-political and developmental vacuum that has existed at the rural level since the abolition of Area Councils.

The participatory planning through WDCs is a positive development and although they currently do not they could – and the presenters argued that they should – support rural community water management outcomes, especially as research both here in the Pacific and elsewhere in the world clearly demonstrates that Water/WASH Committees need ongoing monitoring and support to remain active and efficient. Other positives include the development of Provincial WASH plans in some provinces (e.g. Western).

Nixon Panda stated, “to achieve SDG 6, it is imperative to prioritize WASH in the rural areas of the Solomon Islands, where approximately 74% of the population resides. This necessitates urgent political commitment, the development of climate-resilient systems, and equitable solutions to address the disproportionate impacts on women and children. Water security must be recognised as a fundamental right, transcending mere infrastructure. Collaborative efforts are essential to advance the WASH agenda. The time for action is now.”

Collin highlighted the benefits of attending the conference stating, “It was an amazing conference for me. I was challenged and motivated at the same time, listening to the perspectives on water security and WASH shared from researchers, consultants, policymakers, funders, and implementers within the Asia Pacific region. My favorite quote from the conference. Came from Mr. Exsley Taloiburi (a fellow Solomon Islander) from the Green Climate Fund, who stated that ‘Our Role as Academics and Researchers is critical to collect and provide credible data to inform viable project proposals for implementing tangible developments in the water sector.’”

With access to basic drinking water declining from 76.47% in 2000 to 59.41% in 2022, something has to be done. However, the researchers warned that underfunded decentralisation can lead to even worse water service delivery outcomes – as has happened in some African countries - and also emphasised that decentralisation takes decades, not years, to unfold.

WELCOME TO OUR TEAM

Dr. Kapila Mallah, Visiting Professor in Economics



Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is pleased to welcome Dr. Kapila Mallah as a Visiting Professor in the Discipline of Economics within the Faculty of Business and Tourism Studies for a period of two years.

Dr. Mallah is a distinguished academic currently serving as the Chair of Indian Studies under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. She is also an Associate Professor of Economics at Hansraj College, University of Delhi.

She holds a Ph.D. and M.Phil. in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, and an M.Sc. in Economics and Econometrics from the University of Nottingham, UK.

From 2021 to 2023, she served on the Academic Council of the University of Delhi and has presented widely at national and international conferences.

At SINU, Dr. Mallah will help strengthen economics education and research, support curriculum development, mentor staff, and engage students in applied economic analysis—particularly relevant to Pacific Island contexts.

Her appointment supports SINU's mission to build local capacity and contribute to national development through evidence-based economic policy and research. In her personal time, Dr. Mallah enjoys reading books on spirituality, watching some television, and traveling whenever possible

Staff Profile

Name: Ryan Bako

Province: Isabel

Age: 39

Workstation: Kukum campus

Department: Library

Job title: Library System Assistant

Qualification: Diploma in Library and information system

How long have you been working here? 7 years

Tell us about your job:

As the librarian (systems) officer, I am responsible for administering the library management system, streamlining the the daily operations of the library in 3 SINU campus's, and maintaining access to Online databases and the SINU digital repository.

My role ensures that key technical infrastructure supporting library services runs smoothly and efficiently. in addition to library systems administration, I also assist students with their information needs, helping students navigate and access digital and academic resources effectively.



What do you like about SINU and your job?

I really enjoyed working at SINU because of the valuable experiences gained over the years, and my role allows me to combine technology with library services to support our students academic growth. It has been a rewarding journey to be part of a library team that greatly values the commitment to support students with their information needs.

About us:

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is the Prime and ONLY National University of Solomon Islands.

Founded in 2013, SINU is striving to be one of the Best Education and Research Institute in the Region.

Our VISION: "A quality National University, raising Standards of education and applied research in the Pacific Region."

Our Mission: "Championing the pursuit of knowledge, skills, academic inquiry and applied research to transform lives through higher education and training, inclusive of diverse communities, while providing relevant solutions for the Solomon Islands.



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