



**SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET  
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION UNIT**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**28<sup>th</sup> -05-2020.**

**Youths and Farmers encouraged to apply for ESP**

All youths and rural farmers in the country are encouraged to apply for assistance from the COVID - 19 Economic Stimulus Package, ESP.

Policy Secretary for the Productive Sector in the Prime Minister's Office, Dr Samson Viulu told a group of Malaita Youth representatives in a brief meeting in the Prime Minister's Office yesterday, Wednesday 27th May 2020.

Dr Viulu clarified the ESP is inclusive for all individuals, groups and Associations who already engaged in business activities both in the formal and non-formal sector.

"The package is aimed at rural workers in the rural areas and is directly channelled from the Government through the COVID-19 Oversight and Implementation Committee directly to the recipients," Dr Viulu explained.

Dr Viulu said the ESP is mainly to relief struggling entrepreneurs in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, tourism and forestry to maintain and boost production output at all levels of the production value chain.

He explained that most rural farmers are eligible to apply by submitting simple project proposals, even a two page proposal with all the basic relevant information is suffice.

"There is no standard application form but rural farmers who have existing farms can simply write up their application stating precisely the assistance they need," said Dr Viulu.

He also added that ESP may relax some of the qualifying criteria for assistance under the ESP for existing rural farmers.

“Most rural farmers do not engage in the formal business sector and may not have legal supporting documents, but can submit applications given they have existing farms, with the hope that in the long run, these farmers will eventually register their businesses so that provincial governments too can earn revenue through business licenses” said Dr Viulu.

He clarified that follow up assessments on site will be done after the submissions are received for verifications.

The ESP has three overarching guiding principles including:

1. Quick economic return, which means the applicant’s proposed activity for funding should have a quick turnaround preferably not more than six months;
2. Significant impact to the rural and national economy by encouraging income generating activities and employment. This means the proposed activity should employ a good number of people and contributes hugely to the national economy through taxes, business licenses and growth in employment;
3. Platform for long term economic recovery post covid-19 which sets the foundation for multiplier effect from economic activity, investment and growth.

The deadline for submissions is no later than 5 June.

**ENDS///**