



# Voices

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development  
stories that  
touches rural  
lives.**

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NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 06



**PS VIULU: 2023 CDF ALLOCATIONS SHOULD BE STRICTLY UTILIZED IN CONSTITUENCIES**

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**MP RAMOFAFIA PRIORITIZES TANGIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN FATALEKA**

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## SIG-PRC NEW PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A new donor partnership program between the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) called “Rural Sustainable Development Program or RSDP for short is set for implementation in 2023.

SIG through the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) and PRC will jointly implement RSDP towards improving the social and economic development and livelihood of citizens in the rural areas of Solomon Islands by strengthening the effective participation of indigenous people and local communities in social and economic initiatives.

“...there is no continuation of CDF contribution from PRC in 2023 rather, my ministry will be implementing a newly established joint program with the Peoples Republic of China called the “Rural Sustainable Development Program (RSDP)” that will be jointly implemented by my ministry and PRC Embassy in Honiara,” Minister of MRD Honourable Duddley Kopu informed Parliament when he contributed on the Motion of the 2023 Appropriation Bill 2022 in Parliament, December 2022.

PRC provides the funding to the program and MRD is managing and implementing it in coordination with the Embassy of PRC in Honiara.

The program is strictly proposal based with MRD coordinating the implementation of it to ensure project applications are aligned to the Global Development Initiative of PRC and SIG National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2035 National Objectives.

“Project proposal submissions are strictly according to

the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) application format.

The new program intends to focus more on the 75 per cent of Solomon Islands population living in remote rural areas within the 50 constituencies of Solomon Islands but not neglecting the 25 per cent that resides in urban and semi-urban centres,” Minister Kopu said.

RSDP thematic areas of priority are Infrastructure and Income Generating Projects. The infrastructure category focuses on providing and upgrading basic social and economic infrastructures in the rural areas, while Income Generating Projects (IGP) focuses on supporting and enabling rural dwellers to earn daily income to improve their livelihood.

The Scope of funding will cover development projects focusing on socio-economic infrastructures and income-generating projects in all of the Solomon Islands to achieve integrated sustainable developments.

The RSDP was made possible with the huge support of the Democratic Coalition Government for Advancement (DCGA).

Robust monitoring and evaluation will be in place for accountability and transparency purposes during the RSDP implementation stage.

This new donor partnership is a testament to the MOU signed between the Governments of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) and Solomon Islands Government in 2019 in terms of PRC support towards rural development. ■

# CDF

Constituency Development Fund

**Improves  
social and economic  
livelihoods of all rural  
Solomon Islanders**



# FROM THE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK



## WELCOME TO THE MRD NEWSLETTER 2022.

The Communication and Public Relations Unit (CPRU) of the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) is honoured and pleased to present to you the sixth issue of its newsletter as well as the final issue for 2022.

In this publication, we featured a lot of stories on the positivity of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) on rural lives in our 50 constituencies.

This newsletter publication is one of the various initiatives the ministry through its Communications Unit is effecting to increase its community awareness and raise the visibility of the ministry regarding its core mandates and programmes being implemented in the 50 constituencies via the CDF programme to improve social and economic livelihoods of all rural Solomon Islanders. Despite, the diverse challenges faced by MRD through its programme implementations, MRD is remain committed to deliver to fulfill its vision and that is to ensure ALL rural Solomon Islanders become meaningfully participated in development activities to improve their social and economic livelihoods.

This is a wonderful opportunity for MRD to embrace this communication medium and to fully maximize its capacity to disseminate accurate information and success stories about its programmes to policy-makers, its stakeholders and the general public. We are grateful that you're taking your time to read this publication. Please share this newsletter with your friends, work colleagues and disseminate it through your respective network (s). This publication is produced by the MRD Communications (CPRU) team.

## WHAT'S INSIDE?



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### COVER PHOTO

Soranamola school staff houses and classroom complex on the right in East Choiseul Constituency funded by CDF in partnership with community support.



# Diplomatic relations between SI and China continue to bear fruit

The diplomatic relationship between Solomon Islands and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) continue to yield positive benefits for Solomon Islands.

And is even growing stronger each day as both diplomatic friends continue to expand their areas of cooperation to supporting and improving social and economic livelihoods of rural Solomon Islanders.

“Just over three years ago yet, our friendship has grown stronger and stronger each day,” Minister for the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Honourable Duddley Kopu said.

Minister Kopu who was the guest of honour was speaking at the

official handover ceremony of the Gao-Bugotu Constituency (GBC) office complex established at the GBC Development Growth Centre (CDGC) at Tatamba in Isabel Province on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2022.

The office complex was funded by PRC and the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) with PRC funding majority of the complex with over \$600,000 dollars and SIG \$200,000 dollars, bringing total cost to over \$800,000 dollars.

Minister Kopu said SI-PRC friendship was established on mutual trust and respect adding it will continue to grow even stronger as both countries expand their areas of cooperation in the future.

“PRC is a true friend indeed,” Kopu said.



Guest of Honour MRD Minister Hon. Duddley Kopu, Counsellor of the PRC Embassy Office in Honiara, Yao Ming, MP for Gao-Bugotu Constituency Hon. Samuel Manetoali, MRD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Environment Dr. Melchior Mataki, Assistant Police Commissioner Provincial Policing Leonard Tahnimana, MRD and constituency officers together with provincial and national government officials

Representing PRC at the handing over ceremony was the Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy Office in Honiara, Yao Ming.

“China is committed to growing friendly cooperative ties with Solomon Islands in line with the principles of mutual respect, equality, win-win results and openness and inclusiveness.

“China will always remain a good friend and reliable partner whom Solomon Islands can trust and put SI people first in supporting the country’s rural development,” Counsellor Ming affirmed.

“This historic occasion has marked a great leap forward of our relations. The Chinese Embassy always stands ready to provide assistance on improving Isabel people’s livelihood. So, let us work together to embrace a better future for China-Solomon Islands relations,” Counsellor Ming stressed.

“Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Solomon Islands in 2019, our friendship has nurtured and flourished. Chinese government adheres to the people-centered principle and pays high attention to SI rural development,” he added.

Counsellor Ming then revealed to the people of Gao-Bugotu and Isabel Province that the Chinese Embassy is now working to promote the sister relationship between Shandong Province and Isabel Province which he strongly believes will further provide opportunities for the social and economic development of Isabel.

Meanwhile, Minister Hon. Kopu on behalf of the DCGA govern-

ment and the people of Solomon Islands with profound gratitude acknowledged the Chinese government (PRC) and its people for their unwavering and continuous support to the people of Solomon Islands through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) programme and other assistances.

“Despite the criticisms against CDF, it continues to touch the lives of our people in the remote areas of the country and PRC is the only donor country that contributed to the CDF since 2019.

“Solomon Islands appreciates the ongoing support from the Peoples Republic of China and MRD in particular, looks forward to continue collaborating with the Government of PRC to further implement projects in our rural communities throughout Solomon Islands in the coming years,” Minister Kopu said.

The office complex consist of six office spaces, housing six government line ministries which include the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Traditional Governance, and the Isabel provincial treasury bureau.

Gao-Bugotu Constituency main priority is to bring basic government services more accessible in the rural areas, thus funding of the Tatamba office complex is a fine example to guarantee rural people access needed services in their communities than travelling to Honiara or provincial capital, Buala.

***“China will always remain a good friend and reliable partner whom Solomon Islands can trust and put SI people first in supporting the country’s rural development.”***

**COUNSELLOR YAO MING**



# Vatud constituency delivers

Temotu Vatud Constituency office (TVCO) has successfully completed a major project delivery run in its constituency from 22 October to 14 November 2022.

Project delivery include boats and engines (OBMs) under the constituency fishing project, hardware materials for churches and school projects, small income generating projects for individuals and materials for the two clinic rest house at Utupua and Vanikoro Islands.

Delivery was done by MV VATUD Star vessel.

Vatud constituents who resides at Nukukaisi in Makira also received their projects. Nukukaisi is a settlement in Makira Province where most of the Vatud registered voters especially Tikopia people are residing with proximity to access basic government services that are inaccessible in their community due to the remoteness of their Islands.

The delivery include projects for 2021 which cost over \$4 million and this year 2022 at 2 million plus, bringing cost of \$6 million plus in CDF.

Constituency Development Officer (CDO) Justin Tanema said part of the delivery was done in May 2021 but halted due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

He added that another major challenge that delayed their delivery was transport difficulties as experienced all year round for that remote islands.

Principal Communication and Public Relations officer of the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Andrew Fanasia Jr. accompanied the Vatud project delivery team and captured stories on the delivery and other success stories on how CDF impacted lives of rural people in the constituency.

Meanwhile, Member of Parliament (MP) for Vatud who is also the Minister for the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs Hon. Freda Rotutafi Rangirei said she was happy to see MRD reached out to her constituency to witness livelihood projects and assistance that the constituency office under her leadership continue to deliver towards improving the livelihoods of its rural people.

She also thanked MRD for facilitating the CDF programme which continue to touch the lives of ordinary people especially in VATUD.

Minister Freda further thanked the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) for contributing \$1.8M in 2019, 2020, 2021 respectively, and another



Two of the boats (in red & blue colours) funded under the constituency CDF fishing projects together with housing projects materials offloaded at Nukukaisi 24 October 2022.

\$400,000 this year to the CDF.

PRC is the only Donor partner that has contributed directly to CDF during the reign of the current government.

This year’s CDF contributors are SIG and PRC which allocate public development funds to Constituencies to support rural development initiatives according to constituency development priorities.

According to the Solomon Islands Constituency Development Fund Act 2013 (s.5) funds may be allocated for development purposes to individuals, group income-generating projects, or community projects.

MRD is responsible for the coordination of the rural CDF program in close collaboration with the 50 constituencies towards delivering tangible development results in rural areas.

MRD is fully committed to seeing that all rural Solomon Islanders become meaningfully participated in development activities to improve their social and economic livelihoods.

## Women recipients acknowledges MP Tuki for livelihood projects

Women at Nukukaisi community, a settlement of Tikopia people in Makira has acknowledged their Member of Parliament (MP) for Temotu VATUD Constituency Honourable Freda Tuki for supporting them with five new solar deep freezer sets.

“As rural women we have been working so hard to earn money to support our family,” one of the five recipients Steaty Tonuseiroa said.

“We have children in schools and the only way we can earn money to support them is through marketing,” Ms Tonuseiroa who spoke on behalf of her community women recipients said.

“Most of us women are breadwinners for our families. We spent most of our times at the market by selling our produces for little money. Sometimes we like giving up. However, with these new solar freezers, it will help us to produce something different to sale to our customers,” Ms Tonuseiroa said.

Constituency Accountant Officer Gladys Mavae said that most of the women applied for support through VATUD Constituency Office go for solar deep freezer. “The Constituency choose to support them in this way to improve their small income-generating activities to improve their livelihoods,” she added.

Meanwhile, Ms Tonuseiroa further stated that with her new solar freezer she will store fish and other meats to sale and earn the money she need to support her school children and meet her family basic needs.

When asked how did she manage to support her children prior to receiving this project, she said through sale of cooked food and copra.

“Today I am very happy because this is my first time to get such as-



One of the five female recipients Steaty Tonuseiroa from Nukukaisi community with her solar deep freezer set funded by CDF.

sistance from our MP,” she expressed.

In terms of sustainability of the solar freezer projects, Constituency Development Officer Justin Faka Tanema said their office had engaged a refrigeration certified person to do backup services if there is any fault with the solar freezers.

“We encouraged project recipients to look after their solar freezers and use it for its intended purposes,” Mr Tanema said.

The deep freezer projects were funded by CDF.



# VATUD INVEST MILLIONS IN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Temotu Vatud Constituency has invested million of dollars from its Constituency Development Fund (CDF) allocation toward the development of its human resource.

That’s according to Constituency Accountant Officer Gladys Mavae.

Ms Mavae said the support towards education sector is the top priority of the constituency office under the leadership of honourable, MP Freda Tuki.

“It is our committment under the leadership of MP Tuku that we will continue to invest in this sector (education),”she said.

“Geographically, our constituency is a very remote constituency and accessing basic services remain a challenge.

“Distance and time have a huge impact on our constituency in terms of tangible development on the ground. So, our MP Hon. Tuki has seen it fit to take this path by investing in human resource development,” Ms. Mavae added.

She said investing in education is not just the right move but it is also smart economies.

“Education lead towards health, empowerment and employment,” Ms Mavae emphasized.

Meanwhile, Constituency Development Officer (CDO) Justin Faka Tanema said education is essential because it gives people the



CDO Justin Faka Tanema

skills and knowlegde, they need to be successful in life.

“This is why education plays a big role not only for students but also adults striving to get an education that will allow them to provide for their families,” Mr Tanema said.

He further stated that due to the constituency remoteness, their people has been left out from many opportunities and basic services, so investing in education and human resource development is another way forward for their constituency as development is concerned.

“As long as our people are learning and growing, we are nurturing our human resource for our benefit and for the benefit of the country as well,” he added.

Vatud students who are enrolled at SINU, USP Solomon Islands campus and other institutions are usually supported through the CDF program.

“We will continue to invest in our children’s education for the good of our Constituency and the country as a whole,” Ms Mavae said.

She then thanked the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) for the CDF program which allows them to access much needed funds to support their human resource development.

Ms Mavae also acknowledged their MP for her continuous support toward this initiative since coming into parliament.

## Uta community appreciates CDF

Uta community in Tikopia, Temotu Province has appreciated the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) program of the national government.

This was after they received assistance of hardware materials from the government through their Member of Parliament Hon. Freda Tuki on 8 November 2022 at their community in Tikopia.

The project materials was for the construction of a 3-metre retention wall along the banks of lake Vaeroto to prevent the continuous soil erosion caused by the lake and the impact of climate change.

A teacher and community chairman Mr Joshua Nanalaoi who spoke on behalf of Uta and its surrounding communities said the soil erosion caused by lake Vaeroto becomes a threat to their survival.

He said the changes to their environment came about after the island was hard hit by cyclone Zoe in 2022.

“The continuos erosion along the lake forced most of our families living near the lake to move further inland,” he added.

Community leaders have to find a solution which they initiated a project to build wall to block the lake water from eroding the soil.

The project was accepted by their communities and endorsed by their hierarchy before it was submitted to the constituency office in 2019.

But, due to Covid-19 impact experienced by the country since 2019, it delayed the project implementation.

He further stated that Tikopia is prone to cyclone and climate change impact affecting their small islands adding they believe that this project will have a positive impact to their lives and properties.

“...on behalf of our chiefs and community leaders I want to thank the government through our MP for these much-needed materials to start our project.

More than 100 bag of cements, gabrion nets, mesh wires and wheelbarrows were delivered to the community.

Mr Nanalaoi also thanked the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD)



Cements for the project funded by the CDF program through Temotu Vatud Constituency.



Wheelbarrows for Uta Community Projects funded under CDF program.

for its significant contribution towards rural development.

“CDF is the only funding apart from other government programs that continue to touch rural lives. Thus, we want the government to continue on with this CDF program,” Mr Nanalaoi told MRD Communications Officer Andrew Fanasia Jr in Tikopia.



# Minister Kopu pays courtesy call on SI High Commissioner in Fiji



Minister Kopu and his delegation with SI High Commissioner in Fiji Joseph Ma'ahanua and his Deputy Madolyn Yalu, standing on the left, front row.

A top delegation made up of executive members of the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) led by the Honourable Minister Duddley Kopu paid a courtesy call on the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to the Republic of Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma'ahanua in Suva, Fiji, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.

The courtesy call was purposely to inform H.E Commissioner Ma'ahanua the purpose of the MRD's delegation mission and engagements in Fiji and also provide update on the current reforms that the ministry (MRD) is currently undertaking.

Discussions were centred on the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy that will lead towards reforming constituency developments.

Minister Kopu informed H.E Ma'ahanua that the policy has already gone through nationwide consultation and now in its drafting stage.

He added that one of the determinations of the mission is to validate SICD Policy with designated key informants of the University of the South Pacific (USP) particularly Solomon Islands academics and senior working people of Solomon Islands residing in Fiji.

Minister Kopu highlighted that the SICD Policy key goals are to support and provide a policy framework toward review of the 2013 CDF Act; and it will enhance and contribute towards empowering all Solomon Islanders to participate meaningfully in constituency development activities to improving their livelihoods.

The SICD Policy shall focus on the following key thematic areas: socio-economic infrastructures, livelihoods income generating projects, essential services such as health, education and police- security, and downstream processing and value adding.

In doing so, he said that having the views and inputs of our academics from USP in Fiji and the working community of Solomon Islanders in Fiji is important.

Meanwhile, Hon. Kopu said that his team will also use the opportunity to visit specific Fiji Government Ministries especially productive sectors such as Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Tourisms, Commerce and other sectors that are relevant to rural development in Solomon Islands.

"The mission was premised on the need to refocus Constituency Development Fund (CDF) programme in a more integrated, effective and efficient delivery mechanisms that is transparent, accountable and

also promote good governance.

"This initiative is aligned to the current DCGA government redirection policy particularly 5.2.2.4 (a) Review of CDF Act and Implementation of its regulations," Minister Kopu said.

He further said that they will also use the opportunity to explore opportunities and learn from the challenges and successes of rural development initiatives and models in Fiji mostly in the productive and resource sectors and essential services given that Fiji is ahead of Solomon Islands in terms of rural development.

He added that with MRD embarking on the new SICD Policy, the mission was also an opportunity to establish and forge new partnership with organizations both public or private enterprise working in similar areas and also to customise Fiji's other successful best practices in the productive and resource sectors towards advancing rural development in Solomon Islands.

In welcoming the delegation, H.E Ma'ahanua said that he was honoured and happy to received Minister Kopu and his team.

He said that apart from the Prime Minister and Minister MFAET, Hon. Minister Kopu was the first Solomon Islands Government Minister to have visited the Solomon Islands High Commission Office in Fiji after the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

H.E Ma'ahanua then told Minister Kopu and his visiting delegation that he really appreciated the current reforms that the ministry is undertaking especially with the development of the SICD Policy framework which is not only useful but an important mechanism that will lead to impacting constituency related development programs to improve social and economic livelihoods of rural Solomon Islanders.

He assured Minister Kopu and his team that the SI High Commission Office in Suva is looking forward to continue supporting the team while on official engagements in Fiji.

The delegation consist of team leader Honourable Minister Duddley Kopu, Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu, Deputy Secretary Technical (DST) Hugo Hebala, Deputy Secretary Corporate (DSC), Constance Wane, Director of Rural Development Division (RDD), Milfred Delemani, Director Governance, Hickson George, Financial Controller (FC), Timothy Paoka and Director Communications and Public Relations, Stephen Diisango.

Solomon Islands Government funded the trip. ■



# MRD mission team visits Crest Chicken processing factory, Fiji

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) policy management team has visited the Goodman Fielders (Fiji) International Crest Chicken processing factory, a food processing company at Colo-i-Suva in Fiji on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

Led by the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma’ahanua and MRD Minister Hon. Duddley Kopu, the visit was an eye opener and a successful one.

MRD Solomon Islands head of delegation Minister Kopu was impressed by the visit and the quality control of the poultry processing factory and the magnitude at which the company is operating at.

Minister Kopu said that the scale at which the Crest Chicken company is operating at is inspiring adding there are potential areas where Solomon Islands can learn from and customize at a smaller scale for a start.

He added that the visit was an eye opener for the team and there are takeaways that will certainly be integrated into the reforms that MRD is undertaking particularly the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy that will lead towards reforming constituency developments in our rural areas.

Minister Kopu and his delegation’s official engagements in Fiji was an opportunity to explore opportunities and learn from the challenges and successes of rural development initiatives and models in Fiji mostly



Minister Kopu showing off a product (sausage) of Crest Chicken as they tour inside the processing facility.

of Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma’ahanua acknowledged Crest Chicken management for accepting the team’s request to visit their processing facility.

“Crest brand actually stand out and you have contributed a lot to the nutrition of Solomon Islands especially through your products,” he said.

“Our local production back home is relatively in low mode and we still have a long way to go, to reach the magnitude that you are operating at now.”

He said the visit was primarily not only to see and witness where the products that end up in shops in the Solomon Islands (SI) actually come from and the quality control within which the products go through, but the visit was purposely to learn on how SI can be able to use Fiji’s best practices and successful models for development in the rural areas in Solomon Islands.



MRD Hon. Minister Duddley Kopu and SI High Commissioner to Fiji Joseph Ma’ahanua with the mission team ready to take a tour inside the Crest Chicken processing facility.

in the productive and resource sectors and essential services given that Fiji is ahead of Solomon Islands in terms of rural development.

With MRD embarking on the new SICD Policy, the mission was also an opportunity to establish and forge new partnership with organizations both public or private enterprise working in similar areas and also to customise Fiji’s other successful best practices in the productive and resource sectors towards advancing rural development in Solomon Islands.

Minister Kopu said that Solomon Islands has a large smallholder poultry industry that needs to be properly coordinated and assisted in order to be like Crest chicken in the future.

The need to create farm cooperatives is very important for Solomon Islands as a stepping stone toward developing a proper poultry subsector.

Minister Kopu added that access to finance and whole value chain approach is key to developing the productive and resource sectors.

Meanwhile, Solomon Islands High Commissioner to the Republic

“So, our team’s visit is to see the operations here and to learn what is happening especially the production processes and insights on what can be done on the potentials we have towards developing similar undertaking, not to the magnitude here but at least we start somewhere,” he said.

At the same time, the Company’s Operation Manager, Savenaca Seniloli thanked the Solomon Islands delegation for the visit.

He said that he is looking forward for feedbacks from the visit as he hopes the visit will further boost the relationship between Solomon Islands and Fiji and also form new potential areas of partnership between both countries in the near future as rural development undertaking is concerned.

Crest Chicken is Fiji’s most loved and trusted chicken brand, and is one of Fiji’s food processing companies. Some of the Crest products that are now sold at the Bulkshop, Low price Company and Victory shop in Honiara include Crest chicken, Crest chicken sausages, Crest Chicken Mince, Twisties, tuckers ice cream and Crest eggs to name a few.



# Duff Islands school, church benefit from CDF programme

Despite the challenges encountered in terms of Rural development, Taumako Islands in the VATUD Constituency, Temotu Province not yet forgotten by the government as it received the much-needed assistance through their Member of Parliament (MP) Honourable Freda Tuki for their church and community high school project.

Duff Islands are a small island group lying to the northeast of the Santa Cruz Islands of Temotu Province with Taumako Islands that form part of Duff the largest.

And as the latest beneficiaries of the CDF programme, on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022, MV VATUD Star arrived at Taumako Islands with the materials for St James Chapel, Mothers Union Hall and Tetoli Community High School.

The materials were off loaded on 31<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022.

Due to lack of wharf infrastructure, the unloading was a bit struggle for the vessel crews and community members who were there to help out with unloading of the project materials.

Parish Rector Fr Leslie Loku who received the materials on behalf of Taumako Parish was delighted, despite the challenges.

Fr loku on behalf of the Taumako Parish commended Temotu VATUD Constituency Office for the timely assistance.

“Our churches played a very vital role in maintaining peace and harmony in the community.

“We are so isolated and accessing basic government services is a huge challenge for us, but thanks to the government through our MP Hon. Freda for this assistance.”

He said that churches also stand in the place of our Police force to maintain law and order adding such support to churches is worthy.

Fr Leslie further added that their Chapel was built in Tauhua an artificial Island since the first missionary arrived in Taumako (Duff Islands).

The St James Chapel was built using stones and lime to hold the stones like cement. They only change its roofing irons once during former MP Michael Maina leadership.

At that time Taumako Islands was part of Temotu Pele Constituency.

“We are so grateful today for this assistance from our current MP Honourable Freda Tuki.

“Thank you for priotizing our churches not only in Taumako but the VATUD Constituency as a whole,” Fr Leslie added.

Ngauta community also shared the same sentiments after receiving their materials to build a Jacob ladder which will be used by students and teachers.

The Jacob ladder will replace a dangerous bush track along a steep slope from Ngauta Village to Tetoli Community High School located on the other side of the Island.

Total of 460 bag cement was off loaded at Ngauta Village.

Ngauta Community leader and elder David thanked Temotu VATUD Constituency Office for the huge support.

“We are thankful that our MP supported such community projects and infrastructures which will continue to benefit our people as a whole,” he added.

Taumako Island current population on the island is less than 1000 people.

Constituency Development Officer Justin Faka Tanema thanked the people of Taumako Islands for their support and continuous cooperation towards the constituency office.

He admitted that shipping service is a huge challenge to VATUD Constituency.

“Since MV VATUD Star made its last trip in 2020 to the constituen-



Unloading of various projects materials at Ngauta village, Duff Islands.



Taumako Mothers Union Vice President Brenda Vahimolo (1st left) with the member of her executive after the interview with MRD Communications & Public Relations Officer in Ngauta village, Duff Islands.



VATUD Star crews unloading projects materials at Ngauta village, Duff Islands including materials for the Mothers Union Hall.

cy this is its first trip back to the islands after the Covid-19 pandemic,” Tanema said.

He further stated that his office and their MP will continue to work closely with every communities in Temotu VATUD Constituency to address their development aspirations.

MRD Communications Officer Andrew Fanasia Jr. who accompanied the Vatud constituency delivery team used the opportunity to talk to rural communities in Temotu VATUD Constituency about the vision, objectives and mandates of MRD.

The project delivery completed in Anuta Island, the last Island in the Eastern border of Solomon Islands.



# Ngauta community leaders acknowledge awareness on MRD mandates, key reforms



Some of the Ngauta and surrounding villages community leaders attending the awareness in Ngauta village, Duff Islands.

Ngauta Community leaders in Temotu VATUD Constituency has acknowledged the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) for reaching out to them.

This was after MRD Principal Communication and Public Relations Officer Andrew Fanasia Jnr. held a public awareness on the vision and mandates of the ministry and the purpose of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) programme on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at Ngauta Village, Taumako Islands.

MRD’s vision is to make sure that “all Solomon Islanders become meaningfully participated in development activities to improve their social and economic livelihood.”

Mr Fanasia was accompanying VATUD Constituency Office team during the delivery of their CDF projects in the constituency when he conducted this important awareness.

“This awareness is an eye opener for us,” a community leader David Donald said.

He said such awareness is very important for our rural people to make sure they are informed and educated on the services and programmes that government continue to deliver through the CDF programme.

“Not only that but making sure our people are informed on how CDF is administered is so important because CDF is a public fund and as taxpayers, we have the right to know how it is utilized towards improving our rural livelihoods.”

Mr. Fanasia in his presentation talked key reforms that MRD is undertaking, one of which is the development of the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy.

He explained to Ngauta villagers that this policy (SICD) once approved by Cabinet and implemented will pave the way for MRD with the support of the current government to amend the 2013 CDF Act.

“This is good news to us rural people. If our government and MRD is serious about rural development we want to see these key reforms must happen,” Mr. Donald said.

Mr. Donald on behalf of his people in Ngauta village said that they support the key reforms and the formulation of the new policy.

Meanwhile, the villagers expressed that they have both the land and sea resources but they need the government to reach down to their level and talk to them on how they can utilise their resources to make development happen in Duff Islands.

“We have no major economic activities here. We struggle every day to at least earn little money to help our children in schools and various education institutions in the country.

“We need tangible development on our Islands. We need to utilise our rich sea resources, not only for Duff Islands but the whole of Temotu VATUD Constituency,” they expressed.

Mr. Donald further expressed that to see government officers coming down to their level and talk to the rural people about our government activities and programs is not only commendable but implies that they (Ngauta villagers) are part of the government and

are still embraced by the government in its rural development determinations towards improving rural livelihoods. “Our community is so privileged to host you (Andrew) tonight and shared what our government through MRD is doing towards improving social and economic livelihoods of our rural people.

“We really appreciate this kind of visit and would like to thank your Minister Hon. Duddley Kopu and Permanent Secretary Dr.

Samson Viulu for ensuring that you visited our village and not only that but most importantly information shared through the awareness is really helpful and make us understand the mandates of MRD and the true purpose of CDF,” he expressed.

Mr. Donald also thanked their Constituency Office and their Member of Parliament Honourable Freda Tuki for their continuous support towards rural development aspirations of VATUD despite the challenges faced.

Mr Fanasia acknowledged Ngauta chiefs, community leaders, women leaders, youths and children for their time and keen interests to know more about what the ministry is doing through the implementation of the CDF programme and the execution of government rural development policies to advancing rural development across the country.



MRD Officer Andrew Fanasia with two Lata Health Officers (far end) and MV Vatud Star Captain (2nd left) during the awareness at Ngauta village.



# PS VIULU: 2023 CDF ALLOCATIONS SHOULD BE STRICTLY UTILIZED IN CONSTITUENCIES



MRD Permanent Secretary Dr Samson Viulu

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Dr. Samson Viulu is calling on the 47 Member of Parliament from the provinces to utilize a majority share of their Constituency Development Fund (CDF) allocations for the financial year 2023 in their constituencies instead of in Honiara.

PS Viulu have toured some of the constituencies in the provinces in recent months which gave him the strong conviction that this direction is necessary to promote development in all the 50 constituencies and avoid concentrating all the benefits in Honiara.

While appreciating some of the constituencies that continue to deliver development in their respective constituencies especially in the rural areas to improve rural livelihoods, PS Viulu cited the recent opening of the Gao/Bugotu Constituency Office Complex at Tatamba in Isabel Province in November 2022 as a fine example.

“Gao/Bugotu constituency is leading by example through the opening of their office complex as it will bring government services much closer to the people of that constituency, instead of traveling to either Buala or Honiara.”



Gao/Bugotu constituency office complex funded by by CDF.

He further called on all the constituencies in the provinces to ensure that project materials purchased through the CDF for their constituencies are delivered to the constituencies and not concentrated in Honiara alone.

“If you are a voter that reside in Honiara but is registered in a constituency in the province and you received assistance under the CDF, then you should construct your house in the province. Just by constructing your house in your village, you are providing employment experience and wages to the people in your constituency. You are also developing your community.

“If you are purchasing buses through the CDF under the income generating projects of the constituency then, some of it must be used in the constituency instead of just in Honiara.

“Given that the CDF are meant for constituencies, it is only proper that the funds are utilized in the constituencies to encourage development and sustain the livelihood of our people in the constituencies,” PS Dr. Viulu emphasized.

PS Viulu upon further reflection also calls on the permanent residents of Honiara who are eligible voters to think seriously before deciding where to register so that they do not deprive people from accessing equal assistance through the CDF programs.

“It is sad to see that during my visits to the provinces there are many constituencies that have not progressed in development despite retaining the same MP for the last ten years or more.

“Ironically some of them sit in urban centres yet the livelihood of their people have not improved despite the many millions of dollars they have received over the years.

“The lack of development progress in some of these constituencies was because majority of the funds and project materials through the CDF are used in Honiara and not in the constituencies in the provinces.



A United Church building at Kio Community in East Choiseul constituency funded by CDF in partnership with communities.

“East Choiseul Constituency have shown us the right way forward in Leadership and on the proper utilization of CDF and everyone should learn from them,” PS Viulu pointed out.

CDF’s are allocations of public development funds provided to Constituencies to support rural development initiatives as per constituency development priorities.

According to the Solomon Islands Constituency Development Fund Act 2013 (s.5) ‘funds may be allocated for development purposes to individuals, group income-generating projects, or community projects’.

MRD vision is all Solomon Islanders become meaningfully participated in development activities to improve their social and economic livelihood.



# VATUD communities support applauded



Community members in Tikopia help out in unloading of project materials which took one week to complete.

Temotu VATUD Constituency Development Officer Justin Faka Tanema has commended communities in VATUD Constituency for their unwavering support and cooperation with his constituency office team members that ensued in the successful delivery of projects in the constituency.

Due to the remoteness of the five (5) main islands (Vanikoro, Anuta, Tikopia, Utupua & Duff) which made up the Constituency (VATUD) in the eastern remote part of Solomon Islands, the challenge was it took a month to load MV VATUD Star in Honiara with project materials for 2020 to 2022.

“Most of the projects which supposed to be delivered in 2020 and 2021 could not be delivered as expected due to the Covid-19 restrictions in 2019. This has caused a huge challenge for our office and VATUD Constituency as a whole. But that does not wither our commitment to support and deliver services to our constituents to improve their livelihoods,” CDO Tanema said.

The journey to deliver the much-needed projects in the Constituency started on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.

The vessel stopped over at Nukukaisi in Makira Province on Sunday 23rd October and left on Tuesday 25th October 2022 for Lata, Temotu Provincial Headquarter. Nukukaisi is a settlement in Makira Province where most of the Vatud registered voters especially Tikopia people are residing with proximity to access basic government services that are inaccessible in their community due to the remoteness of their Islands.

The unloading of VATUD Constituency project materials began on Duff Islands on 30th October to 1st November 2022. In Duff Islands most projects are community projects.

CDO Tanema thanked Ngauta and other surrounding communities for their prompt response.

“Hats off to the leaders, chiefs, women and youths for their huge support by helping MV VATUD Star crews to unload the materials. “It is not that easy as we think. Unloading of bulky goods or materials when there is no proper wharf is a real challenge. Lack of wharf in the Islands has caused us to depend much on sea tides to move the materials from the ship through the reef and to the shore. “Thank you very much on behalf of our Member of Parliament Honourable Freda Tuki and our Constituency Office,” CDO Tanema conveyed the appreciation.

The ship left Taumako (Duff Islands) and arrived in Nembao - Utupua on Wednesday 2nd November 2022 in the morning. At around 12-1am between Duff Islands and Utupua a mother from Duff gave birth to a healthy baby boy in the midst of passengers on the vessel’s hatch.

The pregnant mother boarded the vessel to see her mother in Utupua. Luckily the mother was assisted by Lata medical team which is also onboard MV Vatud Star. The medical team also toured VATUD Constituency as part of their health community outreach program.

VATUD Constituency under the CDF program supported Nembao clinic rest house by supplying building hardware materials for the clinic.

The vessel left Utupua late in the evening and arrived in Vanikoro, Savol Bay on the 3rd of November 2022.

The unloading of materials for church projects took two days before the vessel moved to Murivae another port in Vanikoro on the 5th of No-

vember 2022. Murivae Anglican Church also received materials under CDF program for the completion of their church building.

CDO Tanema also applauded the church members and community members in both Savol Bay and Murivae for helping out in unloading of the materials under the scorching sun.

The vessel sails off Murivae late in the evening of Saturday 5th November 2022 and arrived in Tikopia on Sunday night 6th November 2022. In Tikopia the unloading started on Monday 7th November 2022 and ended on Monday 14th November 2022, excluding Sunday.

A good number of community projects were earmarked for Tikopia since 2019 but cannot be implemented due to Covid-19 pandemic that struck the country in 2019.

According to CDO Tanema the MV Vatud Star 22 October trip was the first ever trip to the constituency after the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted making it possible for the constituency office to deliver project materials for year 2020 to 2022.

Mr. Tanema however expressed that a week-long of unloading in Tikopia has caused fatigue amongst the vessel crews.

“But thank you again to the communities, sports club and church members of both Faea and Rafenga villages for supporting our vessel crews. The community work has proved that nothing is impossible through working together and teamwork.”

He also added that despite the challenges they face in terms of development, their people still work together to achieve their development aspirations.

Tanema expressed his regret to the people of Anuta for not making it to their island due to Covid-19 alert from Lata medical authority. The health alert had caused the chief in Anuta to stop MV VATUD Star from landing at Anuta.

Mr. Tanema said he respected the Anuta chief’s decision but assured them that their projects will be shipped to them in any first available transport in due course. The same goes to some of the community recipients in Tikopia.”

Meanwhile project recipients in Temotu VATUD Constituency expressed their gratitude to their MP for the timely development assistance. MRD’s core function is to coordinate the work of the fifty (50) Constituencies in terms of the implementation of the CDF Programs towards advancing rural development and growth in our rural areas to improve livelihoods of all Solomon Islanders.

CDO Tanema then thanked Permanent Secretary Dr Samson Viulu and his officers for continuous support to VATUD and other constituencies through the CDF program. “Vatud Constituency Office also like to thank MRD Communication and Public Relations Officer Andrew Fana-sia Jr for representing MRD throughout the project delivery trip. “We appreciate the role he played by giving right information about MRD to our people and also experience the challenges our rural people continue to face,” CDO Tanema added.

He further stated that VATUD will continue to work with MRD to implement the government policies in terms of Rural development.

CDF is funded by SIG and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC).



# MRD mission team holds fruitful



Seated left-right is Solomon Islands Commissioner to Fiji Joseph Ma’ahanua, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Dr. Samson Viulu and the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs Pita Tagicakakirewa flanked by MRD delegation, Solomon Islands Deputy Commissioner to Fiji Madolyn Yalu standing far left with two female officers from the iTaukei Affairs secretariat support team.

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) policy management team that is currently in Fiji on official engagements had a successful meeting with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs (MTA) on Friday 11th November, 2022 in Fiji.

Led by the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma’ahanua and the MRD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu, the team met with the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Pita Tagicakakirewa where they were able to discuss legislative mechanisms and policies that guides the ministry’s (MTA) operation.

The meeting was dubbed a success as the visiting delegation learnt more about the functions and roles of iTaukei and how Fiji implement mechanisms through the iTaukei Affairs to support its indigenous people and to guarantee the development needs of its rural communities are addressed.

Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu took the opportunity and informed his counterpart, PS Tagicakakirewa on the legislative reforms that MRD is undertaking which include the development of the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) policy that would lead towards reforming constituency developments in Solomon Islands.

PS Viulu also informed his counterpart on the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) programme that MRD is administering and how it is implemented in the 50 constituencies towards improving social and economic livelihood of rural Solomon Islanders.

While acknowledging H.E Commissioner Joseph Ma’ahanua and PS Viulu together with the visiting team, PS Tagicakakirewa said that in relation to rural development framework, Fiji has two administrations.

He said the first one is called District Administration and the other

one is the iTaukei Administration which is under the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs adding Fiji is using an integrated rural development framework.

PS Tagicakakirewa told the team that under the ministry of iTaukei administration they also have a number of institutions which include the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, iTaukei Affairs Board, iTaukei land trust board, iTaukei Trust Fund Board, Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development.

He also explained to the delegation how iTaukei operates and how it works with the Ministry of Rural Development towards implementing their development programs in the rural communities in Fiji.

PS Tagicakakirewa added that his ministry (MTA) was pleased to support in this way and said that they are looking forward to provide technical support in terms of policies and legislative reforms in the near future towards advancement of rural developments in the Solomon Islands.

Meanwhile, PS Viulu on behalf of the Minister for MRD Hon. Dudley Kopu and his team expressed profound gratitude to PS Tagicakakirewa for his time and for going through the functions and mechanisms that iTaukei is operating on with the MRD delegation.

PS Viulu said that his team has learned a lot from the meeting through information shared adding that there are takeaways that will certainly be integrated into the reforms that MRD is undertaking particularly the new SICD Policy that will lead towards reforming constituency developments in our rural areas.

“The current MRD team is more than determined to improve the facilitation and implementation of the CDF and there are potential aspects we have learned from the presentations by the iTaukei Affairs PS where we can embark on to improve rural development and



PS Samson Viulu raised a point during the dialogue.



Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Pita Tagicakakirewa raises a point during the dialogue.



# dialogue with iTaukei Affairs, Fiji



Solomon Islands Commissioner to Fiji Joseph Ma’ahanua (close to camera) raised a point during the meeting with iTaukei Affairs.

livelihood of our people in Solomon Islands.

“Thank you for this very important and detailed meeting.

“We know we will not be able to adopt the full iTaukei model but we will try to adopt some aspects of it that are relevant to our local context,” PS Viulu stressed.

“What we have learned and come to realize from your presentation is that, you have all the relevant legislations and institutional setups in place. DCGA through MRD is embarking along the same path to establish relevant laws to anchor long term tangible development in the constituencies”, PS Viulu told his counterpart.

MRD mission team also learned that the Fiji Government had set up the Fiji Holdings Limited which is owned by the iTaukei people and owns a good number of commercial properties and businesses.

The visiting team from MRD has also learned from the discussions with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs that it provides financial support to iTaukei entrepreneurs through the banks as loans instead of direct cash grants.

The MRD mission team’s engagements in Fiji is an opportunity to explore opportunities and learn from the challenges and successes of rural development initiatives and models in Fiji mostly in the productive and resource sectors and essential services given that Fiji is ahead of Solomon Islands in terms of rural development.

With MRD embarking on the new SICD Policy, the mission is also an opportunity to establish and forge new partnership with organizations both public or private enterprise working in similar areas and also to customise Fiji’s other successful best practices in the produc-

tive and resource sectors towards advancing rural development in Solomon Islands.

Another determination of the mission is to validate SICD Policy with designated key informants of the University of the South Pacific (USP) particularly Solomon Islands academics and senior working people of Solomon Islands residing in Fiji.

The MRD team will also use the opportunity to visit specific Fiji Government Ministries especially in the productive sectors such as Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Tourisms, Commerce and other sectors that are relevant to rural development in Solomon Islands.

On Thursday 10th November 2022, the team visited the Crest Chicken processing factory at Colo-i-Suva.

The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs (MTA) is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring government programs focused on the governance and wellbeing of the iTaukei people.

According MTA, it provides a direct link between Government, iTaukei institutions and its administration across the fourteen provinces.

“Through its various institutes, it is the custodian of official records relating to iTaukei land, fishing grounds, headship titles, traditional knowledge and expressions of culture; it’s mandated to deal with dispute resolution over land, fishing grounds, chiefly and traditional headship titles; it safeguards and preserves language and culture through advocacy programs. The Ministry also administers the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development.”



Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Dr. Samson Viulu presents a gift of carved turtle to the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Pita Tagicakakirewa. The turtle symbolizes patience and steady progress by the MRD in terms of its reforms. It is also the mascot for the SI PG2023.



# SI professionals, academics in Fiji consulted on SICD policy



MRD Hon. Minister Duddley Kopu and SI High Commissioner to Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma'ahanua sits in front with members of the MRD policy management team and Solomon Islands working professionals and academics residing in Fiji during the consultation on Sunday 13 November, 2022 at USP Laucala, Fiji.

The Solomon Islands working professionals and academics in Fiji has been consulted on the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy, an important reform undertaking spearheaded by the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) towards reforming and decentralizing developments in the rural Solomon Islands.

Held at the USP Faculty of Business and Economics (FBC) Lecture Theatre on Sunday 13th November, 2022, the consultation enables Solomon Islands working class people and students residing in Fiji to put forward their invaluable ideas, views and recommendations about the policy concept before a final paper is put through to cabinet for further deliberation.

The consultation was graced by the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Fiji His Excellency Joseph Ma'ahanua who attended and make contributions in his capacity as an ordinary citizen of Solomon Islands.

Presentations focused mainly on the Administration of CDF as presented by Director of Rural Development Division (RDD), Milfred Delemani and MRD Financial Controller, Timothy Paoka while the draft policy was presented by Director Governance, Hickson George and Deputy Secretary Technical, Hugo Hebala made presentation on the proceedings from provincial consultations.

It was a successful consultation as the professionals and academics contributed constructively to the concept policy with invaluable ideas and recommendations on approaches to improve the CDF mechanism toward advancing rural development in our rural areas to improve livelihoods of every Solomon Islanders.

Contributors acknowledged MRD for undertaking this important policy reform that will lead towards reforming the constituency developments and decentralizing government services in the rural areas.

They emphasized the need to streamline the linkages between constituency development supports with the provincial government systems like the Ward Development Committees and other existing mechanisms.

The consultations identified issues and problems under the current constituency development practices through the CDF and recommen-

dations to improve or include in the new SICD Policy, the following areas: Guidelines & Regulations, Governance, Planning, Implementation, Management, Monitoring & Evaluation, Reporting, Constituency Development Centers and Committee and, the General Recommendations on the CDF Reform Act.

In his remarks, SI High Commissioner to Fiji H.E Ma'ahanua thanked the MRD team under the leadership of Honourable Minister Duddley Kopu and Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu to include the Solomon Islands community in Fiji in the consultations to develop this important Policy, through which their voices and ideas can also be included and considered in the development of the policy framework.

He highlighted that the outcome of the SICD Policy will be interesting to note how best the policy will serve the people in rural areas through CDF and how the policy can link to the other existing development mechanisms.

Meanwhile, Minister Kopu who lead the MRD delegation on official engagements in Fiji recognized everyone for their participation and invaluable contributions.

He said the views and suggestions are important as it will help the policy task force in the development of the policy framework.

Minister Kopu also emphasized that the SICD Policy key goals are to support and provide a policy framework to review the 2013 CDF Act; and it will enhance and contribute towards empowering all Solomon Islanders to participate meaningfully in constituency development activities to improving their livelihoods.

He said the SICD Policy shall focus on the following key thematic areas: socio-economic infrastructures, livelihoods income generating projects, essential services such as health, education and police- security, and downstream processing and value adding.

Both the working professionals and students thanked MRD for giving them that vital opportunity to participate in the consultation discussions, where they can share their ideas and views on the current CDF practices and recommendations to be included in the first ever SICD Policy.



SI working professionals and academics who are part of the consultation.



Dr. Gordon Nanau make his contribution during the consultation.



# MP Ramofafia prioritizes tangible development in Fataleka Constituency

The Member of Parliament (MP) for Fataleka Constituency Honourable Rexon Ramofafia continues to prioritize tangible rural development as materials for projects worth SBD4.8 million shipped to his constituency, December 2022.

These projects are part of the government's ongoing support for his constituency through the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) under the Constituency Development Program.

MRD Principal Rural Development Officers Agnes Bopi Tanihorara and Director Governance Hickson George were on the ground to witness the loading of the project materials on Thursday 1st December 2022 before shipment left Honiara to the constituency.

Fataleka Constituency projects fall under two main sectors in terms of project and cost breakdown.

For year 2022, the Fataleka Constituency focus mainly on two main sectors – Infrastructure (Housing scheme) and Income-generating activities.

The infrastructure sector includes; housing projects (roofing Irons, Pallets of cement, Bricks, nails, steel rods, ring and tie wires, Masonite including other necessary hardware materials.

The development of decent, affordable rural housing can improve the lives of those with inadequate shelter, while at the same time benefiting the local economy.

It also guarantees an improvement in the standard of living of the underprivileged population in rural areas.

These projects were aligned with the Fataleka Constituency Development plans and priorities for 2019-2023. Having these additional projects will further enhance the socio-economic development of the constituency which is the key objective of the CDF programme.

A total of \$ 4.8 million plus worth of CDF project materials were shipped to the Fataleka constituency, thus, it was a milestone achievement by the Fataleka constituency office and the Ministry of Rural Development.

Honourable Ramofafia also travelled to his constituency in December 2022 and met with his people and also oversee the handing over of the materials to the people in the constituency.

The earmarked project recipients thanked the SIG and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) for the ongoing support toward CDF.

MRD continues to make sure that all Solomon Islanders become meaningfully participated in development activities to improve their social and economic livelihood.

CDF Programme is administered by the Ministry of Rural Development and is supported by the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) as a donor.

Hon Rexon Ramofafia who is the Minister for the Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination (MNPDC) and is the current Member of Parliament for the Fataleka Constituency.



MRD senior officers posing for a photograph with joyful members of Fataleka Constituency during the loading of materials for projects in Fataleka under the Constituency Development Program (Photo: MRD)



MRD Principle Monitoring & Evaluation Officer Agnes Bopi Tanihorara and Director Governance Hickson George inspecting the materials at the vessel. (Photo: MRD)



Road project also funded by CDF in the constituency under the leadership of Hon. Ramofafia.



Some of the materials for Fataleka constituency were loaded onto the vessel. (Photo: MRD)



Some of the roofing iron for housing projects in Fataleka constituency is ready for shipment. (Photo: MRD)





# CDF

**Constituency Development Fund**

## IMPACTS

- Alleviate poverty across Solomon Islands.
- Addressed basic needs and improved food security.
- Benefits of development more equitably distributed to Solomon Islanders.

## OUTCOMES

- Alleviate poverty and improve provision of basic needs.
- Increase food security.
- Increase employment and labour mobility opportunities in rural areas.
- Improve livelihoods of Solomon Islanders.

## OUTPUTS

- Establish small businesses.
- Develop local economies.
- Create employment opportunities.
- Construct basic infrastructures.

Sponsors





# SICD Policy validation workshop a success



Group photos participants at the SICDP Validation Workshop held at the Heritage Park Hotel on Tuesday 6 December 2022.

A one-day workshop to validate the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy 2023-2033 was held on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 at the Heritage Park Hotel in Honiara.

Government Permanent Secretaries, Senior government officials, diplomatic corps and dignitaries, Private sector and Non-government organization representatives attended the workshop.

The meeting was a success as participants contributed constructively to the home-grown policy with invaluable inputs and recommendations that will lead towards reforming the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and also on approaches to improve the CDF mechanism towards advancing rural development in our rural areas to improve livelihood of every Solomon Islanders.

Honorable Minister for the Ministry of Rural Development Duddley Kopu in his official remark said SICD policy is aligned with DCGA Policy Objectives: 5.2.2.4 (a) Review of CDF Act and Implementation of its regulations.

“Despite the many criticisms against the CDF, it continues to touch the lives of our people in the remote areas of the country. Therefore, this policy once implemented will improve and strengthen the governance, transparency and accountability practices of CDF. It is the intention of the government to support this new policy that will lead to the review of the CDF Act 2013.”

Discussions were centered on the structure of the Policy, Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, Policy Goals, Policy Outcomes, Implementation/ Monitoring and Partnership/Collaboration.

Outcome of discussions were positive giving MRD as the custodian of the policy the nod to move ahead with the development of the policy.

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Country Manager Berdi Berdiyev acknowledged MRD for undertaking this important policy reform that will lead to reforming constituency developments and decentralizing government services in the rural areas.

“UNDP is pleased to support this consultation as the work to set up a policy that will places CDF in a framework that is consistent with international norms and values.

Mr Berdiyev said that UNDP on the global and regional arena continue to offer development assistance and work closely with countries to support their efforts in the development and implementation of good governance frameworks for CDFs.

Both Minister Kopu and Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu expressed their profound appreciation on behalf of MRD and the Solomon Islands Government's to UNDP for its support towards the SICDP Validation Workshop.

Minister Kopu also thanked all the participants for their invaluable inputs and feedbacks towards the formulation of the policy.

“With your respected technical knowledge, experiences, competencies, and comparative advantage, our ministry will take on board all your constructive feedbacks and move forward with the development of the policy for the betterment of our rural people.”



Participants during group discussion session.



Ministry of Communications and Aviation Director of Communications Alwyn Danitofea making his presentation at the workshop.

Permanent Secretary Dr. Viulu also applauded participants for their critical input and recommendations and affirmed it will add more value to the policy.

“We know we cannot do this alone, but we believe we can do better by working closely with our stakeholders and partners,” he added.

Dr. Viulu further added that this new policy direction seeks to take an integrated approach and therefore MRD values the strong partnership and collaboration with its key stakeholders and partners (SIG line ministries, Donors, and Private Sector).

Special Secretary to the Prime Minister Albert Kabui from the Office of the Prime Minister also attended the afternoon session and thanked the participants for their contribution and affirmed that the current government (DCGA) fully supports this undertaking.

MRD also acknowledged the presence of the Japanese Ambassador to the Solomon Islands, His Excellency MIWA Yoshiaki, British High Commissioner Tom Coward, Deputy Commissioner of New Zealand Ms. Kate Bradlow, and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) Embassy Attaché Mr. Wang Xuan at the workshop.



# 12 takes delivery of a boat each, thanks to MP Tovosia



Some of the East Guadalcanal Constituency recipients and East Guadalcanal Constituency Officers pose for a photograph with MRD Deputy Secretary Technical Hugo Hebala (2nd left) after the brief official handover ceremony.

The National Government through the Member of Parliament (MP) for East Guadalcanal Constituency (EGC) Honourable Bradley Tovosia has supported 12 of its constituents with a fibreglass boat each.

The 12 recipients took delivery of the boats from Southern Coast Fibreglass Company which manufactured the products. Located at Alligator area in Central Guadalcanal the company is locally owned and managed by Michael Ruben.

The boats are fully funded by the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) programme and EGC is the recipient while Southern Coast Fibreglass Company is the supplier under the transport project.

The constituency qualified for the transport project this year and the 12 were the first batch of the project with a grant cost of \$500,000.

EGC under the leadership of MP Tovosia will deliver another 12 boats for the next recipients early next year.

Speaking at a ceremony to hand over the boats to the recipients on 13 December 2022, Deputy Secretary Technical (DST) of MRD, Hugo Hebala commended MP Tovosia for his leadership and continuous support toward development initiatives which leads to improving rural livelihoods in his constituency.

He also congratulated the first 12 selected recipients.

Mr. Hebala also acknowledged MP Tovosia and his constituency officers for this very important project and also thanked the recipients for recognizing the importance of transportation and its benefit to the Constituency.

“You are so fortunate to have these assets. I believe, these boats will contribute meaningfully to your needs and existing demand for reliable transport services in East Guadalcanal.”

Mr. Hebala then urged the recipients to take good care of their boats and look after them well.

Meanwhile, Hebala said the handover demonstrated the ongoing commitment of MRD in partnership with constituencies, in this case East Guadalcanal constituency toward improving social and economic livelihood in the constituency through the CDF programme.

Transportation as branded has a lot of benefits and importance to our lives.

Mr. Hebala said with the support of the boats, it will ease transportation challenges of the beneficiaries and also the constituency.

Some of the benefits that the assets will bring to the constituency will include;

- Facilitate movement of people from EGC to neighbouring villages in East Guadalcanal,
- Provide reliable services, especially for the sick people from the constituency to the nearby clinics or area health centres,



Ministry of Rural Development Deputy Secretary Technical Hugo Hebala delivers his brief remarks. From the background are some of the boats that delivered to the 12 recipients.

- Transportation business is important in East Guadalcanal as it generates revenue for the local transport owners,
- It also links local farmers, fishermen and entrepreneurs to the local market.

The support is aligned to the CDF program outcome 1 which is; to alleviate poverty and improve provision of basic needs.

President of Moli Chief Council/ Vice President of Qaenalu Movement Melgibs Topugu on behalf of the four wards in East Guadalcanal thanked their MP Tovosia for the huge support.

EGC Accountant Officer Reuben Talusivana also shared his appreciation on behalf of the constituency office to the DCGA Government through MRD for its continuous support towards rural development undertakings in the country.

He also extended his profound gratitude to the government of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), the only donor partner that continue to support government in the CDF programme.

“Words cannot express enough our appreciation to the PRC for its continuous support to our government toward rural development in East Guadalcanal constituency and the rest of the 49 constituencies in the country,” he added.

Project Officer Illeen Sulukonina affirmed that the constituency office will continue to work closely with their MP and MRD to advance their development aspirations.

Representatives from Guadalcanal Province, community leaders and elders, church leaders, chiefs, women, youth and children witnessed the handing over program.



# Minister Kopu urges colleague MPs to embrace partnership



Minister for the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Honourable Dudley Kopu has urged his colleague Members of Parliament (MPs) to embrace partnership with relevant stakeholders to build the resilience of our constituencies.

Minister Kopu was contributing to the debate on the 2023 Appropriation Bill 2022 in Parliament, December 2022.

He said constituencies through their elected leaders should take this course to build the resilience of our respective constituencies by encouraging investments in small and big ways, in order for us to achieve sustainable economic growth.

“...we cannot achieve this overnight and alone but we should value the importance of partnership and collaborations. I believe that we can achieve more by working together and coordinate better

with all our stakeholders and key partners,” he emphasized.

At the same time, Minister Kopu urged his colleague MPs to align their annual work plans for 2023 with the theme of the 2023 budget.

The 2023 National Budget theme is, “Together, Build, Invest and Recover for a resilient and sustainable economy.”

On the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), Minister Kopu said that despite the many negative perceptions against the fund, CDF is one of very few funds that directly touched the lives of the most disadvantaged communities in the rural areas.

CDFs are allocations of public development funds provided to Constituencies to support rural development initiatives as per constituency development priorities.



MRD officials with participants during an inaugural consultation on the new Solomon Islands Constituency Development Policy held in Isabel, August 2022.

## MRD 2023 priorities set

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) 2023 all-embracing priorities are all set for implementation.

Honourable Minister Dudley Kopu revealed in Parliament, December.

These priorities include;

- Implementation of the new Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy
- Review of the CDF Act 2013 and development of the CDF Regulations
- Pilot the establishment of Constituency Development Growth Centres (CDGCs).
- Drive the Constituency Development Plan through Constituency Development Profiling
- Establishing new partnerships with donors

Topping the priorities is the implementation of the new SICD Policy which is developed by MRD.

He highlighted that this policy is the first ever policy on constituency development since the country gained its political independence in 1978 and since the establishment of the CDF programme in the 90s under different names.

Work on the new policy started in early July 2022 with consultation conducted in 7 provinces except for Choiseul and Makira Provinces due to financial constraints. On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, a validation workshop on the new policy involving all line ministries, donor agencies, bilateral and multilateral partners and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) including the private sector was held with overwhelming support from everyone in attendance.

Overwhelming support was given to the CDF program to continue as obvious from feedbacks and recommendations from rural dwellers and stakeholders but with improved delivery mechanisms and a stronger governance that is aligned to the Public Financial Management (PFM) Act 2013.

Mr Kopu said the policy will prioritize an integrated approach, good governance, improve delivery mechanisms through effective partnership, de-

centralization through establishment of constituency development growth centres (CDGC) and posting of seconded officers to all 50 constituencies to be based in these centres, promote value adding, retain ownership of properties and moveable assets, encourage constituencies to establish viable business entities that can provide proper services to our people and streamline resources to be focused more on the productive and resource sectors but not forgetting the essential services.

“The policy will pave the way for strengthening compliance through the amended CDF Act so that all constituencies shall ensure to comply with requirements before funds can be released,” he stressed.

On the Review of the CDF Act 2013 and development of the CDF Regulations, Kopu said that his ministry already has the draft regulations in place and aiming to incorporate the changes by June/July 2023.

With regards to the establishment of CDGCs, he said the priority will be for constituencies that already have registered land available for development and those that have already established such initiative in their constituencies adding these include Gao/Bugotu, East Choiseul, East Malaita and South Guadalcanal constituencies to name a few.

On the Constituency Development Profiling, Mr Kopu said this will involve the rolling out of constituency planning tools and processes, capacity building for constituency officers on specific skills and knowledge such as planning, project management, research, data collection and analysis and, monitoring and evaluation.

He added that establishing new partnerships with donors is another top priority his ministry will be executing in 2023.

“...we cannot achieve this overnight and alone but we should value the importance of partnership and collaborations. We believe that we can achieve more by working together and coordinate better with all our key partners and stakeholders. MRD has received strong indication from other donor agencies to continue providing support to our reforms and that we are looking forward to working closely with our key partners next year to deliver services to improve socio-economic livelihoods of our people in the rural areas.”



# PS Viulu attends workshop on CDF and Anti-Money Laundering in NZ



MRD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu presenting the new and first ever SICD Policy to the meeting audience. *Photo courtesy of GOPAC*

The Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) Dr. Samson Viulu has attended a regional workshop on Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) and Anti-Money Laundering in Wellington, New Zealand from 28-29 November, 2022.

The meeting brought together parliamentarians along with integrity officials including Ombudsmen and Leadership Commission from the Pacific region.

PS Viulu said the inclusion of Solomon Islands more especially MRD in the meeting was necessary because Solomon Islands like other Pacific Island countries are also adopting the CDF programme towards advancing its rural development aspirations.

He said the meeting ratifications will lead to a new Pacific-focused toolkit on CDFs to boost fund oversight, accountability, transparency and strengthen good governance.

PS Viulu added that CDF allocation to constituencies has since increased over the years therefore, guaranteeing standard practices are adopted is crucial while citing the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy that MRD is developing as a way forward to improve the CDF programme and rural development undertaking in the country.

“CDF is one of the very few funds that go directly to the rural people. The only programme that government through MRD is executing to decentralize development and government services in our rural areas. Yet, standard practices need strengthening to improve delivery mechanisms and boost accountability of the fund and its process,” PS Viulu

highlighted.

He added that with the reforms that MRD is undertaking and the political support from the government towards reforming the CDF programme, he is hopeful that CDF will remain one of the priority programmes of the government towards advancing rural development in our rural areas to improving social and economic livelihoods of Solomon Islanders.

PS Viulu also used the opportunity and did a presentation on the new SICD Policy which was well received by everyone in attendance.

PS Viulu had suggested during the regional workshop for an annual regional CDF conference bringing different countries to share their best practices, successful experiences and challenges in implementing the CDF program in their respective countries.

PS Viulu along with Ombudsman Fred Fakarii, Ombudsman Legal Advisor Nelson Dhitta and LCC Chairman Stevenson attended the workshop in NZ.

A biennial GOPAC Oceania General Meeting was also held during the workshop.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported the two-day CDF conference and development of the CDF toolkit through the UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project (UN-PRAC), supported by the New Zealand Aid Programme. Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) Oceania is assisted financially by the GOPAC Office in Qatar and the Government of Qatar.



MRD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu standing second row from right with officials who attended the two-day workshop in Wellington, New Zealand. *Photo courtesy of GOPAC.*



# MRD mission team visits Grace Road Farm in Fiji

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) policy management team have visited the Grace Road Farm at Navua in Fiji on 14 November, 2022.

The delegation included MRD Minister Honourable Duddley Kopu, his officials and the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Fiji Joseph Ma'ahanua.

The team visited the farm's rice milling/processing factory and its Hydroponic facility.

During the visit, Director of Grace Farm Group, Sung Jin Lee explained to the team how the farm has been developed and operated over the years and its expansion in business operation in Fiji.

The delegation was impressed to hear success stories of the farm company and how it continues to expand its business operation in Fiji, a potential aspect that can be replicated to suite the Solomon Islands context especially on smaller scale for a start.

The team also discussed with Director Lee on areas of future potential engagement.

Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu said information and take-aways from the field visit will certainly be integrated into the reforms that MRD is undertaking particularly the first ever Solomon Islands Constituency Development (SICD) Policy that will lead towards reforming constituency developments in our rural areas.

The visit was a success as the delegation learned a lot from the challenges and success of the company.

The MRD delegation's engagements in Fiji was an opportunity to explore opportunities and learn from the challenges and successes of rural development initiatives and models in Fiji mostly in the productive and resource sectors and essential services given that Fiji is ahead of Solomon Islands in terms of rural development.

With MRD embarking on the new SICD Policy, the mission also an opportunity to establish and forge new partnership with organizations both public or private enterprise working in similar areas and also to customise Fiji's other successful best practices in the productive and resource sectors towards advancing rural development in Solomon Islands.

PS Viulu acknowledged Grace farm group management for accepting the team's request to visit their farm premises at Navua and also for the information shared.

He said the visit was primarily not only to see and witness how the farm operates and listen to its success stories, but the visit was purposely to learn on how Solomon Islands can be able to use Fiji's best practices and successful models for development in the rural areas in Solomon Islands especially in the productive sector.

"So, our team's visit is to see the operations here and to learn what is happening especially the production and operation processes and insights on what can be done on the potentials we have towards developing similar undertaking, not to the magnitude that Grace Farm is



Director of Grace Farm Group, Sung Jin Lee explains to the team the processes it takes to mill or process rice. This photo was taken inside Grace Farm milling factory at Navua.



Grace Farm Hydroponic facility at Navua.

operating at but at least we can work on some aspects that workable for us in the Solomon Islands," he said.

Director of Grace Farm Group, Sung Jin Lee thanked the Solomon Islands delegation for the visit.

She hopes the visit will further strengthen the relationship between Solomon Islands and Fiji especially Grace Farm company and also form new potential areas of partnership between both countries in the near future.

The Grace Road Group's businesses include agriculture and food processing, construction, restaurant and food, retail, hotel and resort and renewable energy.

The company is owned by a Korean. ■



Cucumbers grown in buckets using the hydroponic practices.



The MRD delegation at the Grace Farm at Navua Hydroponic facility.



# INFORMATION ABOUT CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)



Gao-Bugotu  
Constituency  
office complex  
funded by CDF.

## What is Constituency Development Fund's (CDF)?

CDF's are allocations of public development funds provided to Constituencies to support rural development initiatives as per constituency development priorities. According to the Solomon Islands Constituency Development Fund Act 2013 (s.5) 'funds may be allocated for development purposes to individuals, group income-generating projects, or community projects.'

## Where does CDF Funds comes from?

The money comes from the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) budget and donors to help communities.

## CDF Goals and Objectives?

The CDF aims to help communities in these areas:

- Generate income;
- Encourage and bring about development in constituencies;
- Generally to improve the livelihoods of ALL citizens of Solomon Islands.

## Who is entitled to access CDF?

The funding assistance is targeted at alleviating poverty and improving livelihoods of rural Solomon Islanders. This means every Solomon Islanders are entitle to access this fund for its intended purposes. Your consituency offices will draw up a Constituency Plan to help you access your priority projects to be implemented in your communities. This plan would outline the priority projects identified by the rural communities under different sectors, such as education, health, water supply and sanitation, infrastructure, telecommunications, energy, women and youth, and village development.

Ministry of Rural Development annually through its development budget has been allocated funds under the Constituency Development Funding (CDF) programme to implement the SSCD (SIG Support to Constituency Development Fund), and PRCSCD (People Republic of China Constituency Development Fund).

The CDF program consist of four main sub-projects:

- Cash Grant or Constituency Administration Funding.
- Income Generating projects.
- Water and Sanitation, Hygiene projects (WASH).
- Social Infrastructures Projects.

Water project  
in Temotu Pele  
Constituency  
funded by CDF.

