

EDUCATION FOCUS

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Minister of Education, Hon. Tozen Leokana received the key from Australia's Foreign Minister Senator Wong and New Zealand High Commissioner Jonathan Schwas during the handover of Mbokona Community High School Science Laboratory.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the third edition of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) Newsletter!

This third edition features 100-day Program of Action, ongoing socialization and implementation of the Education Act 2023, key messages and key events.

This year, MEHRD is embarking on SIG 100-day Program of Action mandated under the Government of National Unity and Transformation (GNUT), new and exciting projects including implementation of the Education Act 2023 and its subordinate documents.

Besides, MEHRD's focus will also be on expanding our network and engaging more proactively with schools, principals, education providers, and the school community for more meaningful engagement in addressing students' learning needs and character-building initiatives.

We are delighted to provide insightful, accurate first-hand information and avenues where you can access useful information concerning our education system.

We encourage you to submit your thoughts, suggestions, and contributions for future editions through the link provided here. Your feedback is invaluable to continuing the journey together.

Hon. Tozen Leokana
Minister of Education and Human Resources Development

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MEHRD embark on 100 days program of action

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) is embarking on a Program of Action to implement the 100 days priority activities mandated under the Government for National Unity and Transformation (GNUT).

Among the Program of Action, GNUT has mandated MEHRD to complete the new teachers' salary structure for implementation in 2025.

The other Program of Action are reviewing the School Education Grant Policy; Design a School Infrastructure Plan for the period 2025-2029, Develop a Tertiary Student Loan Scheme (for implementation in 2025 or 2026), Review the SITESA Act 2017 to amend provisions for scholarships and review existing legislative and policy frameworks with the intent to design a new legislation for the TVET sector.



PM Manele and SICCI Chairlady Namoi Kaluae showing the 100 days plan and government policy for the next four years.

ELF Socialization to State Schools successfully conducted

The Education Legislative Framework (ELF) socialization to three State schools namely King George Six NSS, Waimapuru NSS and Ngari CHS were successfully conducted as ELF Core Team set to roll out the socialization and implementation of the Education Act 2023 and its subordinate documents to Education Providers, Schools and other key stakeholders.

These schools took the lead as MEHRD as the Education Provider is responsible for administering the new Education Act 2023.



Ngari CHS Teachers during ELF Socialization at the school on 8th-12th April 2024.

At King George Six NSS the ELF socialization was conducted on 27th-28th March followed by Waimapuru NSS on 9th-10th April and Ngari CHS on 8th-12th April.

The aim was to introduce the process of ELF so that teachers are familiarized and well-acquainted themselves with the important contents of the ELF.

It is imperative that School Leaders and Teachers understands the content of the Act so they can begin adhering to it.

The focus of the socialization sessions was on the Education Act 2023, Education Regulation 2024, Education Funding Code, Learning Framework, Secondary School Certificate Scheme and Administrative Instruction for Schools, ECE Centers, School Boards, and School Communities, Teachers and Leaders.

To ensure participatory socialization sessions, different content delivery approaches were used, particularly, general overview on respective ELF document presented using PowerPoint, group discussion, feedbacks and question and answer.

Participants recognized that there were a lot of information to absorb during the socialization sessions. Despite the short time frame, they were able to understand the core of the ELF documents that were presented.

Current MEHRD approaches for ELF socialization

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) is currently undertaking a comprehensive socialization outreach program that will include civil societies, NGO's Provincial Education Boards, Education Providers, Schools, School Leaders and other government ministries and other interested parties.

For now, the priority is to ensure that key stakeholders within the education sector are made aware and are immersed into the Education Act and subsequent reforms.

Already MEHRD has conducted internal socialization for its staff and to three schools and will roll out its program to other schools, education providers and other key stakeholders.

To support this a communication strategy have been developed to ensure that main media platforms are used to ensure that dissemination of key messages or information about the intent of the new Act is provided to all stakeholders.

Expectation implicated in the provision of the Act

With the enforcement and implementation of the Education Act 2023, Education Providers, School leaders, Teachers and other stakeholders implicated in the Act should now comply with the provision provided in the Act.

It is important for Education Providers to adhere and undertake the following;

- Education Providers are expected to register all the schools they own or operate; that is, if they have not registered yet their new ece centres, primary or secondary schools. EPs are not expected to register their schools, if they have already registered them.
- Education Providers must make sure that new teachers whom they recruited at the beginning of this year and are teaching in their schools should be registered. The new teachers must apply to become registered teachers. There is a teacher registration application form, which is available in MEHRD that new teachers must complete. MEHRD can supply the teacher registration forms to EPs on request. The officer in charge is; Loke Sorengana of the Teaching Service Division.
- Ongoing teachers who have already registered and have been issued with their teacher registration certificates need not apply to become a registered teacher. However, if you an ongoing teacher and has been teaching for some years, but have not yet obtained a teacher registration certificate, you would need to complete the teacher registration application form.
- Education Providers are reminded that teachers who are teaching in their schools currently but do not have full registration as a teacher must endeavour to:

a) support the teachers so that they can obtain their teaching qualification or complete the teacher registration process.

b) support their teachers who have other qualifications but no teaching qualifications to ensure they acquire their teaching qualifications;

c) ensure that all teachers are registered and meet teacher registration process within the 2 year transition period that is currently allowed under the new Education Act for teacher registration, which is from January 1st 2024 to 1st January 2025.

Role of Minister, MEHRD and Education Provider under the new Act



Minister of Education Hon, Tozen Leokana

The new Education Act 2023 clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Education Minister, Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and Education Provider.

As set out in Part 3-section 8, the Minister of Education is responsible for the overall governance of the MEHRD and is headed by the Permanent Secretary.

Both the Minister and Permanent Secretary have specific powers under the new act. For example, the minister is responsible for issuing the education regulations, education funding code and the learning framework.

The Permanent Secretary has specific powers and responsibilities as outlined in the Act as well as in the Administrative Instructions for schools, teachers and principals.

For MEHRD, its role is to deliver quality education for the people of Solomon Islands in order for them to develop as individuals and possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to earn a living and to live in harmony with others and their environment.

For Education Provider as referred to Education Act 2023-Division 5-section 26, its role is as follows;

- a. Operated schools and ECE Centres;
- b. Oversee proper use of government, provincial or other funding provided to it or its schools and ECE Centres
- c. Make provisions for health, safety and well-being of students
- d. Employ teachers and leaders
- e. Manage and oversee management of and performance of teachers and leaders.

Lesson Learnt from ELF Socializations

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) with the leadership of Education Legislation Framework Core Team have learnt there is a need for ongoing support in the implementation of the Act at the school level.

From experienced after conducting socialization to three state schools namely King George Six NSS, Waimapuru NSS and Ngari CHS it was learned that school leaders, school boards and principals and teachers need ongoing support in the implementation of the ELF at the school level.

It was also learnt that presentation of the ELF documents must proceed at a slow and thorough pace so that everyone can understand the content well.

The ELF Core Team also learnt that the Socialization, forms and business processes must be made available so that processes can be well explained.

During the socialization the awareness team clarified important matters in the Education Act and the administrative instructions that teachers need to do away with cease doing, as well as matters they need to continue to ensure teachers provide quality teaching for learners.

Teachers also took the opportunity to ask questions regarding their registration status, noting the fact that any teacher can only be employed if they are a registered teacher.

MEHRD AND SINU SUCCESSFULLY HOSTED INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), in partnership with the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) have successfully hosted the first ever International Education Conference held on 19th-20 June with a vision to address unprecedented challenges facing the well-being of our future generation through education.

The theme for the conference was "Rethinking Solomon Islands Education for a Sustainable Future Through Tok Stori." This theme encapsulates our mission to forge an educational paradigm that empowers our youth, addresses the critical issues of our time and paves the way for a sustainable and resilient future for Solomon Islanders.

The unprecedented challenges highlighted during the conference are climate change, health crisis and socio-economic pressures.

It was emphasized that these challenges can be addressed through education by developing curricula that instil environmental stewardship and climate resilience, promote health and wellness and foster economic empowerment.

By doing so, we can create a generation of Solomon Islanders who are not only aware of the challenges they face but are also equipped with the knowledge and mindset to innovate, lead, and thrive in the face of adversity.

The collective effort by MEHRD and SINU in the conference have laid the groundwork for a sustainable and prosperous future, ensuring that Solomon Islands remain a vibrant and resilient nation amidst global uncertainties.

Minister of Education, Hon. Tozen Leokana, when reflecting on the theme, said such conference have the potential to contribute to our country's education - that is, if we action practical solutions to improve the education system in our country, rather than to use the conference for academic purposes.

"Let's embark on this informative journey together, believing in the power of collaboration and learning where we share and learn from research findings on classroom practices, policy and practices," Minister Leokana said.

He said reform can only happen when we critically analyse the old ways of doing things and be open to doing new things.

SINU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Transform Aqorau, when reflecting on the theme, said rethinking education for sustainability in the Solomon Islands involves embracing innovative curricula and pedagogies that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and sustainability.

"It also demands a steadfast commitment to preserving and integrating indigenous knowledge and cultural practices into our educational framework," Dr. Aqorau said.



Dean of Faculty of Education and Humanities Dr Praticia Rodie, left, Minister of Education Hon. Tozen Leokana, center, and Permanent Secretary Dr Franco Rodie during the opening of the International Education Conference.



Tandai House of Chief Tribal group presenting a shell money to Solomon Islands National University Vice-chancellor Professor Transform Aqorau during the traditional welcome ceremony.



Guests, international speakers, and conference participants during the opening of the International Education conference.

KEY MESSAGES

Relevant documents and key messages

Some of the key messages highlighted during the socialization or awareness sessions include the following:

- There is a move away from fixed-term teacher contracts to ongoing contracts.
- As soon as the ECE Registration Form is finalized, the ECE moratorium will be lifted for ECE Centers and Teachers.
- Tuition fees cannot be charged for Basic Education PPY-Year 9; school fee limits have been set.
- Education Providers, Schools, and Teachers must ensure they follow the registration process set by the MEHRD.
- School-aged pregnant girls can return to formal education. A boy parent can also continue schooling (Inclusivity).
- Teachers must follow the Code of Rules stated in the Teachers and Leaders Administrative Instructions.
- Teachers must not leave their classes unattended, and any absences of Teachers must be managed by the Principal and the Education Provider.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

MEHRD officially welcomes new Minister of Education

Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) officially introduced and welcomed the new Minister for Education, Hon. Tozen Leokana on Wednesday 15th, May 2024 with a commitment to drive the Education Policies head on.



Minister Hon. Tozen Leokana and PS Dr Franco Rodie cutting the cake as Deputy Secretary Education Services Christopher Sakiri, Deputy Secretary Teaching and Learning Linda Wate and Chief Executive of Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority Constance Nasi look on

Minister of Education Hon Leokana and Australia's Foreign Minister Wong officially open Mbokona Science Laboratory

In a significant event on Thursday 6 June, the Minister of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), Hon. Tozen Leokana and Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator, Hon. Penny Wong officially handed over a newly built science laboratory to Mbokona Community High.



Minister of Education Hon. Tozen Leokana, left, Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator Penny Wong and New Zealand High Commissioner Jonathan Schwas cutting ribbon to officially open the Science laboratory as West Honiara Member of Parliament Hon. Namson Tran looks on.

Minister Hon. Leokana highlights key workforce the country needs

Minister of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) Hon. Tozen Leokana has stated that the country needs critical thinkers, scholars, educators, policy makers and stakeholders who can get the best ideas and translate them into practical actions.