



Rice Trial

Project Shows Strong Progress as Interns Gain Valuable Agricultural Skills



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Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi
Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Development

It is my pleasure, as the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), to present the Ministry's first newsletter for 2026. This publication reflects our commitment to keeping the public, government ministries, development partners, stakeholders, and the farming community informed about the Ministry's work and the progress being made across the agriculture sector.

From January to August 2026, the Ministry continued to strengthen service delivery through research, extension, livestock development, food security initiatives, climate-smart agriculture, and partnerships that support farmers and rural communities throughout Solomon Islands.

This newsletter highlights some of the important milestones reached during the reporting period and showcases the dedication of our staff and partners in delivering services that improve livelihoods and strengthen food security.

I would like to acknowledge the Ministry's Communication and Information Unit for producing this publication and thank everyone who contributed to its success.

We hope you find this newsletter informative and inspiring, and we welcome your continued support and partnership as we work together to advance agriculture for the benefit of all Solomon Islanders.

Thank you, and happy reading.

Rice Trial Project Shows Strong Progress as Interns Gain Valuable Agricultural Skills



Fertilizer applied in the rice field by interns

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), in partnership with the Jiangsu Academy of Agricultural Sciences (JAAS), has reported encouraging progress in its Intensive Rice Trial Project, with healthy crop development and significant gains in practical training for the Ministry’s agricultural interns.

The project forms part of the Government’s commitment to improving national food security and reducing Solomon Islands’ dependence on imported rice through local production. Three trial plots covering approximately 0.8 hectares have been established to evaluate rice varieties that are best suited to local soils and climatic conditions. The rice crop is currently in the tillering stage, approximately six weeks after transplanting, with Ministry officers and technical specialists continuing to monitor plant growth, manage irrigation, apply fertilizers where necessary, and control pests, diseases, and weeds.

Rice Trial Project Coordinator and MALD Deputy Secretary Technical Michael Ho’ota said the trial had produced encouraging results despite some challenges with water management.

“Overall, the rice is growing well. Our focus now is on monitoring crop performance, maintaining field management, and collecting valuable research data that will help us identify the best-performing rice varieties for Solomon Islands,” he said.

Mr Ho’ota said the project represents an important investment in the country’s agricultural future.

“Solomon Islands spends more than SBD300 million dollars each year



Making of the vegetable greenhouse

importing rice. Through this project, we are evaluating varieties that have the potential to be grown successfully under our local conditions. If successful, this work will strengthen national food security, reduce import costs, and create new income opportunities for rural communities.”

He added that once harvesting is complete, each variety will be assessed for yield, adaptability, grain quality, and consumer preference through taste testing before recommendations are



Rice nursery

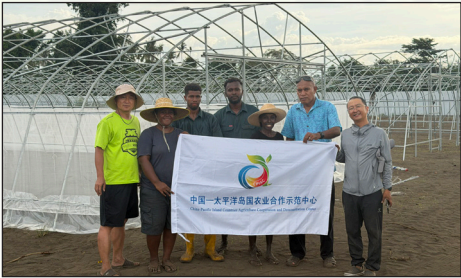


JAAS rice experts inspecting the rice nursery

made for future production. Beyond crop research, the project is also providing practical training for eight agricultural interns who are working alongside Ministry officers and Chinese agricultural specialists throughout the production cycle.

The internship programme has enabled recent agriculture graduates to gain first-hand experience in nursery establishment, land preparation, transplanting, irrigation management,

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JAAS rice experts and MALD staff and interns



Rows of plants inside the vegetable greenhouse

Cont...

fertilizer application, pest and disease management, crop monitoring, and research data collection.

Agricultural Extension Officer Clement Kaora said the interns had become an important part of the project team.

“The interns have shown enthusiasm, commitment, and a willingness to learn. They have been actively involved in every stage of the project and have gained valuable practical experience that complements what they learned during their studies.

Working alongside experienced Ministry officers and technical specialists has given them practical skills that will prepare them for future careers in agriculture while also strengthening the Ministry’s research capacity,” he said. Intern Diane Sandakabatu described the programme as a rewarding learning experience.

“This internship has taught me many valuable skills, from land preparation and transplanting to fertilizer application and crop protection. Working alongside the Chinese rice specialists and Ministry staff has given me practical knowledge that cannot be learned in the classroom,

Another intern, Howard Koukake, said the programme had helped bridge the gap between theory and practice.

“Studying agriculture gave me the theoretical knowledge, but working on the rice project has allowed me to apply those lessons in real farming situations. The experience has greatly improved my understanding of rice production and field management,” he said.

The partnership between MALD and JAAS has played a key role in the success of the trial. Chinese agricultural specialists continue to provide technical guidance, scientific support, and technology transfer while working closely with Ministry staff and interns in the field.

The Ministry believes the project demonstrates the importance of combining research, international cooperation, and workforce development to strengthen the country’s agricultural sector.

Picture Caption: Rice and Vegetable Trial farm



As the crop progresses towards harvest over the coming weeks, researchers will continue monitoring plant performance before conducting yield assessments and analysing the results.

The findings from the trial are expected to guide future decisions on rice varieties suitable for commercial production in Solomon Islands and support the long-term development of a sustainable local

rice industry.

By investing in research, building technical capacity, and equipping young agricultural professionals with practical skills, the Ministry is laying the foundation for increased domestic rice production, stronger rural livelihoods, and improved food security for future generations.

Solomon Islands Assumed Chairmanship and Chairs the 11th Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services Meeting

Solomon Islands has officially assumed the chairmanship of the Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (PHOAFS) on May 27th 2026. As the new chair Solomon Islands led its first regional meeting following the formal handover from the Kingdom of Tonga during the opening of the 11th PHOAFS virtual meeting.

The three-day regional meeting brought together Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services, technical experts, development partners, regional organisations, and stakeholders from across the Pacific to discuss priorities for strengthening agriculture and forestry systems in the region.

In his remarks during the opening session, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development Permanent Secretary, Dr Samson Viulu, said Solomon Islands is honoured to take on



Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi MALD Minister and Karen Mapusua Director Land Resources Division, Pacific Community

The Solomon Islands emphasises strengthening regional governance and coherence, supporting science and traditional knowledge in decision-making, and ensuring youth and women remain at the centre of our regional vision

Dr Samson Viulu

the leadership role at an important time for the Pacific region.

“It is an honour for the Solomon Islands to assume the Chair of the Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services. This marks the beginning of important discussions focused on measuring our progress, strengthening regional cooperation, and ensuring the commitments made under the Growing the Pacific Regional Agriculture and Forestry Strategy 2050 continue to translate into action at the national level,” Dr Viulu said.



Dr Samson Viulu Chair of the 11th Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services Meeting and MALD Permanent Secretary chairing the meeting



Karen Mapusua Director Land Resources Division, Pacific Community

Cont...

bold course, and we know Solomon Islands will carry that forward with purpose,” he said.

He added that Solomon Islands’ rich biodiversity, strong communities, traditional knowledge, and commitment to resilient agriculture and forestry would strengthen regional cooperation during its leadership.

Solomon Islands has chaired PHOAFS through the current meeting cycle and is expected to host the next Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services Meeting in-country next year, providing an opportunity for Pacific leaders and technical experts to gather in the Solomon Islands to continue advancing regional priorities.

Solomon Islands is also expected to host the Pacific Week of Agriculture and Forestry, a week long event at the end of May 2027 here in Honiara.

Co-chair and representative from the Ministry of Forestry and Research, Mr Paul Hatamane, welcomed delegates and acknowledged the importance of regional solidarity in addressing shared challenges.

“The spirit of Pacific cooperation and solidarity remains strong. Through this platform, we continue working together toward sustainable and resilient agriculture and forestry systems for our Pacific people and future generations,” Mr Hatamane said.

The meeting is supported by the Pacific Community (SPC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and regional development partners.

Lumakanji Training Aims to Boost Coffee Production Skills for Labuhila Farmers

Farmers from the Labuhila Coffee Farmers Association on May 27th gathered in Lumakanji, Guadalcanal, for a hands-on training session aimed at improving coffee production and increasing income opportunities.

The training, funded by the Solomon Islands Agriculture Rural Transformation (SIART) Project through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), was conducted on 18–19 May 2026.

The SIART Project, a World Bank-funded initiative implemented by MALD, focuses on strengthening the agriculture sector by increasing production, improving market access, and enhancing rural livelihoods.

The project supports farmers across Malaita, Guadalcanal, and Makira-Ulawa through targeted training, infrastructure support, agribusiness development, and extension services, contributing directly to food security and community resilience.

The training, led by MALD Research Officer Geoffrey Oliouou, focused on two key technical areas: pruning and grafting. Farmers were trained on pruning techniques to manage tall trees, remove unwanted growth after harvest, improve light penetration, and stimulate productive branch development. Participants also learned the timing and follow-up care required to protect trees after pruning.

“The objective of this training is to equip farmers with practical skills that will directly improve coffee productivity and quality,” said Geoffrey Oliouou. “By applying proper pruning and grafting techniques, farmers can rehabilitate existing trees, introduce improved varieties, and increase yields in a sustainable way.”

The grafting component covered both top and side grafting techniques on nursery seedlings and mature trees.

These methods enable farmers to replace low-yielding trees, introduce improved varieties, and accelerate the production of marketable coffee.

A representative from the Labuhila Coffee Farmers Association welcomed the training, emphasising its immediate value to farmers.

“This training has given us skills we can use straight away. We are now more confident to manage our coffee trees and will share this knowledge with other members in our community to improve production and income,” the farmer representative said.

During discussions, farmers and organisers highlighted ongoing challenges affecting coffee production in the highlands. These include poor road access, which limits market connectivity and increases transportation costs, as well as limited market linkages that affect farmers’ returns.

Participants noted that coffee, despite its potential as a key cash crop alongside cocoa and coconut, has received limited attention and support in recent years.

Through SIART funding, the training also provided essential materials for hands-on learning.

Trainers emphasised the need for continued support, including access to quality seedlings, regular extension services, and investment in infrastructure to ensure that technical improvements translate into sustainable income gains.

The Labuhila Coffee Farmers Association plans to apply the knowledge gained by establishing demonstration plots, conducting in-community refresher training, and advocating for improved market access and institutional support.

With improved pruning and grafting practices, farmers are optimistic about revitalising coffee production in Lumakanji and surrounding highland communities.

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MALD Supports Indigenous Agribusinesses with SBD 1.34 Million CADP Grants Under GREAT Government Agriculture Policy



Hon Franklyn Derek Wasi MALD Minister and MALD CADP Support Fund grants recipient

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) has reaffirmed the GREAT Government’s commitment to strengthening indigenous agribusinesses through the handover of SBD 1,343,940 in Commercial Agriculture Development Project (CADP) Support Fund grants to four local enterprises. The grant handover ceremony, held at the MALD headquarters in Honiara, marks an important milestone in the Government’s efforts to expand commercial agriculture, promote value addition, and create greater opportunities for local businesses and farming communities throughout Solomon Islands. The CADP Support Fund is designed to support locally owned enterprises involved in agricultural processing, market development, farmer linkages, and post-harvest activities. Through

this support, the Government aims to increase domestic production, improve access to markets, generate employment opportunities, and strengthen rural livelihoods. The four successful recipients are: Cathliro Commodities Development Ltd – SBD 724,000 to complete its chocolate processing factory in Honiara. SOLKAVA Exporter – SBD 313,940 to meet international marketing standards, procure kava from provincial farmers, and complete processing facility improvements. Goshen Enterprise – SBD 200,000 to support taro procurement, transportation, and post-harvest training for farmers in Malaita Province. MNEM Investment – SBD 106,000 to support kava procurement, processing, packaging, and trade activities.



Group Photo

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi said the grants demonstrate the Government’s confidence in local entrepreneurs and its commitment to growing the agriculture sector through partnerships with indigenous businesses. “Supporting local agribusinesses is an investment in the future of our economy. We value your partnership and commitment to supporting the development of our country, and we encourage all recipients to use this assistance responsibly to grow their businesses and create opportunities for their communities,” Minister Wasi said. He reminded recipients that the grants are public funds entrusted to them on behalf of the people of Solomon Islands and must be used strictly for their approved purposes. On behalf of the recipients, SOLKAVA Exporter representative Shirly Teioli thanked the Government for investing in local enterprises and rural farmers. “This assistance will enable us to improve our processing capacity, meet international quality standards, and create more reliable income opportunities for rural farmers, especially women and young people,” she said. Under the CADP Fund Agreements, recipients are required to use the grants only for approved activities and comply with financial reporting, monitoring, and auditing requirements to ensure transparency and accountability. The initiative represents a significant step in implementing the GREAT Government’s agriculture policy and reinforces MALD’s commitment to building resilient agribusinesses, increasing value-added exports, strengthening agricultural value chains, and improving livelihoods for farming communities across Solomon Islands.

New Agriculture Extension Offices Progressing Under SIART Project to Strengthen Rural Services



Construction of the MALD Extension Office Building in Auki Malaita Province

Construction of two new provincial agriculture extension office buildings in Auki, Malaita Province, and Kirakira, Makira-Ulawa Province, is progressing steadily under the Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Transformation (SIART) Project. The facilities are being funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) with support from the World Bank. The new offices are part of ongoing efforts to strengthen agricultural infrastructure, improve extension services, and provide better support to farmers and rural communities across Solomon Islands. SIART Project Manager William Okekini highlighted that significant progress has been achieved at both project sites despite challenges caused by prolonged rainfall and difficult ground conditions. The Auki Extension Office has reached the first-floor level, with the immediate focus on completing the first-floor concrete slab before brickwork begins. Preparations for the roof structure are also continuing, while retaining wall and car parking area works remain key priority to ensure site stability and office grounds landscaping. At the Kirakira Extension Office, roof construction has advanced with roof beams completed and installation of supporting steel plates for roof structure. A temporary delay has occurred due to the need to properly dry recently harvested timber before installation to ensure long-term quality and durability.



Construction of MALD Extension Office Building Kirakira, Makira Ulawa Province

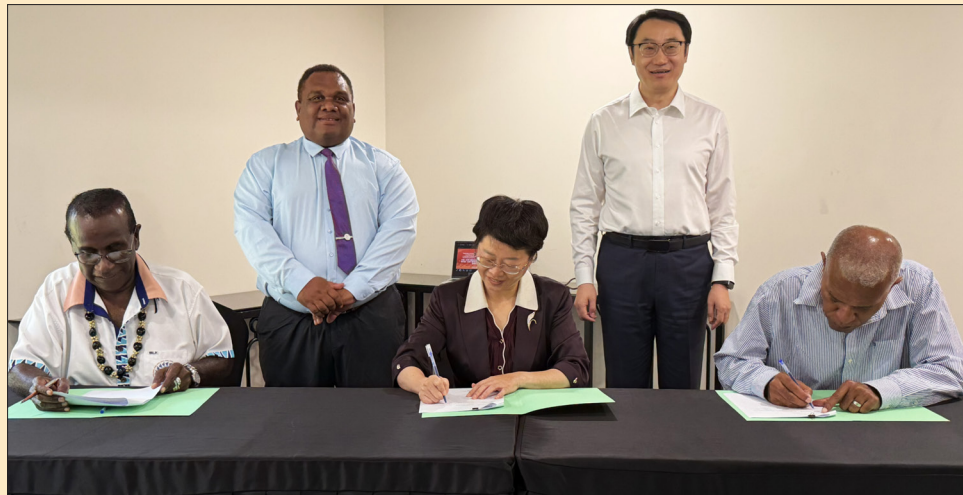


Construction of MALD Extension Office Building Kirakira, Makira Ulawa Province

Environmental and social safeguard measures continue to be implemented across both sites and have meet all requirements. Daily toolbox meetings are conducted, and workers are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment to maintain safe working conditions. Despite weather-related setbacks, the project team remains confident that roof structures will be completed within

the `planned timeframe, with finishing works expected to continue through the end of the year. The completed facilities will provide modern working spaces for provincial agriculture officers and enhance the Government’s capacity to deliver vital agricultural services that contribute to improved livelihoods and rural development.

MALD Strengthens Agriculture Development Through Enhanced Partnership with Jiangsu Province



Signing of the tripartite agreement to establish a joint laboratory for climate-smart agriculture by SINU, MALD and JAAS.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening agricultural development, food security, and climate-smart farming through an expanding partnership with Jiangsu Province of the People's Republic of China.

This commitment was highlighted during the official opening of the Agriculture Green Development Workshop in Honiara, where MALD and its partners celebrated a number of important milestones aimed at supporting the Government's agriculture development agenda and improving opportunities for farmers across Solomon Islands.

The ceremony saw the handover of agricultural materials from Jiangsu Province to MALD, the presentation of an appointment certificate to MALD's Agricultural Advisor, the unveiling of the Honiara Rice Demonstration Base under the China-Pacific Island Countries Agriculture Cooperation and Demonstration Centre, and the signing of a tripartite agreement to establish a joint laboratory for climate-smart agriculture.

The joint laboratory will bring together the Jiangsu Academy of Agricultural Sciences (JAAS), the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), and MALD's

Research Division to promote research, innovation, technology transfer, and knowledge sharing in support of sustainable agricultural development



“JAAS has sent its experts to Solomon Islands since 2024 with demo bases for both rice and vegetables now established on the ground

Hon Franklyn Derek Wasi

in Solomon Islands.

The event also saw a bilateral meeting held between MALD officials and the Jiangsu delegation to review progress under existing cooperation arrangements and discuss future areas of collaboration.

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi welcomed the delegation led by Jiangsu Province Vice Governor Zhao Yan and acknowledged the growing partnership between Solomon Islands and China since diplomatic relations were established

in 2019.

“The visit by Your Excellency Vice Governor of Jiangsu Province is a testament to the stronger relation that both our two great countries have nurtured since 2019,” he said.

Minister Wasi said the initiatives launched during the ceremony demonstrate the practical outcomes of cooperation between MALD and Jiangsu Province and support the Government's vision for a productive, resilient, and food-secure agricultural sector.

Minister Wasi highlighted the progress made since MALD and JAAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Honiara on 22 July 2024. The agreement focuses on developing mechanized commercial rice farming, strengthening

agricultural research, promoting the production of maize, fruit trees, nut trees, and vegetables, and facilitating agricultural training and workshops through the China-Pacific Island Countries Agriculture Cooperation and Demonstration Centre.

Through the partnership, JAAS has sent agricultural experts to Solomon Islands and supported the establishment of rice and vegetable demonstration farms aimed at introducing improved farming practices and technologies.

“JAAS has sent its experts to Solomon



MALD and Jiangsu Province Bialtral Meeting

Islands since 2024 with demo bases for both rice and vegetables now established on the ground,” Minister Wasi said. The Minister also acknowledged the support received from Jiangsu Province through donations of agricultural machinery, equipment, greenhouse materials, computers, and high-yield crop seeds, as well as opportunities for Solomon Islands students to pursue studies in agricultural institutions in China.

Minister Wasi said the tripartite agreement signed between JAAS, SINU, and MALD represents another significant step forward in strengthening agricultural research and innovation within the country.

“The inclusion of SINU will certainly add value and future sustainability to the growth of agriculture and livestock industry in Solomon Islands,” he said.

He added that the initiatives launched during the ceremony are closely aligned with the policy priorities of the GREAT Government and MALD's strategic objectives.

Meanwhile Vice Governor Zhao Yan reaffirmed Jiangsu Province's commitment to supporting Solomon Islands through practical agricultural cooperation, research collaboration, and human resource development.

He described agricultural cooperation as one of the strongest pillars of engagement between China and Solomon Islands and highlighted Jiangsu's extensive expertise in agricultural science and technology. “Throughout this process, agricultural cooperation has remained a cornerstone of our practical cooperation,” he said. Vice Governor Zhao outlined three key priorities for future cooperation: strengthening scientific research and

innovation, expanding agricultural demonstration projects, and investing in talent development.

He emphasized that the Honiara Rice Demonstration Base will serve as an important platform for improving rice production and supporting Solomon Islands' efforts to strengthen food security.

The Vice Governor also highlighted the importance of developing local expertise through training programs and technical exchanges.

“Talent is the foundation of agricultural modernization,” he said. “We hope to cultivate more local professionals with technical expertise, operational competence and management skills.”



Qi Linlin CPIAC Deputy Director

The official opening of the Agriculture Green Development Workshop concluded the ceremony and provided an opportunity for participants to exchange knowledge and learn from experiences in sustainable and climate-smart agriculture.

For MALD, the partnership with Jiangsu Province continues to deliver practical benefits that support the Government's agriculture transformation agenda. Through research collaboration, technology transfer, capacity building, and investments in agricultural productivity, the partnership is contributing to stronger food security, increased domestic production, and improved livelihoods for farmers and rural communities throughout Solomon Islands.



Group Photo

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MALD Minister recieves courtesy call from Grow Asia and hold brief meeting with visiting team



MALD and GAP Meeting

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) welcomed a courtesy visit from Grow Asia Pacific (GAP) to discuss opportunities for collaboration in agricultural development, cocoa production, and rural livelihoods in Solomon Islands.

The GAP delegation, led by Tamar Porat and cocoa specialist Pavel Muron, met with Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi and Deputy Secretary Technical Michael Ho’ota to discuss the Government’s priorities for expanding the agriculture sector.

Discussions focused on the national target of establishing 10,000 hectares of new cocoa and coconut plantings over the next two years. Minister Wasi reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to improving productivity, increasing farmer participation, and supporting rural economic growth.

Deputy Secretary Technical Michael Ho’ota highlighted



Michael Ho’ota (MALD DST), Pavel Muron (Grow Asia Pacific cocoa specialist, Hon Franklyn Derek Wasi (MALD Minister), Tamar Porat Grow Asia Pacific, (Left to Right)



Michael Ho’ota MALD DST and Hon Franklyn Derek Wasi Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Development

key implementation strategies, including expanding access to quality planting materials, establishing provincial nurseries, and rehabilitating aging cocoa plantations.

Pavel Muron praised the exceptional quality of cocoa produced in Makira Province, describing the knowledge and expertise of local farmers as among the best he has seen across the Pacific.

Both parties also

discussed strengthening agricultural extension services, youth participation, and addressing challenges such as limited planting materials, transport, and market access. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to strengthening cooperation to support sustainable cocoa development and improve livelihoods for farmers and rural communities across Solomon Islands.

MALD and JICA Sign Technical Agreement to Boost Sweet Potato Research and Food Security

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have signed a Technical Agreement to implement the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) project, “Comprehensive Sweet Potato Seedling Management System for National Food Security.”

The five-year partnership establishes technical cooperation between the Solomon Islands Government and the Government of Japan to strengthen sweet potato production through scientific research and innovation.

The project will establish a tissue culture facility to produce government-certified, disease-free sweet potato seedlings, develop a national seedling certification system, strengthen pest and disease management, improve cultivation practices, and establish gene banks to conserve valuable sweet potato genetic resources.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, MALD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu thanked JICA and the Government of Japan for supporting a project that will improve food security, strengthen local crop varieties, and enhance agricultural productivity.

JICA Solomon Islands Resident Representative Mr. Kawasaki Mitsuyoshi said the initiative reflects the strong partnership between the two governments and aligns with the Solomon Islands National Development Strategy.

The project will involve MALD, Biosecurity Solomon Islands, Solomon Islands National University, and leading Japanese research institutions, contributing to increased farmer incomes, climate resilience, and long-term national food security.

Japan SATREPS Researchers Pay Courtesy Call to MALD

Researchers from Japan’s Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) Project have paid a courtesy call to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) Permanent Secretary, Dr. Samson Viulu, marking the commencement of a long-term collaboration to strengthen sweet potato production and food security in Solomon Islands.

During the meeting, Dr. Viulu welcomed the Japanese delegation and expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for supporting the initiative.

He described sweet potato as the country’s traditional staple food and stressed the importance of revitalising its production as rice consumption continues to increase, particularly in urban centres.

The delegation included JICA Project Formulation Advisor Masayoshi Kawai, SATREPS Project Coordinator Hayato Ogushi, and Tokai University Project



Group Photo



Hayato Ogushi SATREPS Project Coordinator and Dr. Takeshi Kanto Tokai University Project Researcher



Japan SATREPS Researchers and MALD Exective Managment staff during the courtesy meeting



Dr Samson Viulu MALD PS and Simon Baete MALD DSSD

Researcher Dr. Takeshi Kanto.

The project officially commenced in May 2026 following the signing of the Record of 8Discussions and has now entered its implementa tion phase with the deployment of long-term experts to Solomon Islands.

Dr. Kanto thanked MALD for its partnership and reaffirmed the research team’s commitment to working alongside local counterparts to improve sweet potato production through science and innovation.

The five-year SATREPS Project, titled “Implementation of a Comprehensive

Sweet Potato Seedling Management System for National Food Security,” will establish a tissue culture facility to produce certified disease-free planting materials, strengthen pest and disease management, improve cultivation practices, and develop a national seedling certification system.

Implemented by MALD’s Agriculture Research and Development Department with technical and financial support from JICA, the project is expected to improve national food security, increase farmer incomes, strengthen climate resilience, and enhance the livelihoods of farming communities across Solomon Islands.



MALD Leads Food Relief and Agriculture Recovery Efforts Following Tropical Cyclone Maila



MALD Director Extension Department Andrew Melanolu and staff handing over a chainsaw to the community in Simbo as part of the ministry's support in helping communities recover from Tropical Cyclone Maila

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) has continued to lead the national response to restore food security and agricultural livelihoods following the devastating impacts of Tropical Cyclone Maila in Western Province in May.

As Chair of the National Disaster Operations Committee (NDOC) Livelihood Sector Committee, MALD has coordinated emergency food relief, agricultural damage assessments, and early recovery initiatives in partnership with the Provincial Disaster Operations Committee (P-DOC), provincial authorities, and other government agencies. The coordinated response aims to provide immediate assistance to affected communities while supporting their long-term recovery.

Following the cyclone, MALD mobilised technical officers to conduct Initial Damage Assessments (IDA) in some

of the worst-affected areas, including Simbo, Ranongga, Ranggo Island, North Vella La Vella and the Shortland Islands. The assessments confirmed widespread destruction of food gardens, fruit trees, root crops and coconut plantations caused by destructive winds, storm surges and extensive saltwater intrusion.

The assessments also identified severe impacts on household food security and rural livelihoods, with many communities losing both their primary food sources and their main sources of income.

In response to the findings, MALD, through the Provincial Disaster Operations Committee Livelihood Sector Committee, immediately commenced the distribution of emergency food supplies to priority communities identified as red zones. Food relief, consisting mainly of rice, has already reached communities in Simbo, South West Ranongga, North

Vella La Vella and the Shortland Islands, while distributions continue to other affected areas.

Chief Field Officer for Western Province and Chairman of the P-DOC Livelihood Sector Committee, Sipuru Rove, said response teams are working tirelessly despite significant logistical challenges.

"So far, we have carried out food distribution in Simbo, South West Ranongga, North Vella, and the Shortlands. This is not yet complete, as we are prioritising the red zones, areas that are severely affected by the cyclone."

Mr. Rove acknowledged that transporting food relief to remote island communities continues to be one of the biggest operational challenges.

"One of our main challenges is the lack of reliable logistics to move food relief supplies. We have engaged available vessels, but they have operational limitations, and access to some communities remains difficult."

He added that the committee continues to rely on community leaders and field teams to provide updated information as assessments progress.

"I do not always have readily available disaster information, so I rely heavily on contacts within the communities and also our team's assessments. While many have come forward, not all communities have reported in, and that makes it a challenge to ensure everyone is covered. However, we will still cover all affected areas."

Alongside emergency food relief, MALD has begun supporting early recovery activities by distributing chainsaws and essential farming tools to heavily affected communities. These tools will enable families to clear fallen trees, remove debris from villages and gardens, and prepare land for replanting.

The ministry is also preparing for the next phase of agricultural recovery through the production and distribution of planting materials and fruit tree seedlings, including mango, guava and citrus varieties, to restore household food production and strengthen long-

Picture Caption: Tropical Cyclone Maila damages on communities, agriculture and food relief supply distribution in Western Province



"When the cyclone and waves came, it swept everything off the land. Most of the crops and vegetation we survived on have now been washed away. After the sun came out, we saw that the vegetation had dried up, turned brown, and died."

In Simbo, residents reported similar experiences as storm surges carried seawater inland, destroying gardens and coconut plantations.

Nestar Iputu described the event, saying:

"The strong wind came with something that looked like fog, but it was the sea being carried into our gardens and plantations. After the cyclone, many plants and trees died, and the crops we tried to harvest were rotten."

Chris Boti of Simbo said communities are now looking beyond emergency relief towards rebuilding their livelihoods.

"Within two months, all our gardens will be totally destroyed with nothing edible left. Planting materials and seeds are our most pressing needs. Our coconut plantations, which are our biggest source of income, are now slowly dying."

MALD acknowledges the resilience and cooperation shown by communities throughout the response and thanks village leaders, provincial authorities and partner agencies for supporting field teams during assessments and relief operations.

Damage assessments and food relief distributions will continue over the coming weeks as additional reports are received from remote communities. The ministry remains committed to ensuring that every affected community receives the assistance needed to recover from Tropical Cyclone Maila.

A draft budget of approximately SBD\$45 million has been proposed under the Livelihood Sector Committee to support food relief and agricultural recovery across affected provinces as part of the broader National Disaster Operations Committee response.

MALD remains committed to restoring food security, rebuilding agricultural livelihoods, and strengthening the resilience of rural communities as Solomon Islands recovers from Tropical Cyclone Maila.

term resilience.

Director of MALD's Extension Services Department, Andrew Melenolu, said recovery will require sustained support because many productive areas have been severely affected by saltwater intrusion.

"The surging waves and strong winds have washed away plantation land and damaged crops with saltwater. Replanting, especially for coconut plantations, will be difficult and will take time."

Community members have welcomed

MALD's timely intervention, saying the emergency food assistance has provided much-needed relief while they begin rebuilding their gardens.

Susan Liton from Saevuke on Ranggo Island said the assistance arrived when families needed it most.

"The food relief supplies have helped our communities and families. Our gardens were badly damaged by the cyclone, so this support is helping us feed our families while we begin replanting."

Describing the devastation caused by the cyclone, she said:

Ariel shot of Saevuke village showing the damages to the village and environment following tropical cyclone maila

Kokota National Cattle Breeding Centre Project Records Strong Progress



Arial View of Kokota Cattle Farm Site



Cattle farm site after clearing of forest



Timber from the cleared forest

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) continues to make steady progress in developing the Kokota National Cattle Breeding Centre in Isabel Province, with significant achievements recorded during the first half of July 2026 as work advances under Phase Three of the project. Current project officers, supported by local communities, have successfully completed ring weeding across 48 pasture plots covering approximately 12



Pastures growth – 2 months



Residence /storage/office

hectares, creating favourable conditions for healthy pasture establishment and future cattle production. The project team has also completed the re-plotting of pasture blocks to prepare for the next phase of pasture planting. Community groups are being organised and allocated to specific blocks to support planting, weed management, and ongoing maintenance, reinforcing MALD's commitment to community participation in agricultural

development. In addition to pasture establishment, construction of the Garanga residential building is progressing well. Building works have reached the roofing stage, marking another important milestone in strengthening the infrastructure needed to support the long-term operation of the national cattle project. According to the project team, established pastures are showing encouraging growth after two months, reflecting the effectiveness of ongoing weed management and field maintenance activities.

While progress has been positive, the project continues to face some operational challenges, including delays in fuel allocation for field activities and the processing of contractor documentation. The Ministry is working to address these issues to ensure activities continue on schedule. The Kokota National Cattle Breeding Centre Project remains a key investment under MALD's livestock development programme, aimed at rebuilding the national cattle industry, improving domestic beef production, creating employment opportunities, and strengthening food security in Solomon Islands.

MALD acknowledges the dedication of its field officers and the valuable support of surrounding communities, whose participation continues to drive the successful implementation of the project.

The Ministry remains committed to delivering sustainable livestock development that benefits rural communities and contributes to the country's economic growth.



Paragrass transported to Kokota Cattle Farm Site



MALD Minister Hands Over Cocoa and Coconut Project Materials to Provincial Representatives

The Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development, Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi, has officially handed over project materials to Chief Field Officers and OICs representing the (9) provinces under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development's (MALD) Cocoa and Coconut Development Support Programme 2025, reaffirming the Government's commitment to revitalising two of Solomon Islands' most important agricultural export commodities. The handover marks the beginning of the distribution of project support to successful farmers across the provinces who have been approved under the Cocoa and Coconut Development Support Programme. Speaking during the handover ceremony, Minister Wasi said the initiative demonstrates the Government's continued investment in strengthening the cocoa and coconut sectors, which remain vital to rural livelihoods and the national economy. "The Government recognises the important contribution cocoa and coconut farmers make to our economy and to the wellbeing of rural communities. Through this programme, we are providing practical support that will enable farmers to rehabilitate their farms, increase production and improve household incomes," he said. The Minister encouraged provincial agriculture officers to ensure that the materials are delivered promptly and transparently to the approved beneficiaries and urged farmers to

maximise the opportunities provided through the programme. The project materials are being supplied under several categories of support, including tools and equipment for coconut rehabilitation and replanting, cocoa rehabilitation and replanting, nursery establishment, as well as productive infrastructure such as cocoa and copra dryers, storage sheds for cocoa and copra. Andrew Melanolu MALD Extension Department Director, acknowledged that the delivery of materials has taken longer than expected due to procurement and supply chain challenges. "The supply of materials has been slower because our preferred supplier has been ordering in bulk while also supplying constituency projects through the Ministry of Rural Development. However, the handover today confirms that the materials are now ready for distribution to farmers through our provincial offices." Mr Melanolu said the Ministry is working to freight all remaining project materials to the provinces and expects deliveries to be completed before the end of July. He noted that Makira-Ulawa, Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces will receive the largest allocation of project materials because they remain the country's leading cocoa and copra producing provinces. "We want to assure farmers that they will receive their materials, we also want recipients to use the support provided for its intended purpose. Farmers receiving sheds and dryers must ensure these facilities are constructed and used

properly, while those receiving tools and equipment should utilise them to improve farm productivity. There are significant financial benefits attached to these projects when they are fully completed and managed well," he said. Mr Melanolu said the Cocoa and Coconut Development Support Programme is designed to support rehabilitation of existing farms while strengthening the entire value chain through improved infrastructure, planting materials, extension services and farmer support. Under the programme, the Ministry aims to rehabilitate approximately 11.5 million cocoa trees by 2029 through Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) while also replanting 28,800 hectares of ageing coconut plantations over the next ten years using improved planting materials. These investments are expected to significantly increase cocoa and copra production, strengthen rural livelihoods and generate higher export earnings for Solomon Islands. MALD remains committed to working closely with provincial governments, extension officers and farming communities to ensure the successful implementation of the Cocoa and Coconut Development Support Programme and to build a stronger, more productive and sustainable cocoa and coconut industry for future generations.



MALD Launched AIM-N Project

in Isabel Province to Strengthen Nutrition, Markets and Rural Livelihoods

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) has officially launched the Agricultural Investment for Markets and Nutrition (AIM-N) Project in Isabel Province, marking a significant milestone in the Government’s efforts to strengthen food security, nutrition, agricultural productivity, and rural livelihoods across Solomon Islands. Launching the project, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Hon. Franklyn Derek Wasi described AIM-N as one of the most significant agricultural investments delivered to rural communities in recent years. “This is a historic morning for Isabel Province, for the people of Solomon Islands, and for every rural farming family whose hard work, resilience, and patience have brought us to this moment,” Hon Wasi said. The AIM-N Project is financed through a partnership between the Solomon Islands Government, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, with a total investment of US20 million dollars over six years. Minister Wasi emphasized that AIM-N is designed to create lasting change for rural communities. “AIM-N is not a handout. It is not a

short-term project that will come and go. It is designed for our farmers, our women, our youth, and our communities who deserve better opportunities and stronger support systems,” he said. The project focuses on four key areas: improving nutrition, strengthening market access for farmers, investing in resilient agri-food systems, and enhancing disaster response capabilities. Isabel Province is one of three target provinces selected for full implementation, alongside Western and Choiseul Provinces. Under the project, rural households will receive nutrition education, farmer groups will be linked to markets and buyers, women’s groups will access competitive grants, and young graduates

will be recruited and trained as Young Professionals to support implementation at the community level. Hon. Josiah Laumana, Acting Premier and Finance Minister of Isabel Province welcomed the initiative and reaffirmed the Provincial Government’s commitment to supporting its implementation. “Today marks an important milestone in our province’s development journey. It reflects a shared commitment between the Government of Solomon Islands, our development partners, and our communities to improve food security, strengthen nutrition, increase rural incomes, and build more resilient farming systems for future generations,” he said. Hon. Laumana noted that many communities throughout Isabel continue



AIM-N Isabel Province Project Team and Members from the project office in Honiara

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to face challenges associated with remoteness, limited market access, climate vulnerability, and dependence on subsistence livelihoods. “The AIM-N Project responds directly to these challenges through an integrated approach that brings together agriculture, nutrition, market development, and climate resilience,” he said. He assures the provincial government stands ready to work closely with MALD, development partners, and communities to ensure the project’s success. Provincial Minister of Health Hon. Nathaniel Gudfraede highlighted the critical link between agriculture, nutrition, and public health. “This is an important occasion and an important program. It will help farmers and improve nutrition by ensuring healthy food reaches our schools and communities as planned,” he said. Hon. Gudfraede encouraged farmers to prioritize the production of nutritious foods alongside commercial crops.



Hon Franklyn Derek Wasi MALD Minister and Hon Josiah Laumana Isabel Province Acting Premier/ Finance Minister cutting the ribbon to officially launch the AIM-N project in Isabel Province



Women guests at the AIM-N project launch in Buala, Isabel Province



IFAD Supports Mission Team made a Courtesy call to MALD

Officials from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) recently paid a courtesy call on the management of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) to discuss the progress and implementation of the Agriculture Investment and Market Nutrition (AIMN) Project. The meeting provided an opportunity for IFAD and MALD to exchange updates on the project's ongoing activities and priorities, while reinforcing their shared commitment to supporting agricultural development and improving the livelihoods of rural communities. Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration and ensuring the successful delivery of project objectives aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity, improving market access, promoting better nutrition, and creating sustainable economic opportunities for farming households in the project's target provinces. Speaking during the meeting, MALD Permanent Secretary Dr. Samson Viulu acknowledged the importance of the AIMN Project and reaffirmed the Ministry’s commitment to supporting its implementation. He emphasized that MALD will continue working closely with the AIMN Project Management Unit and

development partners to achieve the project's intended outcomes for beneficiary communities. The meeting also reviewed the current status of project implementation and discussed key priorities for the months ahead. Both parties highlighted the importance of maintaining strong partnerships and coordinated efforts to advance sustainable agricultural development and food security in Solomon Islands. Discussions further noted the challenges faced during the current quarter in completing the project's baseline survey following the impacts of Tropical Cyclone Maila, which affected the target provinces of Western, Choiseul, and Isabel. Despite these challenges, project activities are expected to progress as field operations resume. Both MALD and IFAD reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining close collaboration to ensure the successful implementation of the AIMN Project and to deliver sustainable benefits to rural households and farming communities throughout Solomon Islands. The AIMN project is valued around USD19 million and being implemented in the three provinces of Choiseul, Isabel and Western until 2030.

MALD Research Advances Climate-Smart Vegetable Production Through Greenhouse Trial



Jerry Ruhasuma MALD Principal Research Officer for the Soil and Farming Systems Section

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), through its Research Department, is conducting a Protected Agriculture (Greenhouse) Trial at the King George VI Research Centre to identify sustainable technologies that can improve vegetable production in Solomon Islands. Supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the research compares the growth, yield, and quality of tomatoes and capsicum grown under greenhouse conditions with crops cultivated in conventional open-field systems. The trial is part of MALD's commitment to advancing climate-smart agriculture by generating scientific evidence to improve farming practices, strengthen food security, and build resilience to climate change. Researchers are also assessing crop productivity, fruit quality, marketability, and economic returns to guide future farmer adoption and agricultural policy. MALD Principal Research Officer for the Soil and Farming Systems Section, Jerry Ruhasuma, said the study responds to the increasing challenges farmers face from changing weather patterns. "This project is designed to help our farmers adapt to changing weather conditions while improving vegetable production through climate-smart agriculture. We are comparing greenhouse cultivation with open-field

production to determine which system performs better under Solomon Islands conditions," Mr. Ruhasuma said. Using locally available organic inputs such as compost and chicken manure,



Capsicum and Tomato Green House Trial



Tomato Plants in the green house

the research team monitors plant growth, pest and disease incidence, crop performance, and fruit quality throughout the production cycle. Although the trial is still underway, early observations are encouraging. "The greenhouse has provided better protection against pests, diseases, heavy rainfall, and prolonged dry periods. As a result, the plants have shown stronger growth, better fruit quality, and higher yields compared to crops grown in the open field," Mr. Ruhasuma said. The findings will support evidence-based recommendations for farmers through MALD's Agricultural Extension Service, helping promote climate-resilient farming technologies that improve productivity, strengthen food security, and enhance rural livelihoods across Solomon Islands.

MALD and DAFF Strengthen Solomon Islands' HPAI Preparedness through Joint Surveillance in Western Province



Farm biosecurity assessments conducted at farms visited during HPAI surveillance.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), in partnership with Australia's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), successfully completed a five-day Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) surveillance mission in Western Province, reinforcing Solomon Islands' preparedness against one of the world's most significant transboundary animal diseases.

The surveillance mission was conducted from 22 to 26 June 2026 in Munda, Gizo, and surrounding islands, bringing together animal health officers from both countries to strengthen early detection systems, improve farm biosecurity, and enhance community awareness of HPAI. The joint initiative forms part of the ongoing collaboration between MALD and DAFF to protect Solomon Islands' poultry industry, safeguard rural livelihoods, and strengthen national animal health systems through surveillance, technical cooperation, and capacity building.

During the mission, surveillance teams visited communities, poultry farms, and selected pig holdings to conduct farmer interviews, assess farm biosecurity measures, perform clinical examinations, and collect biological samples from domestic poultry, selected swine, and wild bird environments.

A total of 405 biological samples were collected, comprising serum and swab samples from chickens and ducks, environmental swabs from wild bird habitats, and serum samples from pigs. All samples were carefully preserved



Surveillance team conducting HPAI surveillance activities.

using international cold-chain protocols before being submitted to the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP)



Collection of biological samples from domestic ducks during HPAI surveillance activities



Close up collection of blood sample from local chickens during HPAI surveillance activities

for laboratory analysis. In addition to surveillance activities, officers delivered HPAI awareness sessions to livestock owners, emphasizing the importance of early disease recognition, good biosecurity practices, and timely reporting of unusual illness or mortality in poultry. The awareness programme was well received by farmers, many of whom welcomed the opportunity to learn practical measures to protect their flocks.

Importantly, field investigations found no unusual disease events or clinical signs consistent with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza during the surveillance period. However, laboratory testing remains essential to confirm the disease status of the collected samples, with results expected following analysis by ACDP.

Despite challenges including adverse weather conditions, limited transport to remote communities, and the difficulty of handling free-ranging poultry, the mission successfully achieved its objectives through the commitment and close collaboration of MALD and DAFF personnel.

MALD acknowledges the continued support of the Australian Government through DAFF in strengthening Solomon Islands' animal health surveillance and emergency preparedness.

The partnership has significantly enhanced national capacity to detect and respond to emerging animal diseases, contributing to regional biosecurity and food security. MALD remains committed to maintaining regular surveillance programmes, promoting improved farm biosecurity, and working closely with farmers, provincial authorities, and international partners to ensure Solomon Islands remains vigilant and prepared against the threat of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and other emerging animal diseases.

Livestock Outreach Program Boosts Farmer Capacity on Ugi Island



Hakanipua community members

A week-long livestock awareness and veterinary outreach program has successfully strengthened farming knowledge and animal health practices across six communities on Ugi Island. The initiative, funded by the Solomon Islands Agriculture Rural Transformation (SIART) Project, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), was conducted from April 23 to 29, 2026, with participation from 173 community members, including women and youth. The (SIART) Project is a World Bank-funded initiative implemented by the MALD to strengthen the country’s agriculture sector. The project aims to increase agricultural production, improve market access, and enhance rural livelihoods by supporting farmers with training, infrastructure, and resources across 3 key provinces of Malaita, Guadalcanal and Makira-Ulawa. Through activities such as livestock outreach, agribusiness support, and extension services, SIART plays a critical role in improving food security and building the capacity of rural communities. Led by senior officers from the Livestock and Extension Departments, the program covered Su’Ena, Hakanipua, Makia, Mwanipua, Tawarodo, and Sunge-sau

communities. The outreach combined classroom-style awareness sessions with practical demonstrations, focusing on livestock disease prevention, nutrition, husbandry practices, and biosecurity measures. Farmers were also trained in basic procedures such as pig castration and proper animal handling techniques. A community representative from Makia expressed appreciation for the initiative, stating, “This program has helped us better understand how to care for our animals. We have learned practical skills that will improve the health of our livestock and support our families’ livelihoods.” Veterinary services formed a key component of the program, with livestock treated for common conditions, including parasitic infections such as mange and worm infestations. These issues were found to be largely preventable through improved hygiene and feeding practices. A MALD livestock officer highlighted the importance of the outreach, saying, “Our goal is to empower farmers with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent disease and improve productivity. Programs like this are essential in strengthening rural livelihoods and ensuring sustainable livestock development.”



Livestock Officer Lucy restrain a pig, for treatment administration by vet Rod starr

The touring team noted that limited knowledge of animal husbandry remains a major challenge among rural farmers, but initiatives such as this program play a vital role in bridging that gap and building long-term capacity. Despite logistical constraints, including transport and equipment limitations, the program successfully delivered training, treatment, and advisory services to participating communities. The initiative is expected to contribute to improved livestock productivity, enhanced food security, and stronger rural livelihoods across Makira Province.



Livestock Officer Barney Jr restrains pig, while vet Rod Starr mentors' extension officer Gabriel Ngaritora on performing castration procedure

MALD Launches Capacity-Building Workshop to Secure Implementation of USD 4.7 Million GEF Project

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD), in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), on July 1st held a three-day capacity-building workshop to strengthen the ministry’s institutional systems for implementing a USD 4.7 million Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded project. The workshop brought together



Simon Baete MALD Deputy Secretary Special Duties



Douglas Yee FAO Representative for Solomon Islands



Workshop participants



officers from MALD and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) to enhance skills in work planning, risk management, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, and internal controls. The training follows a Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assessment conducted in preparation for the GEF-funded sustainable agriculture project approved

in May 2025. Opening the workshop, MALD Deputy Secretary Special Duties Simon Baete said strengthening institutional systems would improve accountability, safeguard public resources, and enhance service delivery to farmers and rural communities. FAO Representative for Solomon Islands Douglas Yee described the training as a critical step toward ensuring the

successful implementation of donor-funded projects. He reaffirmed FAO’s commitment to supporting Solomon Islands through its “Four Betters” vision—Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment, and Better Life. The workshop reflects the shared commitment of MALD and FAO to strengthen governance and institutional capacity for sustainable agriculture and resilient food systems.

Makira-Ulawa Province Supports Establishment of Provincial Food Council

The Makira-Ulawa Provincial Government has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening sustainable agriculture, food security, and rural development through the proposed establishment of a Provincial Food Council. Speaking at the opening of the Provincial Agrifood Systems Consultation Workshop in Kirakira on 9 June 2026, Deputy Premier Hon. Stephen Ngara (MPA) described agriculture as the backbone of the province’s economy and emphasized the need for stronger partnerships to address challenges such

as limited market access, inadequate infrastructure, post-harvest losses, and low investment in agricultural value chains. The consultation, held under the theme “Strengthening Provincial Partnerships for Sustainable and Inclusive Agrifood Systems,” brought together government agencies, development partners, the private sector, farmers, churches, women, and youth representatives to shape the province’s agrifood future. Hon. Ngara acknowledged the support of the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD). The proposed Provincial Food Council will strengthen coordination among stakeholders and promote public-private partnerships to improve agricultural value chains, expand market opportunities, and attract investment. The workshop concluded on 10 June 2026 with participants reaffirming their commitment to working together to build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable agrifood systems that support the livelihoods and wellbeing of communities across Makira-Ulawa Province.

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Students and Farmers in Malaita Embrace Climate-Smart Agriculture Through FAO-EU and MALD STODAS Project

Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD). The activities form part of the Climate-Smart Crop Production and Home and School Gardens component implemented by MALD's Research Department.

Although Arao RTC was on its mid-year break, several students joined more than 20 youth, women, and farmers from surrounding communities to participate in practical demonstrations on nursery management, organic pesticide preparation, pest and disease control, soil fertility improvement, and water conservation.

Agriculture instructors McLeish Lazarus Diau and Roselyn Dereveke welcomed the initiative, saying the new knowledge and skills would improve farming activities and household livelihoods.

"We are very pleased and happy to have learned these new climate-smart agriculture practices. The knowledge and skills gained will help improve our farming activities and support our household livelihoods," they said.

Ms. Dereveke added that the gardening tools and greenhouse supplied through the project were the first of their kind for the school and would greatly benefit both students and community farmers. The project also established Aligegeo Provincial Secondary School as a climate-smart agriculture demonstration site. During the school break, MALD Extension Officers completed a Training of Trainers programme and will provide practical CSA training to students when classes resume. The school also received support to strengthen its demonstration garden and practical learning facilities. A third demonstration site was established at Kelakwai Community, where more than 20 farming households learned practical techniques including rainwater harvesting, composting, soil moisture management, integrated pest management, and improved irrigation to address the impacts of prolonged dry periods, declining soil fertility, pest



Dr Aaron Kama demonstrates transplanting after mulching mounted ridges at the Arao RTC demonstration site.



From left to right: Mothers, youths and students practising field transplanting learned during the demonstrations.



MALD Extension Officers during the Auki Training of Trainers programme at Aligegeo Provincial Secondary School under the supervision of MALD Research Department Assistant Coordinator and CSA Focal Point Raymond Vava (second from right).

outbreaks, and water shortages. Kelakwai Community Chairman Jackson welcomed the initiative, saying: "This training has opened our eyes to new ways of farming that can help us cope with the changing climate. The practices we have learned will improve food production, soil fertility, water conservation, and the future livelihoods of our families." MALD Research Officer, Assistant Coordinator and Climate-Smart

Agriculture Focal Point Raymond Vava said empowering communities with practical climate-smart farming knowledge is essential to safeguarding the future of agriculture in Solomon Islands. Through demonstration sites and farmer-focused training, the STODAS Project continues to promote resilient farming systems that improve food security, nutrition, and rural livelihoods across the country.

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MALD Congratulates SINU Graduates, Strengthening Agriculture Expertise

ongoing commitment to staff development and capacity building in the agriculture sector.

Speaking on her achievement, Rosemary Alabae described the milestone as the fulfillment of a long held dream, both personally and professionally. She said the qualification represents a "more capable and grounded workforce" within MALD, better prepared to address the challenges facing the agricultural sector. Having returned to academic life after 15 years of field work, she said perseverance, faith, and family motivation played a vital role in completing her studies.

"This degree marks a new chapter in my career," she said, adding that it equips her with modern agricultural techniques and research skills to better serve farmers and strengthen the Ministry's overall impact.

She expressed gratitude to MALD, the Extension Headquarters team, the Director of Extension, and supporting units within the Ministry for enabling her to focus on her studies.

Similarly, Samson Kauhiona said the achievement is a significant milestone for himself, his family, and MALD. He noted that the qualification enhances technical expertise in agricultural science, which is critical for improving service delivery to communities across Solomon Islands.

"This qualification is a great honour and will enhance my ability to serve faithfully as an officer of the Solomon Islands Government," Mr Kauhiona said.

He acknowledged the challenges faced during his academic journey and credited perseverance, faith, and determination for seeing him through his studies.

Mr Kauhiona also thanked MALD and the people of Solomon Islands for sponsoring his education, emphasizing his commitment to returning to service and contributing meaningfully to national agricultural development.

MALD said the graduation of its officers from SINU reflects the Ministry's strategic investment in human resource development, aimed at strengthening technical capacity and improving agricultural services nationwide.

The Ministry congratulates all four graduates and looks forward to their continued contribution to advancing sustainable agriculture in Solomon Islands.



Rennell and Bellona Strengthen Biosecurity Efforts Through Provincial Coordination Workshop

Rennell and Bellona Strengthen Biosecurity Efforts Through Provincial Coordination Workshop

Government agencies, provincial authorities, development partners and community stakeholders have reaffirmed their commitment to protecting Rennell and Bellona Province from invasive species and other biosecurity threats through strengthened collaboration and coordinated action. The commitment was reinforced during the Rennell and Bellona Biosecurity Plan Implementation and Coordination Workshop, held on 3 June 2026. The one-day workshop brought together key partners to strengthen implementation of the province's Biosecurity Plan and agree on practical actions to safeguard the province's unique environment, agriculture and livelihoods. The workshop was supported by BirdLife International through funding from the Kiwa Initiative as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen invasive species management and biodiversity conservation in Rennell and Bellona Province.

Opening the workshop, Deputy Provincial Secretary Mr Aubrey Saueha highlighted the significance of biosecurity in protecting the province's rich biodiversity, food security and way of life. He noted that Rennell and Bellona is the first province in Solomon Islands to develop a Provincial Biosecurity Plan, providing a model that other provinces can follow. Representing Biosecurity

Solomon Islands (BSI), Director Ms Jean Eroa Manepora'a said the Plan provides a practical framework for preventing and managing invasive species while supporting national biosecurity legislation and policy. BirdLife International representative Ms Miliana Ravuso encouraged participating agencies to integrate biosecurity responsibilities into their regular programmes and emphasised that successful implementation will depend on strong partnerships, shared ownership and accountability. Participants reviewed implementation priorities, clarified agency responsibilities and discussed mechanisms for coordination, monitoring and reporting. The workshop concluded with agreement that Biosecurity Solomon Islands will lead implementation of the Plan in partnership with the Rennell and Bellona Provincial Government and relevant stakeholders. Participants also endorsed the development of a Provincial Biosecurity Ordinance to strengthen the province's legal framework for biosecurity management.

The workshop marked an important milestone in strengthening provincial biosecurity governance and reaffirmed a shared commitment to protecting Rennell and Bellona's unique biodiversity, agriculture and communities for future generations.

CONGRATULATIONS



Rosemary, Samson and Fiona with their Bachelor's Degree in Tropical Agriculture

MALD Congratulates SINU Graduates, Strengthening Agriculture Expertise



The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MALD) has congratulated four of its officers who successfully graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Tropical Agriculture Science from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) on Thursday, 30 April 2026.

The in service MAL Extension officers who successfully completed the Tropical Agriculture Science Bachelor's Degree programme at SINU are:

1. Samson Apato Kauhiona
2. Rosemary Haadola Alabae
3. Mathew Aini Junior
4. Fiona Suiti

Among the graduates are Rosemary Alabae and Samson Kauhiona, who completed their studies under MALD sponsorship as part of the Ministry's

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Students and Farmers in Malaita Embrace Climate-Smart Agriculture Through FAO-EU and MALD STODAS Project

Students at Arao Rural Training Centre (RTC) and farmers from Kelakwai Community in Malaita Province are benefiting from climate-smart agriculture (CSA) training aimed at improving food security, strengthening resilience to climate change, and enhancing household livelihoods.

The training was delivered through the European Union-funded Sustainable Transformation of Domestic Agrifood Systems (STODAS) Project, implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with the Ministry of

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