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MAY 2009

NZAID making a difference in Solomon Islands

## NEW ZEALAND'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

### NZAID snapshot

- NZAID is the Government's international aid and development agency
- In 2008/09 NZAID will spend \$471.3 million on overseas development assistance
- Over half of NZAID's expenditure is spent in the Pacific
- NZAID's total bilateral assistance to Solomon Islands in 2008/09 is \$35.7 million.

### The facts

- The population is approximately 530,000
- The country is made up of 992 islands spread over 28,500 square kilometres
- The population growth rate of 2.5 percent is one of the highest in the world
- 40 percent of the population is under 15 years of age
- 85 percent of the population live in rural areas.

### NZAID in Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands Programme, NZAID's largest bilateral aid programme, will be guided by a new strategy for 2009-2018.

New Zealand's support aims to contribute to a prosperous and stable Solomon Islands by fostering broad-based economic and social development.

NZAID will focus on:

- improving livelihoods and broad-based economic growth
- investing in people through education and skills development
- support for building peace and stability.

### Development challenges

- Subsistence farming and fishing support 75 percent of the population
- Rapid population growth and limited access to transport are significant challenges to economic development and the provision of health and education services
- School enrolment rates are low: primary education 91 percent, junior secondary 30 percent, and senior secondary 20 percent
- Unemployment and under-employment of young people is significant
- Recovering from 1998–2003 civil strife and the breakdown of public services and the destruction of public infrastructure
- Unsustainable management of natural resources, particularly forests. Revenue from logging, which makes up 60 percent of government revenues, will begin to drop significantly from 2009.



Less than half of the population over 15 have completed primary level education

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nzaid

New Zealand's International  
Aid & Development Agency

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## 2009-2018 Strategy Focus Areas

### Improving livelihoods and promoting broad-based economic growth

#### *Transport*

Improving access to markets and social services through reliable, affordable transport is central to promoting broad-based economic growth. NZAID is currently working with other donors and the Solomon Islands Government to fix roads and bridges that help rural people get to markets, schools, and clinics. NZAID will be promoting a more coordinated sector-based approach to transport that goes beyond roading to meet the needs of rural communities and stimulate economic activity.



The opening of Tananvasa Bridge

#### *Fisheries*

The fisheries sector offers real potential to generate domestic revenue, expand formal employment, and improve food security and rural livelihoods. NZAID will substantially expand previous support to the fisheries sector by moving to a more sector-based approach. This approach will strengthen the linkages between the government, private sector, and communities leading to improved management and benefits from fisheries and marine resources.

NZAID has been focused on improving the effectiveness of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources to ensure that the people of the Solomon Islands receive maximum benefits from sustainably managed fisheries. This includes construction of new headquarters for the Ministry to be able to function efficiently.

#### *Revenue collection*

NZAID, in conjunction with New Zealand Inland Revenue and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), is scaling up its support to the Ministry of Finance and Treasury to improve revenue collection and strengthen public sector financial management so that the Government is able to finance essential services and put in place a business-friendly tax system.

### Investing in people through education and skills development

#### *Formal education*

Education, especially of girls and women, is recognised as one of the most successful means of enabling countries to achieve sustainable development. NZAID is supporting the Ministry of Education to achieve its goal of providing a quality basic education for all children and eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education.

NZAID is recognised as a lead donor in the education sector and has been working with other donors and the Ministry of Education on a comprehensive Education Sector Programme since 2003.

Since 2003, the Education Sector Programme has:

- Strengthened the Ministry of Education's management of the formal education system.
- Developed a programme to upgrade school infrastructure and a grants policy to increase access to education and the quality of education. In 2009, support has been provided for fee free education to improve access.
- Revised curricula and distributed text books and teaching aids to primary schools.
- Made progress towards ensuring that trained teachers are available in every classroom (in 2007/08, 340 untrained teachers received in-service training and 250 new teachers graduated).

Under the new strategy, NZAID will focus on improvements to schools, while continuing to build the capacity of the Ministry of Education to sustain these results in the long term.

NZAID will also continue to provide scholarships for tertiary study and professional development to address the human resource shortages in the public and private sectors.



The opening of the new library at Hamariko School

### ***Non-formal education /skills development***

A strong education system relevant to employment opportunities is central to achieving sustainable economic growth. Under the new Strategy, NZAID and its partners will expand their support to technical and vocational education and non-formal education. The focus will be on improved access to quality skills-based training that is relevant to improving livelihoods and quality of life.

### **Underpinning the strategy: building peace and stability**

The Government and people of Solomon Islands continue to request external assistance to maintain peace and stability. NZAID will continue to work with the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) to provide the stability required for all development efforts, and continue to support key reform and improved governance initiatives which contribute to sustainable economic development.

NZAID is supporting:

- Deployments of NZ Police to the RAMSI policing force and secondments of senior NZ Police officers to the Royal Solomon Islands Police for capacity development

- The construction of 34 new family housing units for the Royal Solomon Islands Police
- The secondment of judges and magistrates for high-profile court cases
- Honiara City Council by funding the Commonwealth Local Government Forum to provide advisors and new equipment to improve governance, operations, and basic services such as rubbish collection and road maintenance.

### **Post-tsunami reconstruction**

NZAID has committed \$8 million to assist with rebuilding schools, homes and fisheries livelihoods affected by the April 2007 earthquake and tsunami.

- The Ministry of Education, supported by NZAID, UNICEF and the European Union, is rebuilding schools and teacher housing
- World Vision, with NZAID funding, is helping communities to rebuild and repair the homes of about 30,000 people on remote islands in Western Province
- World Fish and Village Technology Trust, with NZAID funding, are replacing 992 dug-out canoes lost in the tsunami. The canoes are made by villagers, which generates income in isolated communities.

Canoes funded by NZAID to replace those lost in the April 2007 tsunami restore people's livelihoods

