



Ministry of Education and Training

Media Release

Thursday 23rd April, 2020.

Commissioning of New Classrooms for GPS Ha'alalo funded by the Government of Japan through its Grant Assistance for Grass-root Human Security Project (GGP)



A new two-classroom building and bathroom facilities for GPS Ha'alalo were officially jointly commissioned by the Hon. Minister for Education and Training, Hon. Siaosi 'Ofa Ki Vahafolau Sovaleni and the Japanese Ambassador to the Kingdom of Tonga, His Excellency, Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, on Thursday 23rd April, 2020.

The new facilities were financed by the Government of Japan at a cost of USD90,625, approximately TOP200,000, through its Grant Assistance for Grass-root Human Security Project or more commonly known as GGP.

The Hon. Minister, on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga, the Ministry of Education and Training and GPS Ha'alalo, acknowledged with gratitude the continuing assistance of development partners for the development of education in Tonga to meet national and global education goals, and for the provision of healthier and safer schools. He particularly thanked His Excellency and his good government for recognizing the desperate plea from GPS Ha'alalo to upgrade the school to meet the growing student population of the school that enrolls students from three surrounding villages. The occasion also symbolized the continuing friendly and cordial relations and partnership between Japan and Tonga.

The Hon. Minister further stated that the assistance from Japan was very timely as the Ministry has been working round the clock to increase and improve sanitation facilities and implement social distancing in all schools in the wake of COVID-19.

Reiterating his vision, “... to provide quality Education for All..”, the Hon. Minister emphasized the need to make sure that no child is left behind – that each child has access to quality and relevant education and a safe learning environment to hopefully transform lives and society for the better.

The Hon. Minister further elaborated that in support of his vision, the Ministry had recently opened a Lifelong Learning School (Ako Tu’uloa) aiming at providing a second chance education to those who had not completed High School studies. In addition, the Ministry had opened 15 Early Childhood Education Centres (ECE - kindergartens) in Tongatapu, and also in the outer islands to better prepare young children for entry to primary school. He acknowledged again the Government of Japan’s significant partnership through which it had funded the construction of some ECE buildings in other villages. An additional and exciting highlight for GPS Ha’alalo was the Hon. Minister’s announcement that an ECE centre will be established at the school, now that there was room for expansion and that ECE is the fundamental building block for a successful education.



In their addresses, both the Hon. Minister and the Japanese Ambassador highlighted the fact that this year, 2020, marked the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Tonga. His Excellency conveyed his wish that bilateral relations will be furthered strengthened with a warm relation between the people of Tonga and Japan. The Hon. Minister responded with good wishes for another 50 years of happy and successful relations between Japan and Tonga.

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