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Construction commences on replacement patrol boats

LCDR David Perry

In exciting news for the Federated States of Micronesia construction has commenced on the first of the new Guardian Class patrol boats to be gifted to the country by Australia. On Monday 03 April 2021, two FSM Border Surveillance Officers, LEUT Micheal Pretrick and AB Dane Johnson were given an opportunity to witness the progress on the new vessel at the Austal's construction yard in Henderson, Western Australia. Whilst in Western Australia both officers completed the Guardian Class conversion training providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to competently operate the new vessels.



Guardian Class vessels have a stern launch capability for the embarked Rigid Inflatable Boats

support to enhance practical maritime security cooperation across the South Pacific. The program will deliver 21 new steel hulled vessels for delivery to 12

The Pacific Patrol Boat replacement program is part of Australia's ongoing

"See FSM Patrol Boats" on page 5



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FSMTC files \$13.6 million counter claim against FSM's fiberoptic Open Access Entity

By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

May 3, 2021

FSM—FSM Telecommunications (FSMTC) has filed a \$13.6 million counter claim against the FSM's fiber optic Open Access Entity (OAE) FSM Telecommunications Cable Corporation. The counter claim was filed as part of FSMTC's response to OAE's April 9 civil action (CA 2021-010) which, among other things claimed that FSMTC had not paid \$780,000 in OAE invoices it was required to pay for access to undersea fiber optic cables under an agreement (Indefeasible Right of Use – IRU)

that FSMTC had signed. OAE also asked for injunctions and declaratory judgment establishing the IRU as a valid document that is legally enforceable.

FSMTC claims they were forced to sign the IRU agreement through political pressure under duress. It says that the IRU is unconscionable, unenforceable, and that it amounts to OAE "simply taking assets of FSMTC without compensation." Their response says that FSMTC and OAE did not pursue a compromise approach as CA 2021-010 claims. Instead, FSMTC was

presented with a "take it or leave it" options and that promises were made to revise and revisit the entire agreement once the World Bank funding for construction of fiber optic lines in the FSM had been received, but that never happened.

"FSMTC does not oppose fair and reasonable competition," FSMTC's response to the OAE Civil Action says, "but it considered the creation of the OAE to be an extra layer of expensive and needless bureaucracy, and

See "FSMTC counter claim" on page 4

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Plaintiffs in Bank of Guam “Stimulus Check” case file strong opposition to motion to dismiss

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

May 3, 2021

FSM—The seven plaintiffs in civil action 2021-008 have filed what they characterized as a “sharp opposition in the Bank of Guam’s (BOG) motion to dismiss”. The case was filed after the Bank of Guam complied with a request of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to return “stimulus payments” it erroneously paid out to some of BOG’s customers.

“...this case has nothing to do with the corona virus or a person’s eligibility to receive a stimulus payment from the United States,” the response said in its opening. “Nor is this case a matter of first impression. Instead, this case is simply about how the Bank of Guam handled and dispersed funds that were deposited with it by its customers.”

The response points out that BOG does not deny in its motion to dismiss that each of the plaintiffs is a customer who deposited funds with the Bank, which is a debt that

the bank owes to the depositor. BOG also did not dispute the fact that it “held” funds deposited with it, rather than immediately crediting the depositor’s account. BOG also did not dispute that for some of the plaintiffs it seized and disbursed the funds to the United States government, while for others, it eventually credited the depositors’ accounts after a lengthy, unexplained delay.

Plaintiffs say that there is no law in the FSM or the U.S. that obligates the bank or any financial institution to hold and/or disperse the deposited funds to the IRS based on a mere request by the IRS to do so. They say that BOG was not operating under some legal requirement based on some money judgment against one of their customers, or some lien or other legal judgment placed on their accounts.

“...the situation at hand is no different than if the Bank had acted upon a request from a local merchant to disperse funds from a depositor’s account because the merchant believed that the depositor had either been undercharged for the goods purchased or received too much change when

completing a transaction or possibly even unlawfully taken the merchant’s property, e.g., shoplifted. For the Bank to take such action based upon a mere request is clearly actionable,” the response said.

Plaintiffs claim that evidence will show that other financial institutions, such as the Bank of Hawai’i, declined the IRS’s request to “unlawfully” disperse funds from their depositor’s accounts to the United States government, and that it was only BOG that took that action.

The response reiterates its claim that there was nothing on the face of the U.S. issued checks being deposited at BOG that presented any evidence of error or fraud, whether or not the depositors were eligible to receive the stimulus checks, and intimates that it wasn’t BOG’s responsibility to ensure that they were.

Plaintiffs took BOG’s four reasons for dismissal to task, the first of which was the plaintiffs’ failure to name the United States as an indispensable party in the civil action. “In this case, the United States is not an indispensable party. For example, the United States is not a party to the depositor agreement that the Plaintiffs allege the Bank breached. Similarly, the United States does not control the accounts the Plaintiffs maintain at the Bank, and as such, the IRS does not owe either the Plaintiffs or the Bank a fiduciary duty...instead, the sole role that the United States had in this situation was to issue payments to the Plaintiffs.” Any money judgment against BOG will have no impact whatsoever on the United States which has already collected money it issued to depositors in error, particularly since, according to the

Compact of Free Association between the U.S. and the FSM, the courts of the FSM have no jurisdiction over the United States’ government. Plaintiffs argue that the case should not be dismissed for failing to name the U.S. as a defendant.

BOG’s argument that the eligibility of some of the plaintiffs to receive payments is “simply an irrelevant red herring in this case.” It says that BOG’s argument that it was upholding U.S. laws is a “smokescreen”, as BOG is not an enforcement arm of the United States government and was not operating under any FSM applicable legal actions. “...it is not the role of the Bank to determine if a depositor is eligible to receive a payment that he or she wishes to deposit for safekeeping into their account.”

Plaintiffs argue in their opposition that when BOG tried to determine if a depositor was eligible to receive the payment submitted for deposit, it, as licensed to engage in the business of banking, was acting under the color of law. Therefore, the argument that the bank is not a governmental organization and therefore cannot be held liable for any due process or civil rights violations based on the fact that BOG is a private entity is not applicable and the case should not be dismissed on that basis.

Plaintiffs also argue that their allegation of fraud committed by the bank was stated with sufficient specificity. “The plaintiffs maintain that this allegation, which is far more descriptive than any other allegation in the complaint...provides more than specific allegations in which to defend itself and as such, the Court should reject dismissal based on that claim.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
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WILL BE RELEASED ON:
May 26, 2021**

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of working hours on:
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Some defendants file answers to complaint alleging election wrongdoing in Chuuk

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

May 8, 2021

Chuuk—Several defendants in the Civil Action (2021-1003) alleging wrongdoing during Chuuk elections have now filed their responses or filed motions for dismissal. The alleged wrongdoing centers on allegations of misuse of special projects funds in order to influence two elections.

The FSM Department of Justice filed answers and defenses to the complaint as amended on behalf of defendants Speaker Wesly Simina, Senator Tiwiter Arritos, and the FSM Department of Finance. For the large portion of their answer, defendants answered that they had no knowledge of the assertions and therefore deny them. With no discussion, the defendants named 16 “affirmative and

other defenses”. They are: failure to join indispensable parties; failure to state a claim, lack of standing, failure to exhaust available administrative remedies, statute of limitation, non-justiciable political question, sovereign immunity, equitable doctrines of res judicata and collateral estoppel, laches, equitable estoppel, waiver, unclean hands, barred, in whole or in part, by the provisions of the FSM Civil Procedure; plaintiffs have adequate legal remedies for any alleged injuries or damages; ripeness; and limitation of liabilities.

They ask the court to dismiss the complaint for injunctive relief, declaratory judgment, specific performance and for punitive damages, and for other relief as the Court deems fit and necessary.

When plaintiffs, Sabino Asor, Setiro Paul, Takamichy Morio, Johannes Berdon,

Maimichy Masis, and Simay Casro Karen, amended their initially filed complaint, they added Saki Stores of Chuuk State to their list of defendants. On April 26, the attorney for Saki Stores filed a motion asking the Court to dismiss the plaintiffs’ claims against them and to dismiss them as a defendant in the matter. Essentially, their motion argued that Saki Stores simply sold products and goods to customers and nothing more.

At press time, plaintiffs had not filed an opposition to the motion of Saki Stores.

On the same day, April 26, now Governor Alexander Narruhn filed a motion to dismiss, arguing that in each complaint plaintiffs alleged acts of other defendants named in the complaint and not him, and therefore each cause of action fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

On May 3, plaintiffs entered their opposition to Governor Narruhn’s motion to dismiss saying that there are sufficient detailed factual allegations and supporting affidavits to support the legal claims of “civil conspiracies to violate and of per se violations of civil rights” by Narruhn and the other named defendants. They also argue that the motion is too early in the process of litigation because it comes before discovery can “help develop critical facts that need to be proven and rulings of law necessary to be made to each of the causes of action against the defendants.” They argue that based on affidavits from witnesses, Narruhn was aware of wrongdoings and participated in them by cooperation.

The Court has yet to make any rulings on any of the motions or responses of either plaintiffs or defendants.

Pohnpei Rotary Club sponsors COVID-19 vaccination banner project

Pohnpei Rotary Club
May 3, 2021

Pohnpei—The Pohnpei Rotary Club in

conjunction with many active sponsors wants to do its part to end the current Covid 19 pandemic.

which donated funding to purchase 60 banners, that have all been placed around the island, at schools, churches and businesses. These are all visibly located, and thanks to our Rotary Club members who put them in so many locations.

We also want to thank other sponsors, such as Genesis Corporation, Etscheit Enterprises Inc., Salomon Saimon, Lt. Commander David Perry, and Pohnpei Port Authority that also purchased banners.

This is an initial project to increase public awareness. Public health is now going out to local clinics to make it easier to get vaccinated. Please do your part. We want to make Pohnpei safe and to get life back to normal.

Everyone needs to take a role.

Thanks again to our sponsors and especially the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei.

Together we can fight this scourge and win.



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There is a lot that can be done. We want to encourage every adult in Pohnpei to get vaccinated. We are currently very fortunate to have been provided by the U.S. enough vaccinations to vaccinate everyone in Pohnpei.

Many many countries do not have that luxury. Please don’t be frightened by the scare tactics published on Facebook or other sources. If we want to go back to normal and bring our people back to Pohnpei we need to step up and vaccinate ourselves, to protect both ourselves and our families.

The FSM is starting to open up with a repatriation flight on May 13. Protecting yourself and your family is your job.

The Rotary Club undertook an awareness project by posting banners all over the main island of Pohnpei. We want to thank our main sponsor the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei



...FSMTC counter claim

Continued from front page

that no financial, market or business studies were conducted to show that this total reorganization of the telecommunications market would be efficient, cost effective or even necessary. Further, OAE is in fact now competing with FSMTC with its intent to install fiber to the home throughout the FSM and replace FSMTC's current infrastructure without any compensation."

FSMTC denies OAE's allegations that FSMTC's lack of cooperation has stalled a planned installation of an undersea fiber optic connection to Kosrae. FSMTC claims that project is actually foundering due to United States disapproval of the contractor selected by OAE and the World Bank selected to do the work.

In its response, FSMTC claims that the World Bank intentionally excluded FSMTC from discussions and decisions and "denies that there was a Telecom Project Team and that such Team had any authority other than to implement the actions directed by the World Bank."

In its response, FSMTC claimed 10 affirmative defenses to OAE's claims: failure to state a claim; failure of consideration; breach of contract; failure to mitigate damages; offset, waiver; bad faith; unconstitutional taking; fraud, misrepresentation, detrimental reliance; intentional and negligent interference with business opportunities; and the defense that the FSMTC IRU should be set aside, which it also states as a first cause of action in its counter claim against OAE.

Among FSMTC's causes of actions in its counter claim is that OAE is engaging in anti-competitive conduct. Along with other allegations within the 39-page body of its response to CA 2021-010, FSMTC lists examples it claims are anti-competitive conduct by OAE. First was its requirement that FSMTC sign the IRU and then requiring FSMTC to pay all of OAE's costs even though there are competitors licensed in the market. The agreement also prohibits FSMTC from using satellite services and restricts it to purchasing cable services only from OAE. It says that the seizing of FSMTC assets with no compensation is anti-competitive conduct. It claims that OAE is additionally operating outside of its mandate by directly competing with FSMTC in the retail cable to the home market, and is attempting to interfere with FSMTC's provision of cable services to its customers, including the challenging of upgrades to its own cable systems.

On May 3, FSMTC additionally filed two supplements to its motion to dismiss OAE's

claims. Each contains affidavits and "white papers" by two telecommunications market experts, each of them with decades of experience in telecommunications markets in the Pacific Islands region.

"There is no purpose served by the OAE as a wholesale carrier in this small market, and it simply adds costs without adding value," the affidavit of John Neilsen Hubbard says and refers to his white paper analysis of wholesale telecommunications in FSM. "With the creation of FSMTCC, the structure of wholesale telecommunications in FSM became fundamentally flawed and makes no economic sense for the users or suppliers of Telecommunications in FSM," it opens. "...The creation of OAE was incongruent with the circumstances in FSM and detrimental to the provision of cost-effective telecom services in FSM," he writes.

He says that a wholesale carrier has value when there are multiple retail service providers (RSPs), and that in that situation, the wholesale operator can facilitate a strongly competitive market. "A problem arises when there is only one RSP. The wholesale operator is then just an entity in series with the RSP and just adds the costs of administration but affords no value add. If it is expected to recover its costs from its customers and there is just one RSP, then the cost of overall service provision to the nation must rise with no added benefit. This is the situation in FSM and hence why the arrangement involving OAE is fundamentally flawed."

He then offers the examples of Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu as examples of countries that have wholesale operators and multiple RSPs and lists the market share of RSPs in those countries. He says that of 21 Pacific Island nations, only Cook Islands and FSM has a wholesale operator and a separate single RSP and that arrangement is only serving to drive up prices in the Cook Islands. He equated FSM's telecommunications situation with Cook Islands and with French Polynesia and New Caledonia, where the wholesale operator is also a significant RSP and is therefore significantly conflicted which keeps competitors from entering those markets. He suggests that the OAE should be dissolved allowing FSMTC to become an Integrated carrier much like six other carriers that currently operate successfully in CNMI, Guam, and American Samoa.

The affidavit of Paul Gerard McCann, who has 46 years' experience in telecommunications, offers his expert testimony on OAE's proposal for fiber to the home (FTTH) coverage in the FSM. "There is no showing in any of the plans I reviewed how OAE is planning to either utilize or take over the existing network,"

he testifies. "If OAE simply duplicates the existing FSMTC network that is extremely wasteful and is a failure to utilize existing facilities. If OAE is going to take over the FSMTC facilities I have not seen any provision for compensation for the existing facilities. If the co-existing facility issue is not addressed it would appear that OAE and FSMTC would then be competing for customers, which would also not make any business or operational sense. Further, it is unclear then who has the responsibility for maintaining the connections, and for connecting customers. Clear delineation and responsibility needs to be determined on who owns and operates the network

elements within the POI's/exchanges (NB: POI is Point of Interconnect)."

"In reviewing the OAE plan it appears that OAE is simply not considering or utilizing any existing infrastructure already in place by FSMTC which is unnecessarily wasteful and simply not good or effective planning," he concludes.

Both sides will get to argue their significantly different points of view on the mechanics of the telecommunications market, and their claims against each other in front of the FSM Supreme Court. The hearing for preliminary matters has already begun.

IOM courtesy call with President of FSM to discuss IMPACT project

International Organization for Migration

On April 1, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) paid a courtesy call to His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of FSM, with the purpose of providing a brief on the Inclusive Mitigation and Preparedness in Action (IMPACT) project.

The project, funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), aims to improve the resilience of eight communities across FSM by strengthening food security, water security, or evacuation shelters. The project is community-driven, meaning that community members will be involved in all stages of the project — from designing the intervention to its implementation. The project will also emphasize inclusiveness and directly engage youth, women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. In addition to these interventions, the project will empower youth and women to be agents of change in their communities. IOM will seek to work with partners to host workshops, trainings and meetings towards this objective.

The meeting with H.E. David W. Panuelo and his Secretaries was an excellent opportunity for IOM to renew its commitment to supporting FSM. In addition, both IOM and the President reaffirmed the importance of partnership

for successfully accomplishing the project. H.E. David W. Panuelo, stated that "the IMPACT project, in cooperation with National and State initiatives and programming, is playing a crucial role in addressing our Nation's food and water security issues in some of our most remote and vulnerable communities. I fully endorse the activities of IOM's IMPACT project, funded and supported by USAID, and hope that the IMPACT project continues to expand in its depth and scope. Every person deserves to know that they will have plenty of clean and nourishing food to eat, and plenty of clean and nourishing water to drink."

Accompanying the President in the courtesy call were The Honorable Andrew Yatilman, Secretary of the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management; T.H. Kandhi Elieisar, Secretary of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs; T.H. Elina Akinaga, Acting Secretary of the FSM Department of Resources and Development; T.H. Dionis Saimon, Representative of FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs; and Mr. Leo A. Falcam Jr., Chief of Staff for President Panuelo.

If you have any questions regarding the IMPACT project, please contact IOM at 320 8735 / 8795.



Dennis L. Belcourt, sworn in as Associate Justice for the FSM Supreme Court

FSM Supreme Court

On Friday, April 27, 2021, the Court held a virtual investiture for the swearing in of the newly appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Honorable Justice Dennis L. Belcourt. The investiture of Justice Belcourt was marked as a historic day for the FSM, and especially for the FSM Judiciary as it was the first time for the Court to administer the Oath of Office for a FSM justice virtually.

The COVID-19 pandemic and closing of the FSM borders have kept Justice Belcourt (and his family), like many of our FSM citizens, stranded in the US. Thanks to the diligent work of the FSM Government, the hard work of the court staff and the advancement in modern technology, the investiture celebrations was made possible. The event was held at the FSM Supreme Court in Palikir, FSM and while the President of the FSM, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, joined virtually from his Palikir, FSM and Justice Belcourt appeared virtually from the FSM Consulate Office in Portland, Oregon. Joining in both locally and virtually were all the Court field offices, members of the FSM bar association, State Courts, Guam Superior Court Justice Barcinas, family, friends and many others. The special proceeding was recorded and is now available on YouTube.

The Judicial Branch is the FSM Supreme Court, the only national court of the FSM whose function is to interpret the Constitution and laws of the Nation and to administer justice equally in a fair manner. Pursuant to the FSM Constitution, the Supreme Court justices are comprised of the Chief Justice and not more than five Associate Justices. Justices are nominated by the President for a lifetime appointment and confirmed by the FSM Congress. The current composition of the Judicial Branch is as follows:
 Chief Justice - The Honorable Dennis K. Yamase
 Associate Justice – The Honorable Bealeen Carl-Worswick
 Associate Justice – The Honorable Larry Wentworth
 Associate Justice – the Honorable Dennis L. Belcourt

Justice Belcourt was nominated by President David W. Panuelo and received confirmation from the FSM Congress in May 2020. He is not a stranger to the FSM. He is married to Kenye Belcourt from Kosrae. They have three children: Anthony, Mary and Josie and one granddaughter, Charlotte. Justice Belcourt, originally from Nevada, has extensive experience in private law practice and public service both in the United States and in the FSM. We warmly welcome Justice Belcourt to the FSM Judiciary family and wish him the best in this new endeavor.

...FSM Patrol Boats

Continued from front page

Pacific Islands as well as Timor Leste. The new vessels, known as the Guardian Class, is based on a proven Australian Patrol Boat design and is 39.5 metres (130 ft) long with a beam of 8 metres and a loaded draft of 2.5 metres. It is capable of travelling at 20 knots and at 12 knots possesses a 3,000 nautical mile range. Each vessel can accommodate 23 people and importantly, due to the lay out of the accommodation, will allow female officers to serve at sea. One of the main deck staterooms, a stateroom with two bunks, is equipped with separate ventilation, so it can be used as an infirmary for infectious patients.

The patrol boats are used primarily for maritime surveillance and fisheries protection. They are often the only

surveillance capability the operating nation has access to, and their presence has often deterred foreign fishing fleets. The ability to patrol the waters has provided boosts to economies through both fishing fines and improved negotiation stances when discussing foreign fishing rights and fees. As part of the patrol role, the vessels are used for customs inspection of ships, and have stopped some smuggling and drug-running operations within the Pacific. Patrol boats have also seen use in humanitarian roles such as search-and-rescue, towing of disabled vessels, sea safety checks on vessels, and inter-island transport, particularly for disaster relief operations.

The new vessel will be formally handed over the Government of FSM in March 2022 prior to arrival home in Pohnpei in late April 2021. The second of the new vessels for FSM will be delivered in the third quarter of 2022.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI) (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

COUNTRY: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
NAME OF PROJECT: Digital FSM Project (P170718)
GRANT NO.: IDA-D5560
Assignment Title: CIU Finance Officer
Reference No.: FM-DOFA-228167-CS-INDV

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank (WB) toward the cost of the Digital FSM Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The Finance Officers will work under the direct guidance of the Finance Specialist, the Project Implementation Support Officers and DoFA officers in both the preparation and regular reviews of the project budget. The objective of the CIU is to provide support to Implementing Agencies in the preparation, implementation and reporting of WB financed projects.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment may be obtained through the Federated States of Micronesia Department of Finance & Administration website (www.dofa.fm) or by e-mailing to the address indicated in this REOI.

The Central Implementation Unit (CIU) within the FSM National Government Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) now invites eligible individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc. and the details of two references).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory

- Minimum of bachelor’s degree in Accounting/Finance/Business Management/ Public Administration or other relevant field.
- Minimum of five years of work experience in public sector financial management in lieu of the required bachelor’s degree requirement.
- Experience with working in a team environment.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

Desirable Experience

- Training in relevant fields (management, financial management, accounting).
- Good understanding of Govt. accounting system.
- Experience in donor - funded projects.
- Additional work experience with national and or international non-governmental organizations will be an added advantage.

Duration and Location

The CIU Finance Officer will be based in Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia for an initial period of twelve months, extension will be subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 Pohnpei Time (Local Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the email addresses below by Friday, 21st May, 2021 to:

Secretary, Department of Finance and Administration,
 Attn:
 Mr. Clint Ngemaes
 Program Officer
 Central Implementation Unit
 Department of Finance & Administration
 Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
 Email: clint.ngemaes@gmail.com

And CC to:

Central Implementation Unit: ciu.dofa@gov.fm

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI) (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

COUNTRY: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
NAME OF PROJECT: Digital FSM Project (P170718)
GRANT NO.: IDA-D5560
ASSIGNMENT TITLE: CIU Finance Specialist
REFERENCE NO.: FM-DOFA-229906-CS-INDV

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank (WB) toward the cost of the Digital FSM Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The CIU Finance Specialist will be responsible for providing financial support and technical assistance to the CIU, Project Implementation Units (PIUs), and Implementing Agencies (IAs) in their respective financial activities, financial management, budgeting, and reporting; including wider assistance and support to the Department of Finance & Administration (DoFA). This will be undertaken in compliance with applicable accounting standards, the provisions of the Legal Agreements with the WB, and the National Government laws and regulations. The Finance Specialist will also assist in finance related training to the CIU, PIU and IA personnel. The Finance Specialist will work under the direction of the CIU Program Manager.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment may be obtained through the Federated States of Micronesia Department of Finance & Administration website (www.dofa.fm) or by e-mailing to the address indicated in this REOI.

The Central Implementation Unit (CIU) within the FSM National Government Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) now invites eligible individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc. and the details of two references).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

MANDATORY

- A post graduate qualification in accounting, finance, or business administration or a related discipline.
- Certified Public Accountant or equivalent
- At least 10 years' experience in accounting, auditing and/or finance.
- Experience with working in a team environment.
- Fluency in both written and spoken English.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE

- Training in relevant fields (management, financial management, accounting)
- Good understanding of Govt. accounting system.
- Experience in donor - funded projects.
- Work experience with national and/or international non-governmental organizations.

Due to current travel COVID-19 travel restrictions, preference will be given to applicants within the FSM before looking internationally.

DURATION AND LOCATION

The CIU Finance Specialist will be based in Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia for an initial period of twelve months, and will be subject to extension based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

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Secretary, Department of Finance and Administration,
 Attn:
 Mr. Clint Ngemaes
 Program Officer
 Central Implementation Unit
 Department of Finance & Administration
 Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
 Email: clint.ngemaes@gmail.com

And CC to:
 Central Implementation Unit: ciu.dofa@gov.fm

Training supports police in RMI to better respond to and prevent violence against women

Women United Together in Marshall Island (WUTMI)

Friday 30 May 2021 (Republic of the Marshall Islands, RMI): Women United Together in Marshall Island's (WUTMI)



is training almost 30 police officers from the Marshall Islands Police Department working in Ebeye to better respond and support survivors of violence against women and children.

The training is being provided through WUTMI's counselling and support service, *Weto In Mour (A Place of Life): Violence Against Women and Girls Support Service*.

"Police officers are often the first to respond to situations of domestic and family violence and it's critical they uphold the law – violence against women is illegal – by removing the violent perpetrator while offering support to the woman survivor," said WUTMI's Executive Director, Daisy Alik-Momotaro.

"This training is also very timely, as in recent months during the COVID-19 response period, there has been a surge of sexual violence and substance abuse which target women and girls within their communities," Ms Alik-Momotaro said.

Opened by Lerij Anta Kabua James John, a woman Chief of Ebeye, and a member of WUTMI as well, this is the second *Weto In Mour* training to support Marshall Islands Police Department officers to better respond to, support and prevent domestic and family violence, with the first held in November last year.

The Attorney General Richard Hickson will also be a guest facilitator on Monday, 3rd of May, during the Ebeye police training being held 26 April to 4 May. He was also a guest speaker at the first training held in November last year for 18 police officers.

This training has 28 participants, including two from the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation and the gender office in Ebeye. In total there will be 46 people trained by end of this second police training, with facilitated by WUTMI in partnership with Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women).

"RMI's rates of violence against women are unacceptable for a nation whose culture is built on peace, care and love for family and clan; a traditional structure that has existed for centuries, and a Christian

country, Ms Alik-Momotaro said.

"Police, as first responders and community activists, are essential to stopping this modern day violence and helping our nation return to its culture of peaceful families, but we need to train and support police to help make a violence free RMI a reality."

The police training in Ebeye island, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), follows WUTMI's February opening of its *Weto In Mour* support service for women in Ebeye, expanding its services beyond Majuro.

Funding for WUTMI's *Weto In Mour (WIM)* Ebeye centre is from the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, via UN Women Pacific, complementing support from the Australian Government through Pacific Women that funded the Majuro *Weto In Mour* – the first ever support service for domestic violence survivors in RMI. Pacific Women also provides ongoing technical support.

"The training is focusing on gender, violence against women, human rights and legislation and is being remotely delivered to the 28 police officers," Ms Alik-Momotaro said.

"Through the training, police officers will deepen their understanding of the need and importance of referring survivors of violence against women to support services such as *Weto in Mour*," she said.

The training is part of Pacific Women's ongoing support for RMI's first counselling and support service *Weto in Mour*, established in 2016 with the support of the Australian Government through Pacific Women. The counselling service continues to increase awareness about violence against women and to improve the referral network and services provided to its survivors. Pacific Women also provides ongoing technical support for all WIM staff along with assistance designing its police training workshop, supported by Wilma Eileen, Pacific Women's Capacity Development Adviser for Gender-Based Violence (Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands).

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 **ISOLUTIONS**

UNICEF with the support of USAID provides hygiene kits to all 183 schools across the FSM to promote FSM WINS (WASH in schools).

By Robin Magangat

Pohnpei—On April 9, 2021, UNICEF handed over 2,500 hygiene kits to Acting Secretary of the FSM National Department of Education Mr. Wayne Mendiola Jr., through the generous support of USAID. These hygiene kits constitute the second batch of supplies that will be distributed to all 183 schools across the FSM by August before the next school year starts. Each kit provides for 8 children and contains items such as soaps, nail clippers, toothpastes, and sanitary pads. The first batch of hygiene kits which arrived last year was evenly distributed to 20 schools (5 schools in each state of the FSM) and was received by 6,000 children. This time, over 18,000 school children will receive the hygiene kits to further support water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in schools (WinS).

UNICEF supported WinS in COVID-19 Emergency as far back as March 17, 2020 when it assisted the Chuuk State Department of Education in adapting the global guideline on safe school protocol to suit the local context of the state. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) relative to the reopening of schools was also

developed by tailoring the key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools to the State’s local context including following recommendations from UNICEF, WHO, IFRC, CDC, National and State Governments.

Indicators in the SOP were utilised to form a baseline survey for school COVID-19 readiness.

Findings from the baseline survey on COVID-19 readiness of schools conducted in 2020 by the Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS) volunteers in partnership with Pohnpei Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE) State Task Force, and the Chuuk State Department of Education with support from UNICEF showed that 91% of 35 schools in Pohnpei and 68% of 47 schools in Chuuk, have soap and water available at age-appropriate handwashing stations.

While the availability of soap and water was not generally an issue in schools



Photo by: Sackett Peter

in Pohnpei State, the presence of handwashing facilities in both Pohnpei and Chuuk remains a big concern. Only 47% of schools in Chuuk and 74% of schools in Pohnpei responded that there is a hand sanitizer or handwashing facility (portable or permanent) available in toilets, classrooms, offices, and near the school entrance. In addition, 83% of schools in Pohnpei and 45% of schools in Chuuk have a regular handwashing program that encourages positive hygiene behaviours.

With the significant gaps in the survey,

the Chuuk State Department of Education initiated a Safe School Protocol training before the reopening of schools. This followed the establishment of FSM WinS by the National Department of Education based on WinS Accreditation Standards, which enables schools to improve their WASH status.

The FSM WinS Program by the Department of Education addresses the immediate health concerns of school children suffering from diseases due to

See “Hygiene kits” on page 11



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FSM Department of Justice division of Anti-Human Trafficking Services receives \$49,733.20 CAD Grant from the High Commissioner of Canada

FSM Department of Justice

The Division of Anti-Human Trafficking Services recently conducted its first Training-of-Trainer Workshop. The successful 3-day workshop was held April 29th through May 1, 2021 in the Governor's Auditorium in Chuuk State. The workshop was part of a broader project which also included the strengthening of assistance for victims of trafficking in the FSM through improvements to the Human Trafficking Victim Shelter in Chuuk. The project was funded in large part by a grant received from the High Commissioner of Canada in the amount of \$49, 733.20 CAD. The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) provides modest funding for small-scale, high impact projects in more than 120 countries. Each year the CFLI funds innovative projects that support meaningful change in communities such as the FSM.

The opening ceremony included remarks from the Hon. Wesly W. Simina, Speaker of the FSM Congress, special remarks from the newly elected Governor of Chuuk State, Hon. Alexander R. Narruhn, welcome remarks from Hon. Lino Amor, Assistant Secretary, Anti-Human Trafficking Division, an opening prayer by Father Kaster Sisam, and keynote address by Lori J. Williams, Esquire, Assistant Attorney General,

FSM Department of Justice. The closing dinner, held at the Truk Stop Hotel on Saturday evening May 1, 2021 officially concluded the event and was highlighted by the closing remarks of Hon. Jose R. Gallen, Secretary, FSM Department of Justice. After his remarks, Secretary Gallen with the assistance of Governor Alexander Narruhn, presented each attendee with a Certificate of Completion. The training was conducted by Dawn Jones, the current Chair of the Milwaukee Joint Human Trafficking Task Force, and a retired Police Lieutenant from the Milwaukee Police Department in Wisconsin, USA. Ms. Carmen Pitre also served as a trainer. She is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Sojourner Family Peace Center, a large service provider in Wisconsin which provides emergency shelter and many other important services for victims of human trafficking and domestic violence.

The Division conducted a training-of-training program to increase the availability and capacity of trainers in the FSM who can raise awareness within their professions/communities regarding human trafficking identification and response. The workshop brought together staff from the Anti-Human Trafficking Division including the Assistant Secretary, Human Trafficking Investigators, Human Trafficking Coordinators, and

Attorneys and law enforcement officers from the national government, as well as Human Trafficking task force members from the four FSM States. Currently, each State has a Human Trafficking Task Force, which is made up of government agencies, traditional leaderships, civil society, NGOs, church groups, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and youth organizations.

The training was provided free of charge to the participants. In return for the training, the participants will be expected to hold at least one training or awareness-raising event within their respective jurisdiction by the end of June 2021. They will be provided grant funding up to one-thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to conduct

the training/awareness raising events. The remaining funds will be used to fully furnish and provide security upgrades to the Human Trafficking Victim Shelter in Chuuk State.

The FSM Department of Justice is very appreciative for the hospitality shown to the workshop attendees by the national and state leadership and citizens of Chuuk State. The Department of Justice would also like to express its appreciation to Ms. Dawn Jones and Ms. Carmen Pitre for the time and effort they put into the training and to the participants for their enthusiastic participation during the workshop.

Activity supported by the
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
Activité réalisée avec l'appui du
Fonds canadien d'initiatives locales

Canada



Sokehs community takes steps to protect its Marine Protected Areas

SOKEHS, POHNPEI – On April 29th, the Sokehs Menen Katengensed (SMK) hosted an MOU signing ceremony for a boat that was donated by OneReef to assist the Sokehs Community Conservation Officers in their work to help monitor climate stressors and enforce the regulations for the Palikir Pass Marine Protected Area. After several weeks of collaborative reviews of the MOU between the Sokehs community traditional leaders, the municipal government officials, SMK, and the donor OneReef by way of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei, the parties finally reached an agreed arrangement. The ceremony was short yet monumental as it was the first of its kind for the Sokehs community. Representing OneReef, the CSP Director, Mr. Eugene Joseph was present for the donation to the SMK members. Mr. Mark J. Johnny, Sokehs CCO and Chairman of SMK, Mr. Pius Roby, Sokehs Traditional Leadership & Vice Chairman, and Mr. Patrick Blank, Secretary/Treasurer were all present for the ceremony. Sokehs Municipal Government Chief Magistrate Hon.

Michael Liemen and FSM R&D Deputy Secretary of Marine, Valentin Martin, who also a Sokehs Traditional Leader, were present as witnesses and support.

Sokehs Menen Katengensed is a Community based natural resource management NGO of Sokehs. Established in early 2020, SMK was created to represent the Sokehs Community Conservation Officers (CCO) with the objectives to assist in the implementation of the Sokehs Government's management plan for all its Marine Protected Areas (MPA). A large focus of SMK is to better educate the communities on the benefits of the MPA's, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, to help conserve our natural resources and increase those resources, and to enforce the regulations that protect the MPA's. SMK recently received a grant through the FSM GEF Small Grants Program to help Pohnpei State with installing MPA reef markers and buoys throughout the island, which will help people determine where the boundaries for where they can and cannot fish and ease the enforcements efforts. SMK is also partnering with the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture in planning a giant clam (H. Hippopus) reseeding project this month in May.

SMK would like to thank everyone involved with the acquisition of this boat and for the formalization of this NGO as the official fisherman's NGO for Sokehs Municipality.



Money continues to grow on the special Ka Trees in Kosrae

Micronesia Conservation Trust

May 1, 2021

Kosrae—On Saturday, May 1, 2021, Dr. Tholman Alik, Executive Director of the Yela Landowners Association, presented



checks to the heirs of Alik Kufus for the Yela Forest Conservation Easement. This is an annual event, where the landowners receive dividends from their conservation endowment. This year each family received approximately \$2,758. Thus far the conservation easement has provided over \$111,665 to the families over the past 5 years.

The conservation easement, which was executed in 2014, is between the Yela valley landowners, the Kosrae Island Resources Management Authority (KIRMA) representing the Government of Kosrae, and the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), who is responsible for managing the endowment associated with the conservation easement. The conservation easement, which was developed by KIRMA, with technical and financial assistance from The Nature Conservancy, US Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, the Micronesia Conservation Trust and the Lucile and

David Packard Foundation, set aside approximately 87 acres of the special Yela Ka (*Terminalia carolinensis*) forest/valley in Kosrae – the last remaining stand of this endemic Ka tree which only exists in Kosrae and Pohnpei (known locally as Kehmah).

At its core, a conservation easement is an agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency under which certain uses of the property are restricted in order to preserve the land's natural or cultural features. While the landowners still own the land at Yela, they've signed a lease agreement with KIRMA/Kosrae State Government, to forgo some of their development rights, such as homesteads and road construction, to the land in order to preserve the valley. The families are still allowed to hunt wild pigs and harvest crops and medicinal plants, as well as carry out ecotourism, scientific research and student learning fieldtrips that support management of this highly unique forest. "To us, this is a win, win situation. We protect our land, and at the same time are able to improve our livelihood from the annual dividends we receive from our endowment and the ecotourism activities we allow on site", says Dr. Tholman Alik.

Hygiene kits

Continued from page 9

poor hygiene practices and lack of access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities. WASH deficiency related diseases in schools such as respiratory tract infections, diarrhoea, and intestinal worm infestations could lead not only to undernutrition but also to poor learning outcomes. The hygiene kits provided by UNICEF contribute to improving WASH and nutrition of school children.

"It will contribute a lot because we try to encourage and train our children to always wash their hands before and after they partake in any meal. All of those will play into effect—the hygiene kit helping them to stay healthy and to wash their hands. It will lead into the part of keeping them healthy with the food that they take and all other health issues in schools," Acting Secretary Mendiola said.

"I can fully say that the Department of Education from the National to the State Level and the schools are very much involved in encouraging the students with regards to WASH and as I have mentioned, part of that we have built in our accreditation system to make sure that schools have the facilities for WASH

and comply with all the requirements of WASH as well," he added.

The hygiene kit provided by UNICEF will not only encourage proper hygiene practices to prevent deaths but also improve health and learning performance of school-aged children. It also allows children to become agents of change by sharing the WASH practices they have learned in school to their families and communities promoting better health for everyone.

When the midline survey on school COVID-19 readiness was conducted by Chuuk WinS with the support of UNICEF, the results showed significant improvements from the baseline survey. "I believe that with the recently arrived WASH in school supplies, schools could make further improvement in preventing disease transmission at school premises", said UNICEF Pacific WASH Specialist Mr. Jeffrey Ing.

As His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia said, "Good hygiene habits start at a young age. Implementing WASH in Schools in all schools in the country will help prepare the nation in the fight against infectious diseases. The Children are the future of Micronesia. Healthy and well-educated children ensure a bright future for our country."

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI) (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

COUNTRY: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
NAME OF PROJECT: Digital FSM Project (P170718)
GRANT NO.: IDA-D5560
Assignment Title: CIU Remuneration & Benefits Specialist
Reference No.: FM-DOFA-185766-CS-INDV

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank (WB) toward the cost of the Digital FSM Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include: (i) Development of a remuneration framework for National consultant hires; (ii) review of the existing framework for reimbursable for international consultant hires and identification/development of a remuneration framework for international hires that may be applied; and (iii) Assessment of the existing frameworks for civil service remuneration and benefits and identifying any challenges/issues with the current arrangements.

Estimated level of effort is Fifty (50) Days.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment may be obtained through the Federated States of Micronesia Department of Finance & Administration website (www.dofa.fm) or by e-mailing to the address indicated in this REOI.

The Central Implementation Unit (CIU) within the FSM National Government Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) now invites eligible individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc. and the details of two references).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Minimum Background and Experience

- An advanced degree with a major in a relevant discipline e.g., HR, Finance, Business or Commerce).
- Previous Experience in Compensation and Benefits analysis and/or management: 8+ years
- At least three similar assignments completed in the past 5 years

Essential Specialized Skills/Knowledge/Competencies

Consultant's application/CV must demonstrate the following:

- Have good knowledge of all concepts, principles and approaches to developing contemporary human resource policies and procedures, particularly compensation and remuneration.
- Have in-depth understanding of government human resources management requirements.
- Strong people skills and the proven ability to quickly build and maintain strong relationships at the highest levels within government and with the development partner community.

Experience working in the Pacific or with Small Island States would be advantageous.

Duration and Location

The CIU Remuneration & Benefits Specialist will be based in Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 Pohnpei Time (Local Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the email addresses below by Friday, 21st May, 2021 to:

Secretary, Department of Finance and Administration,
 Attn: Mr. Clint Ngemaes
 Program Officer
 Central Implementation Unit
 Department of Finance & Administration
 Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
 Email: clint.ngemaes@gmail.com

And CC to:
 Central Implementation Unit:
ciu.dofa@gov.fm

MISP training to build the capacity of Pohnpei State health workers on lifesaving SRH

UNFPA

FSM, 28 April 2021 – A first-ever three-day virtual training on the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) is currently underway in the Pohnpei, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) for midwives, nurses, doctors, and key partners representing the country.

The MISP for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in crises is a set of priority, lifesaving activities required to respond to the SRH needs of affected populations at the onset of a humanitarian crisis and if these needs remain neglected, it could result in life-threatening consequences.

The Government of FSM's Department of Health and Social Affairs (DHSA) in the context of its COVID-19 preparedness and response plan identified the need to train health providers on the Minimum Initial Service Package for SRH in Crises. The Government of the FSM, is committed to accelerated implementation and funding of the ICPD Programme of Action, and key actions for the continued implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Our double up efforts will include (a) use of evidence-informed and targeted policy engagement to inform national policy and programming decisions, planning, implementation and monitoring that lead to increased climate change resilience and sustainable development in FSM; (b) evidence based analysis and update on population and development in the context of ICPD and SDGs in FSM Voluntary National Report for SDGs at the HLPF in July 2020; (c) investments in timely and high quality population surveys such as MICS/DHS in 2020 and census completed by 2022 to ensure the right data is available at the right time to support national policy and programming decisions that address climate change and universal health coverage, and that lead to universal access to SRHR, gender equality



and the empowerment of young people to reach their potential.

Dr. Rally Jim, Chief of Public Health for Pohnpei State, in his opening remarks said that the Pohnpei State is very fortunate to be the first state in the FSM to receive this important training.

“Reproductive health and maternal health including family planning, ante-natal, and post-natal care, delivery, HIV/STI services are all essential services that must continue to be provided by the health care system in the event of any humanitarian crisis including potential COVID-19 outbreak. Our health system must have the capacity to ensure that essential life-saving SRH services continue even amid emergencies. The MISP Training will capacitate our health care workers to continue to provide these essential health services during times of crisis,” said Dr. Jim.

“I take this opportunity to thank the UN system in particular UNFPA for providing the technical tools and support and making this capacity-building opportunity for our health workers possible. As we focus our efforts on COVID-19 preparedness, our government is very grateful for this timely capacity-building initiative,” concluded Dr. Jim.

The MISP is developed by the Inter-Agency Working Group for Reproductive Health in Crisis (IAWG). UNFPA, in partnership with stakeholders, supports the implementation of the MISP to make sure that all affected populations have access to lifesaving SRH services. The key aims of the implementation are that there is no unmet need for family planning, no preventable maternal deaths, and no gender-based violence (GBV) or harmful practices, even during humanitarian crises.

Dr. Jennifer Butler, UNFPA Pacific, Director, and Representative, in her opening remarks, said that the FSM is one of the fourteen countries which UNFPA has served over the past four decades. We firmly believe, our partnership and country programme will flourish even more, with the North Pacific Multi-Country Office. “We look forward to working closely with the Government of the Federated States of the Micronesia and the four states including Pohnpei State, to support a country-owned and led pathway to universal health coverage including universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.”

She said that as a Pacific Small Islands Developing State, the FSM is on the front line of climate change. We see the effects of prolonged droughts. We see how king

tides erode the coastline. “We see how the sea water that sips into the water tables affect water and food security. In the midst of these climate induced vulnerabilities, the threat of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic call for greater cooperation and a resilience for survival. Despite the adversities and uncertainties of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that the FSM, in keeping to its Strategic Development Plan will embrace “resilience in all its dimensions” moving forward,” stressed Dr. Butler.

She said the survival of women, expectant mothers and newborn babies is dependent on access to critical health services, such as emergency obstetric care, sexual and reproductive health services, access to a safe space for survivors of violence. To ensure collective resilience of affected populations, it's critical to understand and accommodate the needs, perspectives and capacities of women, girls, men and boys because they are not only different, they are specific.

Dr. Butler added that the United Nations Population Fund is deeply grateful to the Government of New Zealand for the funding support to FSM through the NZ-UN Pacific Partnership. This funding support has enabled this MISP training and the critical work required to ensure access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents and young people.

In conclusion, Dr. Butler conveyed her appreciation to the Government of FSM, the value and quality of genuine and durable partnership, as a critical component in making the promise of the Strategic Development Plan, the KAILA Declaration, the Nairobi ICPD25 Commitments, and the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for the people of the FSM.

UNFPA strives to ensure that MISP activities and additional SRH services are included in all phases of the humanitarian programme cycle.

Pohnpei Rotary Club distributes hand sanitizers to community

Pohnpei Rotary Club

May 3, 2021

Pohnpei—The Pohnpei Rotary Club was very happy to play a small part in promoting safety and hygiene in Pohnpei State during these times of the Covid 19 pandemic.

We were the recipients of a most thoughtful donation of approximately 80 cases of Palmolive hand sanitizer. We

want to thank the company Micronesian Brokers in Guam for the donation and the Rotary Club of Northern Guam for the assistance in organizing the donation to us. We also want to thank Triple B Forwarders for the assistance received in covering the shipping of this big donation to Pohnpei.

Rotary can do good things when it is assisted by generous and caring individuals and companies.

The Rotary Club of Pohnpei then distributed the hand sanitizers to all sorts of community locations, including schools, churches, government offices and places where people gather. It was a very thoughtful and useful donation especially in these trying times.

Many thanks to the individual Rotary Club members who helped distribute the many cases to many locations.

As you can see from the photos the donations were well appreciated.

Many thanks to all those who helped including Micronesian Brokers, Triple B Forwarders and Rotary Club of Northern Guam for the assistance.

With all of this help we will beat the pandemic.

Yap enjoys monthly island market events

Yap Visitors Bureau

MAY 3RD, 2021

COLONIA, YAP MICRONESIA – The new Yap Island Market has seen an upsurge in participation with the latest market event held April 30, 2021. As Yap remains COVID free, and the borders still closed, the Yap Visitors Bureau continues to find ways to enjoy a “normal life”. Previously this kind of market activity occurred only occasionally during special events. The Island Market was launched late 2020 and it is gaining popularity. The

event is held at the Yap Living History Museum every last Friday of each month. The recent pressures associated with COVID-19, including reduced imports and travel restrictions has increased the importance of this market that provides a source of food, cash, and other exchanges as well. Organized by the Yap Visitors Bureau the market will hopefully be a tourist attraction as visitors will also be able to enjoy the market and purchase art and handicrafts once the island opens up again.



First Lady Edwin opens three-day plastic repurposing training workshop

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On April 27th, 2021, Patricia E. Edwin, First Lady of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), opened the Plastic Repurposing Training Workshop. Co-hosted by both the FSM Department of Resources & Development (R&D) and the South Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO), the three-day workshop taught participants on how on to reuse pollutants, such as plastic bottles, in a way that will strengthen and promote Micronesian culture.



The three-day workshop concluded in Pohnpei on April 29th. The Government will soon be expanding it into the States of Yap, Chuuk, and Kosrae.

“Of the more than one thousand jobs lost in the FSM due to the COVID-19 Pandemic,” First Lady Edwin said, “a plurality of these have been in the tourism sector, of whom a disproportionate number have been women. ...The Pandemic gives the FSM an opportunity to reflect and plan our [tourism] pathway carefully; this planning is important

See “Plastic workshop” on page 15

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI) (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

COUNTRY: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
NAME OF PROJECT: Digital FSM Project (P170718)
GRANT NO.: IDA-D5560
Assignment Title: Digital Information Assistant
Reference No.: FM-DOFA-222212-CS-INDV

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank (WB) toward the cost of the Digital FSM Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Digital Information Assistant, under the direction and supervision of the Digital Information Officer, will ensure effective systems for the repository and management of information and communication activities of the World Bank portfolio in FSM, including, but not limited to, the maintenance of the National Department of Finance website, maintaining online project monitoring and document control databases, and implementing and maintaining data policies including backup and recovery procedures.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment may be obtained through the Federated States of Micronesia Department of Finance & Administration website (www.dofa.fm) or by e-mailing to the address indicated in this REOI.

The Central Implementation Unit (CIU) within the FSM National Government Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) now invites eligible individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc. and the details of two references).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory

- Associate Degree from a recognized institution in computer science, information technology, or related field.
- A minimum of five (5) years relevant experience in lieu of the associate degree requirement.
- Experience in working in a team environment.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

Desirable Experience

- BS Degree in computer science or information technology is a plus.
- Demonstrated ability to work under pressure and pay attention to details.
- Ability to learn quickly.
- Organized and detail-oriented person.
- Good communication skills.

Duration and Location

The Digital Information Assistant will be based in Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia for an initial period of twelve months, subject to extension on satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 Pohnpei Time (Local Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the email addresses below by Tuesday, 18th May, 2021 to:

Secretary, Department of Finance and Administration,
 Attn. Mr. Clint Ngemaes
 Program Officer
 Central Implementation Unit
 Department of Finance & Administration
 Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
 Email: clint.ngemaes@gmail.com

And CC to:
 Central Implementation Unit:
ciu.dofa@gov.fm

Letter to the Editor

China's path of poverty alleviation and its significance to the world

Chinese Ambassador to the FSM Huang Zheng

Poverty is a chronic affliction of human society and a common challenge faced by the whole world. China is the world's largest developing country, with a population of 1.4 billion, which had long been plagued by poverty at a scale and a level of severity that has rarely been seen anywhere else in the world. As a result, the challenge of poverty alleviation in China almost defies imagination.

At a grand gathering held on February 25, 2021, to mark China's achievements in poverty alleviation and to honor its model fighters against poverty, President Xi Jinping solemnly declared: Victory in the battle against poverty is complete, and China completed the arduous task of eliminating extreme poverty. As home to nearly one fifth of the world's population, China's complete eradication of extreme poverty, being the first target of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 10 years ahead of schedule, is a milestone in the history of the Chinese nation and the history of humankind, making an important contribution to the cause of global poverty alleviation. In the future, a more prosperous China, having been lifted out of extreme poverty, will also be more open and inclusive. It will interact more constructively with the international community, and make a greater contribution to building a better world.

For the purpose of recording the course of the Chinese people's great fight in eliminating extreme poverty, introducing China's approach and sharing its experience and actions in poverty alleviation, the Chinese government issued a white paper in April, titled *Poverty Alleviation: China's Experience and Contribution*.

Year 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Over the past century, the CPC has united and led the Chinese people in the battle against poverty with unwavering faith and will. Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee, with General Secretary Xi Jinping at the core, has fought a decisive battle against poverty that is unprecedented in scale and intensity, and has benefited the largest number of people in human history. At the end of 2020, the 98.99 million people in rural areas who were living below the current poverty threshold (annual income of RMB 2,300 or USD 345 based on the 2010 price index) all shook off poverty; all the 128,000 impoverished villages and 832 designated poor counties got rid of poverty; poverty over entire regions in China has been eliminated.

There has been significant improvement in the living standards of the poor. The per capita disposable income of the rural poor increased from RMB 6,079 (or USD 912) in 2013 to RMB 12,588 (or USD 1,888) in 2020, up by 11.6% per annum on average. The "Two Assurances and Three Guarantees", which refers to guarantees of adequate food and clothing, access to compulsory education, basic medical services, and safe housing for impoverished rural residents, have been realized. Education, healthcare, housing and drinking water supplies are much improved. Poverty-stricken areas have got rid of backwardness in terms of infrastructure and public services, etc.. Those who have been lifted out of poverty adopt a new mindset. The rights of women, children, the elderly, the disabled and other special disadvantaged groups to basic needs and development are well protected. We have seen grassroots social governance in poverty-stricken areas significantly improved.

The strategy of "targeted poverty alleviation", derived from China's poverty elimination effort and tested in practice, is the strongest weapon in its final battle to secure victory against poverty, and a major innovation in the theory and practice of poverty alleviation. The core of the strategy lies in the following 5 aspects of work: I. identifying people in need to know whom to help; II. strengthening leadership and team-building to know how to offer help; III. applying targeted measures for different groups to know how to help; IV. adopting strict criteria to know when and how to deregister those who have emerged from poverty; V. conducting follow-up monitoring to help people stay out of poverty.

China has accumulated valuable experience in its cause of eliminating poverty and blazed a new path of poverty alleviation with Chinese characteristics. This path consists of 6 essential elements:

Firstly, a people-centered philosophy. The problem of poverty, in essence, is how the people should be treated. The people-centered philosophy, upheld by a country's ruling party or leading group, is the fundamental driving force behind the cause of poverty alleviation.

Secondly, highlighting poverty alleviation in the Governance of a country. To achieve success, it is of utmost importance that the leadership have devotion, strong will and determination, and the ruling party and government assume their responsibilities to the people, play a leading role, mobilize forces from all quarters, and ensure policies are consistent and stable.

Thirdly, eradicating poverty through

development. Only development can lead to economic growth, social progress and higher living standards. Only development can better guarantee people's basic rights and meet their desire for a better life.

Fourthly, pressing ahead with poverty alleviation based on reality. The occurrence and evolution of poverty has its own features and trends. To successfully reduce poverty, a country must follow a path in line with its national conditions, identify and remove obstacles to poverty alleviation, find driving forces for this cause, and constantly adjust and reform its strategies and policies.

Fifthly, letting the poor play the principal role. The government needs to serve the people, rely on them, respect their principal status and pioneering spirit and motivate the poor to rely on their own hard work.

Sixthly, pooling all resources to create synergy. It is required that we mobilize all sectors of society to unite with common purpose and act in solidarity.

Under the CPC leadership, the Chinese people have created an approach to poverty alleviation with their own hard work. China's successful practice and valuable experience in eliminating extreme poverty have deepened human understanding of poverty alleviation trends, enriched and extended the theory of international poverty alleviation, and boosted the confidence of other countries, especially developing ones, in eradicating extreme poverty. They serve as reference for other countries to choose a suitable path of poverty alleviation, and offer China's approach to solving the problem of modern national governance and creating brighter prospects for social progress, which belongs both to China itself and to the rest of the world.

The world today is experiencing a scale of change unseen in a century. The kind of world we should build and the future direction of human civilization, are issues that have a bearing on every country and every person. Everyone has the right to a decent life. All countries need to shoulder their responsibilities and work on poverty reduction. China has always closely linked its future with that of the rest of the world and will act as an advocate, facilitator of and contributor to the international cause of poverty alleviation as usual. China is ready to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with other countries, including the FSM, on poverty reduction, support international poverty reduction, and make a greater contribution to building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity that is free from poverty and blessed with common prosperity.

Reply to President Panuelo regarding corporate tax

Dear President Panuelo:

With great respect, I thank our Almighty Father for the opportunity to be able to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of April 22, 2021, regarding the sharing of corporate tax revenues generated through the corporate tax scheme, and your position to allow the FSM Supreme Court to make a ruling whether the tax revenues be shared or not.

With all due respect, the question whether the tax revenues generated through the corporate tax scheme is subject to the revenue sharing mandated by Section 5, Article IX of the FSM Constitution is a simple one. It is simple because historically (facts), the National Government has been faithfully sharing tax revenues in accordance with the mandate of Section 5 of Article IX of the FSM Constitution. However, interestingly enough, the question was raised whether the tax revenues received from the corporate tax should be shared or not, which resulted in a legal opinion issued by one of the Assistant Attorney Generals from the FSM Department of Justice, that the tax revenues should be shared, especially with Pohnpei, but President Mori did not agree. This could be authenticated by the hand written notes on the first page of the legal opinion, which supports sharing of the corporate tax revenues pursuant to the FSM Constitution and its laws. How could this be so wrong that would require another legal opinion in support of President Mori's intent not to share? Since historically, as mentioned above, National Government has been faithfully sharing tax revenues with the states in accordance with the mandate of Section 5 of Article IX of the FSM Constitution. I see no other reason to issue another legal opinion, but to deny the people of Pohnpei to receive their rightful shares of the corporate tax revenues. To say in the second opinion that Palikir is a province, thus it is not part of Pohnpei or even Sokehs, is an insult to the people of Pohnpei, particularly, the people of Sokehs. Nothing can change the fact that Palikir is in Sokehs and Sokehs is a municipality of Pohnpei.

References made to the many assistance that the National Government has

Continued on next page

been providing to the states, especially to Pohnpei, are well acknowledged. However, these assistance should not be used to overshadow or deny what is so rightfully belongs to the people of Pohnpei. The applicable provisions of the FSM Constitution are self-executing provisions, therefore, the action taken not to share the tax revenues from the corporate tax scheme is one with great concern. If I may repeat again, historically the National Government has been sharing tax revenues with the states since the ratification of the FSM Constitution, why made a decision not to share?

The explanations given in your communication of April 22, 2021, which dwelled on the reasons why the corporate tax should not be shared, may create a constitutional question, and that constitutional question is whether the National Government, especially Congress, has the constitutional authority to levy or impose such tax or any tax against a business operating outside of the FSM. Since the authority of the National Congress is confined to only the imposition of taxes prescribed under Section 2(d)(e) of Article IX of the FSM Constitution, which tax revenues are subject to the mandate of Section 5 of Article IX of our Constitution. We must keep in mind that sharing of tax revenues is what binds us together.

For the record, I would like to clarify that I have great respect for President Mori, but his action which reflected on the first page of the legal opinion showing that he did not support sharing is a great concern. I can only conclude that the move taken not to share has no basis, except to deprive the people of Pohnpei from their rightful shares of the Corporate Tax Revenues

The question is why issued another legal opinion not to share when historically, the National Government has been faithfully sharing the tax revenues since the ratification of the FSM Constitution and the fact that the first legal opinion on the subject matter supports revenues sharing. The constitutional question still remains whether the President has the constitutional authority to order the Attorney General to issue another legal opinion declaring that the tax revenues should not be shared.

Lastly, but not the least, thank you for taking a moment out of your busy schedules to read my response. Pohnpei is seeking nothing more or nothing less.

Sincerely oh ni wahu,

Feliciano M. Perman

...Plastic workshop

Continued from page 13

in the way we see the people of the FSM benefitting from businesses such as accommodation, food, transport, and nature-based activities, including a strong sense of ownership in the protection and conservation of natural resources.”

“Today,” First Lady Edwin continued, “We are demonstrating a practical way of sharing the benefits from tourism widely, across our villages and households, through the introduction of creative skill sets to make jewelry, and decorative household items, which can be sold back to visitors or exported to our diaspora in the United States and other countries.”

Intended to tap into Micronesian creativity, the Plastic Repurposing Training Workshop seeks to alter citizens’ mindset from seeing a plastic bottle on the beach or road as exclusively a pollutant into a potential source of familial revenue.

“We are a resilient people,” First Lady Edwin said. “Together we can contribute to keeping the whole Pacific region a safe and attractive paradise in our backyards by repurposing plastics, one day at a time.”

Pre-quarantine process begins for 42 stranded FSM Citizens; If May 13th repatriation effort finds success, future repatriation efforts to be planned

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On May 6th, 2021, forty-two (42) citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) entered into a designated pre-quarantine site in Guam. The 42 citizens will spend seven (7) days at the site prior to their repatriation into the Nation on May 13th via a United States Armed Forces asset.

The repatriating citizens include stranded medical patients and their respective attendants, students, and essential personnel. While the repatriating citizens collectively represent all four of the FSM’s States, they all reside in the State of Pohnpei. With some limited exceptions, the citizens scheduled for the May 13th repatriation effort are the same citizens originally scheduled to return on December 5th, 2020.

To enter into pre-quarantine, all repatriating persons, with limited exceptions (e.g. minors, pregnant women), demonstrated possession of documentary evidence showing they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, as well as the completion of a PCR-based COVID-19

President Panuelo submits FSM’s opposition to nuclear waste dumping, & encourages Japan to consider hosting a formal, multilateral dialogue with the Pacific

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On April 26th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—wrote a letter to the Honorable Yoshihide Suga, Prime Minister of Japan. Transmitted to Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs on April 27th, 2021, the letter was with regards to the Nation’s increasing concerns arising from the Government of Japan’s decision to solve the enduring problem of nuclear waste at Fukushima by releasing, in two years’ time, 1.2 million tons of diluted—but nonetheless contaminated—water into the Pacific Ocean.

President Panuelo noted that the FSM National Government is concerned over possible harm to the environment, and frustrated that other countries which share the Pacific Ocean were not consulted on the decision. The President wrote that, of all the reasons the FSM champions environmental protection, conservation efforts, and sustainable fisheries, the Nation’s continued survival is at the forefront.

The President’s letter emphasized that the FSM recognizes that the earthquake and subsequent disaster at Fukushima in 2011 was a heartbreaking tragedy for Japan and the World, and congratulated the Government of Japan for its untiring efforts to clean up and contain the dangerous nuclear waste left in its aftermath. “We recognize that putting

the nuclear waste product in water tanks was an effective and immediate solution for an urgently evolving problem,” President Panuelo wrote, “And we note, through your own assessment, that the current practice is unsustainable. ...As a fellow leader, I can empathize that you’re facing a difficult situation, domestically and internationally.”

“In addition to the Pacific Island Forum’s call for an independent expert review,” President Panuelo continued, “I strongly believe it would be highly fruitful, and demonstrative of our close friendship and cooperation, for the Government of Japan to engage in a formal and multilateral dialogue with countries whose livelihoods depend greatly on the health of the Pacific Ocean. In the spirit of multilateralism and inclusivity, I would encourage you to consider having consultations with the Micronesian region. ...I believe [such an engagement] will be fruitful for your Government to hear, candidly and directly, our fears and concerns, so that they can be identified and then assuaged.”

President Panuelo concluded his letter by re-emphasizing that the People and Government of the FSM cherish our Kizuna, or special bond, with the People and Government of Japan.

Citizens interested in reading the President’s letter to Prime Minister Suga may find it here: https://gov.fm/files/DFA-KAE-110-21_cleared_for_dissemination.pdf

test indicating that they are negative for the virus. All repatriating persons will be tested again prior to departure to the FSM.

All individuals the repatriating persons will encounter when they leave the pre-quarantine site to the aircraft, including the aircraft itself, will wear personal protection equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves. All members of the crew for the United States Armed Forces asset have been vaccinated. All members of the crew will also be tested, multiple times, prior to the flight.

Upon return into the FSM, all vaccinated repatriating citizens will undergo an additional seven (7) days of quarantine at the Pohnpei State quarantine facility in Dekehtik; the citizens who arrive unvaccinated will stay a total of fourteen (14) days. All repatriating persons will undergo testing upon arrival into Pohnpei and prior to exiting the quarantine facility.

All repatriating persons will undergo the same COVID-19 testing and security protection regimes. All preventative and protective measures necessary to effectively complete this repatriation effort successfully are being implemented and

put into effect both in Guam and in the FSM. Access and visitation to designated pre-quarantine and quarantine facilities is restricted.

The FSM National Government extends its sincere appreciation to the People and Government of the United States of America, with whom the FSM shares an Enduring Partnership, for their offer for the May 13th humanitarian flight.

If the May 13th repatriation effort is successful, which the Government has full trust and confidence that it will be, it will be the first of the FSM’s ongoing initiative to safely return the Nation’s stranded citizens’ home.

The FSM National Government is not able to provide a definitive timeframe for future repatriation efforts in this release. However, the FSM National Government has recently received information that its chartered Air Marshall Islands aircraft may be available towards the end of May or beginning of June, 2021; while this does not set in stone a repatriation effort from the Republic of the Marshall Islands for this timeframe, the Government is pursuing this avenue with urgency and interest.



Register now **SUMMER 2021 REGISTRATION**

For the regular scheduled class starting on May 31, 2021

- May 17-26, 2021 Registration for New Students, Returning and Transfer Students
- May 27-28, 2021 Registration for Continuing Students
- May 31, 2021 Last day to add/drop course/s
First day of class

For new students only whose class starts on June 14, 2021

- June 7-11, 2021 In person registration
- June 14, 2021 Last day to add/drop course/s
First day of class

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Awards CFE Grant



The Center for Entrepreneurship-COMFSM (CFE) is proud to announce to the general public that it has been awarded a grant from the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) of \$979,837.00 as an investment for the FSM Entrepreneurship Initiative – Phase II Project with Co-Principle Investigators as Jean-Pierre K Lukusa and Timothy James Mamangon both faculties at the COMFSM.

The project aims to help increase small- and large-scale agriculture production in the FSM by building 4 (four) 23x40 ft. hydroponic greenhouse, which will serve as a training hub to provide business training for farmers interested in starting their hydroponic farms. The COVID-19 pandemic has seen issues of food security worsen and if not anticipated this crisis may have a particularly severe impact on FSM territories that are ever so reliant on imported consumables. The project is expected to grow the economic capacity of peasant farmers and address issues of food self-sufficiency in our communities and food security at national level.

The project will be located at the College of Micronesia-FSM National Campus in Pohnpei, as well as the three (3) other state campuses located in Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae.

If you want to learn more about how to start your own hydroponic farm for either domestic or commercial consumption or if you need to know more about this Project, please contact our vibrant team located in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) building at COMFSM's National Campus. You can also reach us by phone via +691-320-2480 ext. 149 and/or 150, or drop us an email at cfe@comfsm.fm