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STRENGTHENING COMPETITIVENESS, AGRICULTURE, LIVELIHOODS, AND ENVIRONMENT (SCALE) TRADE AND INVESTMENT

USAID’s Solomon Islands SCALE is a five-year, USD \$25 million project that advances economic competitiveness and inclusiveness with specific emphasis on the development of the agribusiness sector and improved management of the forestry sector.

In support of the Solomon Islands’ National Development Strategy 2016-2035, USAID’s SCALE Program has three Objectives: 1) improving the enabling environment for increased trade and investment; 2) promoting the expansion and further development of the agribusiness sector; and 3) improving governance of the forestry sector. Nathan Associates is implementing the SCALE Trade and Investment (SCALE T&I) Project, which focuses on the SCALE Program’s Objective 1, “improve the enabling environment for trade and investment.” SCALE T&I coordinates closely with the other components of SCALE to facilitate inclusive economic growth, such as on agribusiness grants and infrastructure expansion.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT

SCALE T&I focuses on reducing the cost and steps of obtaining business permits and licenses; strengthening trade and investment facilitation; and improving agribusiness value chain growth. SCALE T&I

works closely with the Solomon Islands National Government, the Malaita Provincial Government, and the private sector to identify opportunities for and implement activities aimed at strengthening the enabling environment for trade and investment. SCALE T&I provides technical assistance through an enterprise-driven lens. The project works to create an environment that allows businesses to compete vigorously, leading to growth and economic expansion in the private sector.

REDUCING COSTS OF DOING BUSINESS

Through stakeholder consultation, SCALE T&I supports Malaita Province in further reducing the cost and steps of obtaining business permits and licenses, and the project will help create an online platform to apply for a provincial business license. With provincial government buy-in, these efforts can be scaled up to other provinces in Solomon Islands and can improve Solomon Islands' Ease of Doing Business Score.

STRENGTHENING TRADE & INVESTMENT

SCALE T&I focuses on increasing agribusinesses' domestic sales and exports and seeks to better understand and increase women's participation and engagement in trade. SCALE T&I conducted an analysis of Solomon Islands' WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement ratification status and will assess non-tariff barriers to trade, create a simple trade model to inform evidence-based policymaking, and provide trainings to stakeholders. SCALE T&I facilitated the formation of the Advisory Committee for Agribusiness in Malaita Province that promotes public-private dialogue and focuses on improving the business enabling environment. SCALE T&I will provide technical assistance, as needed, to advance the Committee's priorities and will work closely with the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce to develop and implement an export promotion training program. The project also aims to support various aspects of competition policy reform and improve public-private partnerships.

IMPROVING AGRIBUSINESS VALUE CHAIN LINKAGES

Supported by SCALE T&I, the Advisory Committee for Agribusiness will also identify interventions for agribusinesses aimed at improving Malaitan agribusinesses' production quality, strengthening value chain linkages, and expanding domestic sales and exports—interventions that can be rolled-out nationally. Driven by government and the private sector, the project will promote the development of agribusiness cooperatives and business associations, such as for kava producers. SCALE T&I will help facilitate kava quality testing to ensure the acceptance of kava exports at international ports.

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