Press release

For immediate release - 10th November 2026

Solomon Islands receives boats, ambulances and vehicles to strengthen access to health services

HONIARA, Solomon Islands, 9 November 2026.– The Ministry of Health and Medical Services of Solomon Islands has received ten multipurpose boats, five ambulances and four 4x4 vehicles through a partnership between the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and UNOPS.

The handover ceremony, held at the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, marked a key milestone in a US$1 million project funded by KOICA and implemented by UNOPS to support health service delivery across the Solomon Islands.

The country's dispersed geography, with communities spread across more than 900 smaller islands and six major islands, presents significant challenges for transporting patients and delivering essential health services. The boats and vehicles are intended to help address these challenges by supporting transportation across waterways and on land.

Ms. **Cho Han Kyul Sam, Country Director of the KOICA Fiji Office**, highlighted the importance of the project in strengthening the national health system and improving access to quality maternal and newborn healthcare services across Solomon Islands.

"As one of KOICA's key priority areas, this project has been directed towards strengthening the national health system and improving the quality and accessibility of maternal and newborn healthcare services across Solomon Islands. We are proud to contribute to Solomon Islands' development priorities and remain committed to working together with our partners to improve the lives of its people." she said.

Hon. **Morris Toiraena, Minister of Health of Solomon Islands**, welcomed the new fleet, noting its contribution to addressing longstanding challenges in healthcare delivery, particularly for communities across the country's islands.

"The new fleet will help address these challenges in health service delivery directly. The five ambulances will strengthen emergency and maternal referrals; the boats will enable patients and health workers to travel more safely and quickly between island communities; and the four vehicles will support outreach, provincial supervision and the delivery of essential supplies. This is also one of the largest donations the Ministry has received. " he said.

The project involved the procurement and delivery of ten multipurpose boats, five Land Cruiser ambulances and four four-wheel drive vehicles. UNOPS managed the procurement process and delivery in coordination with KOICA and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

"*At UNOPS, our role is to assist our partners turn development priorities into tangible results through our expertise in procurement, infrastructure and project management. We are proud to have contributed to this initiative and to work alongside KOICA and the Government in support of stronger health service delivery*," Dr. **Ali Salha, UNOPS Programme Management Advisor**, added.

The handover places the assets under the Ministry's stewardship. Their effective operation and maintenance will be important to ensuring that they continue to support health workers, patient transportation and access to healthcare over time.

The initiative demonstrates the value of cooperation between development partners and national institutions in addressing practical barriers to essential services and supporting stronger, more resilient health systems across the Pacific.

[ENDS]

Notes to the editors:

Press contact details:

Yadhu Acharya,
UNOPS Communications and Partnerships Officer for South East Asia and the Pacific,
yadhua@unops.org

About UNOPS:

UNOPS offers practical solutions across peace and security, humanitarian and development operations. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners, to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement across the world. Read more: www.unops.org.

About KOICA

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is the Republic of Korea's development cooperation agency. It supports partner countries through official development assistance to advance sustainable development and strengthen institutional and service delivery capacities. Read more https://www.koica.go.kr/sites/koica_en/index.do

Pictures of the event:



Handover Ceremony (9 November 2026)

_DSC8411.jpg



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of four four-wheel drive vehicles
(Left to Right) Dr. Gregory Jilini (Permanent Secretary, a.g., Ministry of Health and Medical Services), Hon. Morris Toiraena (Minister of Health, Solomon Islands), Ms. Cho Han Kyul Sam (Country Director, KOICA Fiji Office), Dr. Ali Salha (Programme Management Advisor (Infrastructure), UNOPS)

_DSC8390.jpg



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of ten multipurpose boats
(Left to Right) Dr. Gregory Jilini (Permanent Secretary, a.g., Ministry of Health and Medical Services), Hon. Morris Toiraena (Minister of Health, Solomon Islands), Ms. Cho Han Kyul Sam (Country Director, KOICA Fiji Office), Dr. Ali Salha (Programme Management Advisor (Infrastructure), UNOPS)
_DSC8396.jpg



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of five ambulances
(Left to Right) Dr. Gregory Jilini (Permanent Secretary, a.g., Ministry of Health and Medical Services), Hon. Morris Toiraena (Minister of Health, Solomon Islands), Ms. Cho Han Kyul Sam (Country Director, KOICA Fiji Office), Dr. Ali Salha (Programme Management Advisor (Infrastructure), UNOPS)
_DSC8405.jpg