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Solomon Islands National Ini tiatives, Exper iences & Respons es t o COV ID 19 Pandemic.

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What adapti ve measur es inc luding buil di ng c apacity in t esti ng and tr eatment and ins titutional ar rang ements have been adopted? Solomon I slands

COVID-19 as a Pandemic

Introduction
The nov el co ro nav irus 19 (COVID -19) outbreak was first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by China o n 31 Decem ber 2019 and was declared a public health emergency of inte rnational co ncern (P HEIC) o n 31 January 202 0, and a pandem ic o n 11 March 20 20. The S olomon Islands Go vernment declared a state o f emergency in M arch, which is still in place. At the tim e of writing this

do cument (November 26, 2020), there have been 60,856,294 cases and 1,429,689 deaths worldwide.

Cases hav e been reporte d in co untries of particul ar interest to So lomon Islands with whom we have political and business ties and t here is frequent trav el and trade between them and So lo mo n Islands. These include but are no t lim ited to Australia, New Zealand, China, P hilippines, M alay sia, Singapo re, P apua New Guinea and P acific Co untries including Fiji. A risk assessment of COVID-1 9 in So lomo n Islands showe d a high risk of im portation, and high impact, with large outbreaks likely in Honiara and smaller outbreaks likely in other pro vinces. The Solomon Islands Governm ent (SIG) is committed to protect ing Solom on Islands against pote ntial threats and, in respo nse, has pledged co ntingency warrant funds to suppo rt COVID -19 preparedness,

as identified in the COVID-19 Operational Plan. The National Disaster Committee (NDC), is

coordinating a Whole -o f-Go vernment, whole-o f-so ciety respo nse to COVID -19, with support from development partners, prim arily the

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The clinical signs and symptoms of the patients reported in this new infection resembled flu-like
symptoms. Initial symptoms, which usually appear within 14 days (2-14 days; median time 6 days)
after infection, include fever, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, malaise, headache, muscle pain
and there could be breathing difficulty.
The transmission is through droplet infection and through fomites; airborne transmission has not been
proven. There is an evidence of transmission though sub-clinical cases and pre-symptomatic or
carriers. At present there is no specific treatment and vaccine to protect against this infection.

There is an urgent need for a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (COVID-19-PRP) aligned with
existing key strategic documents, such as the National Health Emergency Plan (NHEP), National Health
Security Plan (NHSP), National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) and other emergency planning and
response mechanisms.

The Solomon Islands COVID-19 PRP incorporates comprehensive emergency risk management in the
health sector, enables and promotes multi-sectoral linkage and integration across the whole-of-government and the whole-of-society
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and entertainment activities and venues, and encouraging the return of Honiara residents to the
provinces. The Government has also set up mandatory quarantine and isolation facilities for incoming
passengers.
The negative impact on the Solomon Islands economy is likely to be considerable, affecting individuals,
households and businesses throughout the country. The country was heading towards recession in
the second half of 2020 with a significant contraction in GDP growth projected to be around -4.9%,
driven by disruptions to export markets, supply chains and travel restriction.
To protect the livelihoods of Solomon Islanders, the following measures were put in place:
(i). Soft Measures:
These are immediate actions aimed at ensuring the economy continues to function during the crisis.
These actions include:
(a) Reduction in utility tariffs for households and businesses
Utility providers would temporarily reduce the cost of utilities to households and business
consumers to im4( )-99(p)3(r)12s were put in plaf(in)1BDC *
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Some banks and financial institutions have already announced initiatives to provide relief
for their customers on loan and interest repayments. The Oversight Committee will
further negotiate with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) and commercial banks

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important players and taxpayers in the economy. The support to these key companies will be
implemented through a concessional facility at the Development Bank of Solomon Islands.
3. tŚĂƚථĂƌĞථƚŚĞථƐŚŽƌƚĂŶĚůŽŶŐ-term socio-economic impacts of COVID-ϭϵŽŶĂĐŚŝĞǀŝŶŐථŐŽĂůƐĂŶĚ
ƚĂƌŐĞƚƐŽĨථƚŚĞථIPoAථand ƐƵƐƚĂŝŶĂďůĞĚĞǀĞůŽƉŵĞŶƚ͍ථ,Žǁ has COVID-19 affected the graduation
process of LDCs?
Covid-19 pandemic has adversely impacted all development sectors in the Solomon Islands. The
country recently shifts its development focus, and invested more resources into measures and

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under the economic and productive sector to ensure the stabilisation of the economic and productive
sector to continue with their business activities.
Major infrastructure programs under the development budget are slowing down in implementation
due to the Covid-19 implying roll over of activities into 2021 and beyond given the unpredicted
situation. Already there is budget constraint against ongoing performance since funds are reallocated
into Covid-19 related activities through Health and border to curb the spread of the pandemic.
Government is prioritizing protective and travelling measures to ensure the situation is managed and
controlled.
In terms of the country’s overall economic growth with regards to the impact of Covid-19, the negative
impact is likely to be considerable, affecting individuals, households and businesses throughout the
country. The country was heading towards recession in the second half of 2020 with a significant
contraction in GDP growth projected to be around -4.9%, driven by disruptions to export markets,
supply chains and travel restriction.
Social
The pandemic also enabled the Development Partners to redirect their development focus and
funding priorities to support the efforts to prepare and response to Covid-19 (Health sector). They
were leaving other essential sectors such as educations, and governance programs on hold. On the
other hand, the new donor funding focus is seen as a positive impact to improve the health sector,
and to strengthen the effort to prepare and response to Covid-19. However, it will affect some of the
planned areas of development that is also vitally important for the Country such as, social service and
infrastructure development
The impact of Covid-19 has brought immediate pressure on the C

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Covid-19 has impact Solomon Islands both socially and economically. The impacts mentioned above
will prevent the Country from achieving the goals and targets of the IPoA and Sustainable
Development.
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