



SCHOOL GARDENS PROJECT



## Morobe School Gardens Project

### Background

This project is a partnership between the Morobe Provincial Government, the Lae City Authority and the Australian Government. With the support of the Morobe Education Department, the project will work hand-in-hand with high schools and primary schools to strengthen agricultural education, provide nutritious meals to students, and educate them on good nutrition.

Covid-19's impact is being felt by the people of Morobe, both in terms of job losses and local food supply disruptions. This is why the project will have an immediate focus on increasing local food production and creating opportunities for local community members to work on school farms. Beyond the Covid-19 crisis, the project will build on this initial effort to provide healthy meals to students, teach them about nutrition, and strengthen the capacity of high schools to produce students who can earn a good living from agriculture.

### Objectives:

- The project has an immediate focus on responding to the economic and food security disruptions felt in Morobe due to Covid-19. By building sustainable farms at schools in Morobe, the project aims to increase local food production and provide opportunities for people to earn money while contributing to the province.
- In the longer term, the project will work with schools to strengthen agricultural and nutrition education, and supply nutritious food for students.

### Project Description

The project will have a high school and a primary school stream. At high schools, subject to feasibility of the site and what the school is willing to maintain, the project will build vegetable gardens, fish ponds and poultry sheds. At the primary schools the project will establish small gardens. The feasibility of layer bird sheds to supply eggs to primary school students is also being considered.

The initial phase of the project will start in the coming weeks, and will focus on building the school farms. It will partner with the Lae City Hands Up Program, which will provide community workers for the project.

The long term phase of the project aims to address some of the challenges that schools face in maintaining school farms and agricultural education programs. It will aim to:

- Foster healthy eating and better nutrition for school students at the primary school level.
- Build on existing agricultural education in secondary schools to include practical agribusiness skills and supplement school feeding with sustainable, low cost food from the school farm.
- Develop a package of resources and tools that are integrated into the existing curriculum, extending subjects such as "Making a Living" and "Healthy Eating" to use the school garden and farming as a practical hands-on learning experience for students.
- In close consultation with schools, teachers and the community, develop a practical sustainable, self-funding and cost-effective model with tools and resources that can be adopted by other schools.