

DISTRICT 9600

WATER AND SANITATION, SOLOMON ISLANDS SCHOOLS AND MEDICAL CLINICS

GLOBAL GRANT: G.G.1417603

STAGE 2 SASSAMUNGGA CHOISEUL

PROJECT REPORT DECEMBER 2015

Project Leader: Leo Smith R.C. of Mooloolaba

Team Leader: Merv Paddison R.C. of Caloundra

Members: Darryl Laing R.C. of Caloundra

Genta Tsukimori R.C. of Caoundra

Jim Lombard Caloundra Men's Shed

Bill Lavery Caloundra Men's Shed

Assistant Yolondi Semi R.C. of Gizo (3 days)

Members: Matthias Amolo R.C. of Gizo (5 days)

PROJECT:

- 1: Install 2 by 1 pedestal toilets and 3 water tanks with guttering at Sassamungga Hospital
- 2: Install 2 by 2 pedestal toilets and 1 water tank with guttering at Sassamungga Secondary School.
- 3: Wash Program information with toilets
- 4: Train of Locals.

The project began on 12 Nov when Leo Smith and Darryl Laing arrived in Gizo to organize tools and obtain final equipment . This was all readied for the open boat trip from Gizo to Sassamungga on Chhoiseul Island , a distance of some 70 km. The remaining team members arrive in Gizo on 14 Nov and attended a meeting of the Rotary Club of Gizo. At 6.00 am on 15 Nov Leo and Darryl left by boat with calm sea conditions. Remaining team members left by Twin Otter at 11.00 am for Taro the Provincial Capital of Choiseul. These members were meet by a boat crew from the Sassamungga Hospital. After a 35 km boat ride all team members were reunited on the beach at Sassamungga for a late lunch.

At 3.30, the team members meet with Caleb Katali, the administrator of the Sassamungga Hospital for a tour of facilities. During the tour , it became obvious that the hospital had been upgraded since Leo Smith and Ken McEwen had visited in 2014 to investigate the local needs. Approximately \$1m of Ausaid assistance had helped build new male and female toilets and showers as well as refurbish the kitchen area, wards, operating area and outside appearance. Discussions with hospital representatives revealed that water was the greatest priority. Only one tank contained some drinking water. The need for the the 2 one pedestal toilets no longer existed. It was decided to build a one pedestal toilet in a common area of the village for the use by local residents. The other single pedestal toilet was to be built at the Secondary school. Hospital staff wanted the two low set tanks (about 1m above ground level) to be built at the rear of the building. They wanted the third tank to be 1800mm above ground level so that water could be plumbed into the new toilets and wash basins. Hospital staff agreed to purchase 2100mm posts for this trird tank but these posts would not be available until the second week. This meant that the only work at the hospital possible in the first week was the installation of two water tanks and associated guttering.

The second problem to be resolved was that no timber had arrived for the work at the secondary school. This may have resulted from the lack of communication between the medical areas and the education areas.

The third problem that faced the team was that no 44 gallon drums were available for work on any toilets. This meant that the team would be faced with the added task of cutting the tops and bottoms out of these drums when they became available. At this stage no work had started on the excavation of the pits for the septic toilets.

With all this in mind, the team was welcomed to the village. This friendly gathering was chaired by Caleb Katali with introductions to the hospital and school staff. Adorned in welcome flowers, our team introduced themselves. This was followed by songs and a delicious banquet of locally prepared food.

Work on the project began on Monday16 Nov about8.30am. There was a prayer meeting at the hospital that ended at 8.30am. With support from three hospital ground staff the site for the two tanks was chosen. Ground staff began digging the four post for the first tank while the team checked the hospital timber against the order list. Leo Smith was hard at work trying to get the secondary school Deputy principal, Sidney, to ascertain what timber was ordered and when it would arrive. Leo was also trying to negotiate the purchase of twelve 44gallon drums. After much discussion he was forced to pay \$300.00 SD per drum delivered Sassamungga. With payment of \$3600.00SD, the drums would arrive

place, guttering was up and timber dressed ready for the tankstand. With the sandy soil, the posts needed to be concreted to provide stability. The drying time for the concrete added delays throughout the project. Yolandi Semi, president of R.C. of Gizo, arrived to assist with local communications and the manual work for three days. Semi's local contacts helped get the project moving.

On 18 Nov, the team saw some progress. The first tank was up on its stand. The posts for the second tank were in position. Overflows were fitted to the tanks and guttering for the second tanks was in place. The drums arrived and some team members began cutting the tops and bottoms out of the drums. The first drum required 6 cutting discs and we only had 10 in total. So the only alternative was to the drums with a cold chisel; a slow time consuming process.

Team members began 19 Nov by finishing the second tankstand in the morning and cutting the tops and bottoms out of the remaining 10 drums. All the gear was then transferred to the school some 800m away. Some of the timber for the secondary school toilets and all the timber for the tankstand had arrived. Some members helped get the ready for the toilet pits while others set up the drop saw. The location for the tank was chosen and marked out.



We visited the secondary school assembly to donate sporting equipment on Friday 20 Nov. The students were not in uniform because at the end of the school day at 11.30 they were going to the beach to collect more coral for the toilet pits. Other students were going to help carry more timber from the beach. More balls were presented to the preschoolers before the team began work. Some members dug the holes for the tankstand while others cut timber ready for the first toilet. Under supervision, some local men started placing the boxing for the toilet. After lunch, the stand posts were concreted into place and concrete was poured for the first toilet. While the concrete dried, two members started

nailing the frames for the front and back of the toilet.



Saturday was a rest day and some members went fishing on the near reef with the hospital workers. In the afternoon, Sidney took the team for a visit to the Lauru Training Centre up the Koolumbungra River. This is surely the most isolated training centre for 16 and 17 year olds in the South Pacific. Matthias Amolo from RC of Gizo arrived to join the project.

The team went to church at 10.30am on Sunday. Taking advice from Matthias, we all introduced ourselves to the assembly of over 400 people. Matthias followed this up with a talk in local language about the work of Rotary. At the end of his talk he asked for assistance from the locals. Two members spent the afternoon copying the toilet plans because the plans in the members' booklets were out of date.

At the start of work on Monday 23, only our team members were present. After a local meeting about eight local workers arrived about 9.30 am to help. By lunch time all the wall frames were up and by the end of work the roof was on. Two members went back to the hospital to start the holes for the third tank as the longer post had arrived. And Matthias two others worked late putting the guttering on the high section of the school roof.

On Tuesday 24 the concrete for the second toilet was laid. The first toilet was completed with pedestals and Rotary signs. In the afternoon, workers built some frames for the walls of toilet two while work proceeded on the third hospital tank.

It was the primary school's turn to receive sporting equipment on Wednesday 25 Nov. Some 220 children were amused as Rotarians demonstrated cricket, skipping and tennis. As locals continued to help, work progressed quickly. By lunch time, the second toilet was almost finished. Some team

members put guttering and signs on all toilets while others moved to the community single toilet site. The hole for the drums was very large so many more rocks were required around the drums. After the helpers located the extra rocks the foundations for the community toilet were laid. At the hospital the tankstand was completed.



The local workers continued to support our project on Thursday 26. Some team members cut timber, others directed the helpers while work on guttering at the hospital progressed. By lunch, cladding was fixed to the single toilet. In the afternoon, the community toilet was completed with signs, door and

roofing.



Our biggest disappointment on Friday was that the last two tanks had not arrived. All we could do was complete the guttering work at the hospital. The hospital maintenance men were shown how to repair guttering. One existing tank had no downpipe and as such was useless. Some members showed how to connect this tank to other existing tanks. As a result of the team's work, the hospital had two new 5000l tanks and two existing tanks which were now connected. When the tanks finally arrive off the barge, the local workers have the knowledge how to place these on the stands. The rest of the day was spent packing up the tools ready for the boat trip to Gizo. We were invited to the home of the Deputy Principal for a delicious lunch.

Our last dinner was held at the community dining hall. Goodbye speeches and songs showed that our work was really appreciated. Gifts were exchanged and fond goodbyes were expressed by all.

In all our aims were achieved. Three tanks were erected at the hospital. One toilet was built for community use. Two double toilets were constructed at the secondary school and one tankstand was built ready for the tank. The last single toilet was not built as the team was not convinced that the Principal's residence was the correct location. All the materials were left for the locals to build the toilet where they choose.

On Saturday 28 Nov. We all left Sassamungga to start our long journey home. Some stayed overnight in Taro while others reached Gizo by sea and attended the meeting of the Rotary Club of Gizo.

The accommodation in the staff houses at Sassamungga was comfortable. The lack of water made for difficult bathing conditions. The food paid by us and provided by the five local communities was interesting, fresh and tasty. The fresh fruit and local fish were the highlights.

We were fortunate to work without any injuries (except for one fish hook). The isolation made the cost of materials increase and caused problems with ordering some requirements.

Overall, this has been a humbling experience to work with such a cooperative community. Their simple way of life governed by religious beliefs makes for a peaceful community. We are confident that our work has been appreciated and with training it will be maintained.



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