



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

INVESTMENT SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

10 APRIL 2026

Ten local emerging entrepreneurs have showcased their business potential in the Lumi Gro Business Accelerator Sharktank finale, an exciting initiative funded by the Australian High Commission's private sector development program.

The ten local SMEs received five months of intensive training, mentoring, and business development support, and were then able to pitch their growth strategies to a panel of judges and investors.

The five winners - Cravings, SolAgro, B&E Diving, Aelan Cruise and CEMs Holdings - secured SBD100,000 each in co-investment to make their business dreams a reality.

Runners-up Menah Fish Supplies, Shine Bright Cleaning Services, Storeroom Productions, Sone Logistics and Smart Technology secured support from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI) to continue strengthening their businesses.

Rose Korinihona, founder of CEMs Holdings, said participating in Lumi Gro had been transformative.

"The Accelerator pushed us to refine our vision and sharpen our strategy. Pitching at the Shark Tank finale was both challenging and inspiring, and this support will help us take the next step in growing our business," Ms Korinihona said.

Minister of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs, Hon. Cathy Launa Nori said, "Women are capable and effective business leaders. And despite the challenges they face, women entrepreneurs continue to demonstrate resilience and determination.

"When women participate in economic development, the benefits extend beyond individuals to families and entire communities, creating more inclusive and sustainable growth."

Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands, Jeff Roach, praised the high calibre of pitches.

"Congratulations to all ten Lumi Gro SMEs for delivering outstanding presentations of your business plans," High Commissioner Roach said.

"Australia will always support new and ambitious local businesses. They are the future of the country's private sector and the key to delivering more jobs and higher incomes for Solomon Islanders."

Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration, Riley Meseptu, said the Shark Tank finale reflected the strength of Solomon Islands' small business community.

“Our entrepreneurs are resilient and forward-looking. Through this partnership with Australia, we are equipping them with the tools, confidence, and investment support needed to grow sustainable businesses that create opportunities for our people,” PS Meseptu said.

The lumi Gro Business Accelerator was the first initiative of its kind in Solomon Islands, reflecting Australia's ongoing support for local businesses and the broader private sector to generate more jobs and increase incomes in the Solomon Islands.

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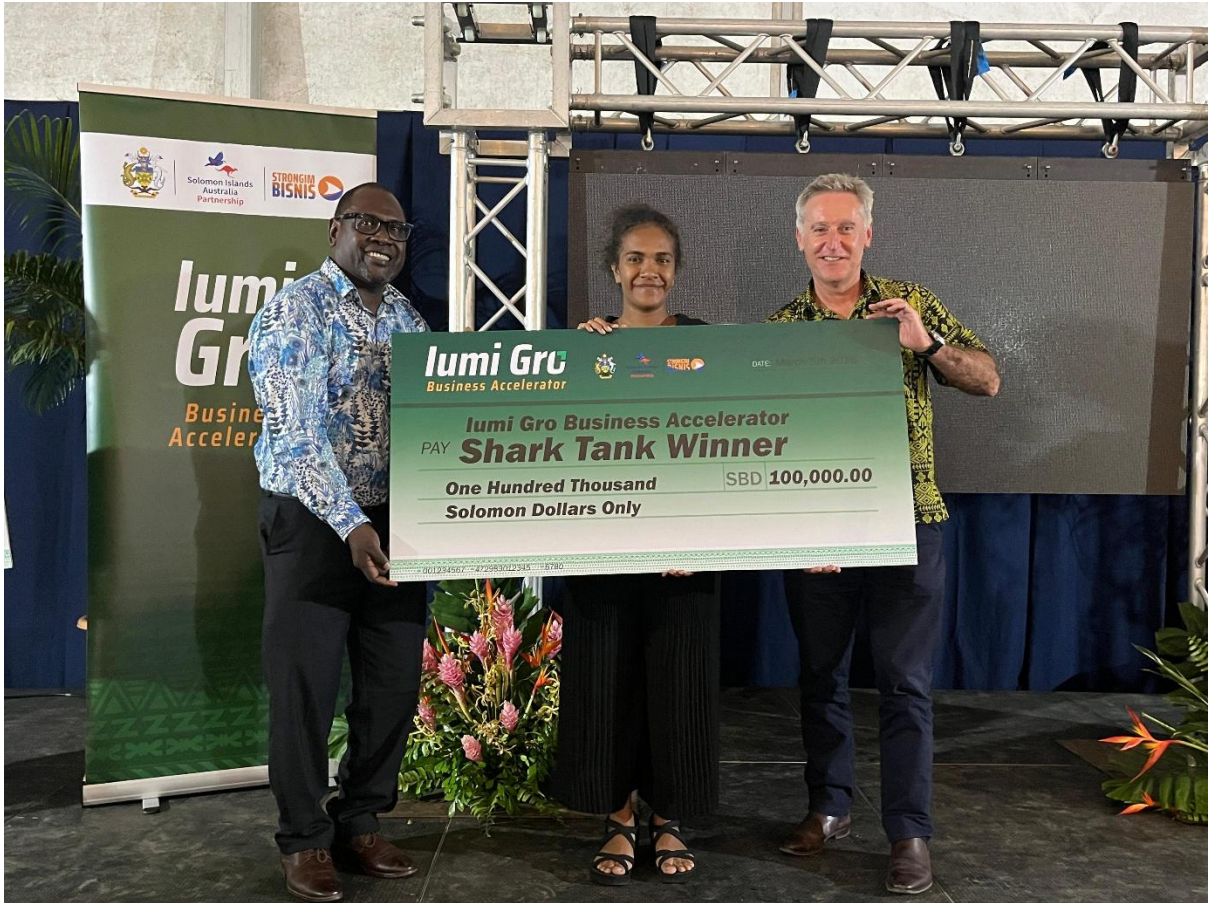
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Photo 1:



Caption 1: High Commissioner Roach (seated far right), Minister of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs, Hon. Cathy Launa Nori, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration, Riley Meseptu, and Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairlady, Namoi Kaluae with the lumi Gro Participants and Trainer.

Photo 2:



Caption 2: Illalina Bisili of Cravings, one of the five Shark Tank winners, and receiver of the High Commissioner's Special Award, receiving a cheque of SBD100,000 in co-investment from Australian High Commissioner Jeff Roach, and PS Riley Mesepitu of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration

Photo 3:



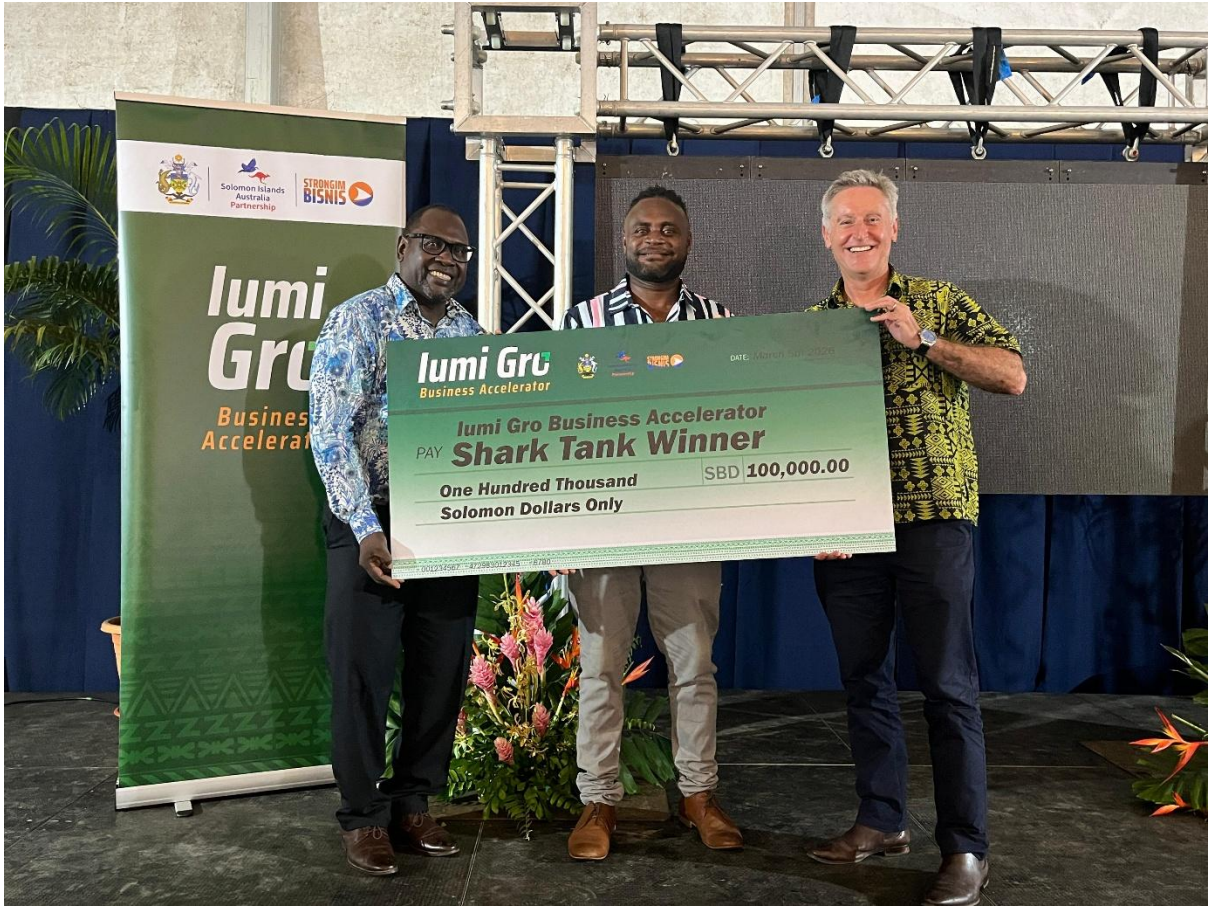
Caption 3: Owner of CEMs Holdings, Rose Korinhona, one of the winners, receiving the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour, and Immigration Special Award

Photo 4:



Caption 4: SolAgro owner, Dr Shane Tutua presenting his pitch to the judges

Photo 5:



Caption 5: Australian High Commissioner Jeff Roach, and PS Riley Meseputu of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration with Aelan Cruise owner, Ishmael Sodu, one of the five Shark Tank winners.