



PRESS RELEASE

SPBD Promotes Fine Tu'ipulotu to Top Position as General Manager of SPBD in Tonga

For Immediate Release

NUKU'ALOFA, KINGDOM OF TONGA (12 March 2019) – The SPBD Microfinance Network, the largest microfinance provider in the South Pacific, is delighted to announce that Fine Tu'ipulotu has been promoted to General Manager of South Pacific Business Development (SPBD) Microfinance Ltd in the Kingdom of Tonga – she is the first, Tongan-born national appointed to the top post.



Fine brings more than 30 years of professional experience to her role. Prior to assuming the GM role, Fine served as the Finance and Administration Manager for SPBD in Tonga for 8 years. In her senior management position, she was a key decision-maker and helped to drive the success of SPBD Tonga. Prior to joining SPBD, Fine spent 21 years working for Tonga Development Bank, including 7 years as the Manager of Finance and Budgeting and 4 years as Assistant Manager of the Loan Division. Fine is also a certified public accountant (CPA).

In her new position as GM, Fine will spearhead the continued growth of the organization, including the expansion of the new SME product as well as the launch of new products and new partnerships to enable SPBD to continue impacting members' lives positively. As a local national, a woman, and a mother, Fine brings a unique perspective to her position, and she is a role model for so many others.

SPBD Founder and President Gregory Casagrande said, "Fine has played an instrumental leadership role in the success and growth of SPBD Microfinance in Tonga since 2010. She is a respected leader across the broader SPBD Microfinance Network and within her local community. I have full faith and confidence that in her new role as our General Manager of SPBD in Tonga, Fine will lead the organization on to even greater heights. This is a position which she has clearly earned and for which she is exceptionally well qualified."

Commenting on her appointment to the top role, Fine notes, "I feel so honoured and blessed to have this opportunity to lead such a strong and mission-driven organization. I promise to do my best to serve SPBD and the people of Tonga, especially the hardworking women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, I would like to thank SPBD President Greg Casagrande for this incredible opportunity and also former SPBD GM Amy Lofgren and the SPBD Tonga staff for helping me to develop professionally and making me a better person so that I would be chosen for this post."

Following the appointment of Fine, SPBD also recently appointed the first Samoan national to lead SPBD in Samoa. Mrs. Luapene Lefau was promoted to the top post of General Manager after 17 years of service, most recently as SPBD Samoa's Finance and Administration Manager.

About South Pacific Business Development (SPBD) Microfinance Network

SPBD is a network of microfinance institutions working in Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. SPBD's mission is to improve the quality of life of underprivileged families by providing them meaningful economic opportunity to help lift them permanently out of poverty. SPBD is especially focused on empowering women to start, grow and maintain micro-businesses through the provision of access to financial and business development services as well as the opportunity to build assets, improve financial security and finance housing improvements and education.

SPBD's vision is to create a network of financially self-sufficient and scalable micro-enterprise development organizations throughout the South Pacific.

Since its inception in Tonga in 2009, SPBD has provided more than TOP\$ 72M in financing to Tongan women entrepreneurs to help them start, grow and expand small, income-generating businesses across Tongatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai and 'Eua. Across the larger SPBD Microfinance Network, SPBD has provided more than USD\$ 130M in unsecured financing to women for the entrepreneurial ventures, basic housing improvements and childhood education.

Press Contacts

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Additional Information

- For SPBD social media, visit <https://www.facebook.com/SPBD-Microfinance-Network-190036957692661/>
- For SPBD videos, see <https://www.youtube.com/user/SPBDfoundation/>
- SPBD's website is www.spbdmicrofinance.com