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National Reserve Bank of Tonga hosts a Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Workshop

The NRBT hosted the MSMEs Workshop on Friday 4th November 2016 to support the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector through improving their access to finance. This is part of the Maputo Accord 2015 commitment that NRBT committed to at the AFI's 7th Global Policy Forum on 4th September 2015 in Maputo, Mozambique.

The opening address of the workshop was done by the Minister for Health, Hon. Dr. Saia Piukala. In the Minister's opening address, he stated that developing the MSME sectors aligns with the vision of the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2015 – 2025 and priority focus areas such as inclusive and sustainable growth as well as poverty alleviation.

The Governor of the NRBT, Mr Sione Ngongo Kioa in his welcoming remarks stated the objectives of the workshop were to discuss challenges faced by MSMEs in access to finance here in Tonga and develop strategies and measures to address these challenges and thereby improve the access of MSMEs to finance and inclusive economic growth. This objective was achieved through the concerted efforts of the participants in developing practical strategies.

The workshop was attended by more than 30 participants from government ministries, banks, microfinance institution, non-government organizations, private sector and representatives of the growth sector (agriculture, fisheries and tourism). The workshop participants endorsed the following strategies to improve access to finance for MSME's to set up a the credit guarantee scheme, centralize the MSME database, stock take all Financial Advisory services, enhancing effectiveness of Credit Bureau and Personal Property Security Register as well as the sector associations, review bank's loan terms & conditions, code of conduct for financial consumer protection policy etc. To be effective in this initiative, a coordinated effort of relevant stakeholders is required therefore these strategies are to be presented to a national financial inclusion committee to endorse in early 2017.

The National Reserve Bank of Tonga would like to thank the workshop participants and the MSME survey respondents for their invaluable contribution to identify the challenges to access to finance by MSMEs and contributed to the success of the workshop.

National Reserve Bank of Tonga