



An Ado sawmill operator demonstrates the operations to the visiting media team and officials from the Japanese Embassy. Photo: Solomon Lofana

# Falake community leads in forest conservation through Japanese partnership

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THE people of Falake in the West Kwara'ae Constituency of Malaita Province are showing the way in sustainable development - thanks to strong support from the Japanese government through the Sustainable Forest Resource and Management (SFRM) project.

Since 2018, Falake has served as a pilot site for the Solomon Islands government's SFRM policy, testing and implementing practical approaches to forest management.

During a recent press tour of the community, Chairman of the Falake

SFRM Committee Mr Constantine Etemani highlighted the positive impact of the project.

He said it has not only helped protect Falake's forests, but also strengthened local governance and contributed to shaping national policies on sustainable forest management.

"Our forest is our life, our identity, and our future," Etemani said. "With the generous support of the Japanese government and JICA, we have been able to develop livelihood programs, conserve our forests, and plan for the future of our community."

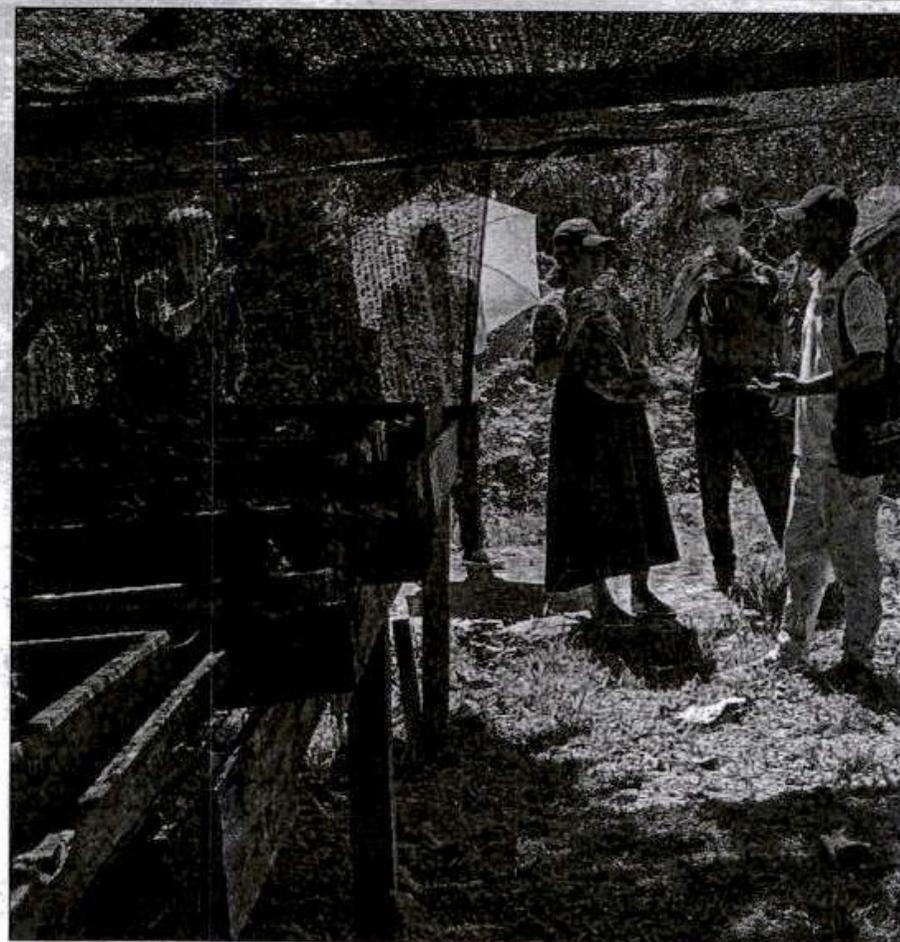
Under a timber milling initiative funded by Japan, a total of 67 Lucas mills were provided nationwide through the Timber Utilisation Division within the

Ministry of Forestry and Research (MoFR).

Falake Community received one Lucas mill, which it is now using to sustainably mill timber from its forests.

Etemani explained that the SFRM program focuses on two main goals: improving community well-being through sustainable income and food security, and protecting forest resources for present and future generations.

Livelihood initiatives such as piggy and poultry farming are already underway. Larger projects, including the Falake Hydro project, aim to provide clean and renewable energy to support education, small businesses and essential services.



Ado Rural Farmers Association Chairman Plus Itea introduces the nursery site to members of a touring press team. Photo: Solomon Lofana

"The Hydro project demonstrates how sustainable development and environmental protection can go hand in hand," Etemani said. "We are promoting development while preserving our forests and environment."

The Japanese government's support has had a wide-reaching impact across Solomon Islands,

providing funding, technical guidance, and capacity building through JICA.

Its assistance has helped communities adopt sustainable forest management practices, generate income, and contribute to national environmental and development goals.

"Challenges create opportunities," Etemani added. "With guidance and

partnership, we can make effective decisions for successful outcomes."

The partnership highlights the critical role of international cooperation in fostering community-led development, environmental protection, and sustainable use of natural resources in Solomon Islands.