

The Lese Oalai program, Part 1: The completion of the construction of 22 composting toilets,

Over three years of effort of the Rotary Clubs of Torquay (D9780), Manly (D9685) and Boroko (D9620), assisted by PNG NGO the Peter Nathan Loko Foundation led to the opening of 22 LooCube composting toilets at the Lese Oalai school in PNG on this last weekend (Nov. 2, 2024).



The construction at the end of the first week.

Funding of construction materials was by a Global Grant from The Rotary Foundation (USD \$85,000), assisted by 10 Rotary Clubs and 5 Rotary Districts, from both Australian and International Clubs. Several private donors also contributed to raising this massive fund.

Importantly, the work was all done by volunteers from Lese Oalai, supervised by 2 Rotary Australia World Community Service team volunteers and the Peter Nathan Loko Foundation. That Foundation also managed an ongoing public education program to teach the school children the correct use of these toilets. This program will be continued

as a regular public health program of an hour a week for all students.

The carpenters, most who had not even seen a screw before, were educated, supervised and mentored by a RAWCS team over a two-week period, so that they were able to complete the construction, unsupervised but still mentored (by Zoom) over the next four months. They have become very employable!



The construction at the end of the two weeks of the two-man Rotary Australia World Community Service Team project



The construction at the end of 6 weeks, after four weeks of independent work by the local team

The waterless toilets include 10 for boys, 10 for girls, and 2 for teachers and handicapped children,



The Construction and Proud Builders at the opening on the 2nd of Nov 2024

The opening of the toilets was itself a marvellous day, attended by officials from the Provincial Government in Kerema, by Catholic Education Department of the Gulf Province officials, by the Rotary Club of Boroko D9620, and by teachers, students and parents. Volunteers from Port Moresby brought up swathes of food, the villagers dressed in traditional attire, and generally everybody celebrated on this very significant event for the town of Lese Oalai, Gulf Province, Papua New Guinea.



The official opening on the second of November 2024



An elated Lucy Loko hands over the toilet suite to the school

This was the first step to be achieved in our program to resurrect the school. The next projects will most likely include rebuilding the aid post and bringing water to the school and the town.

I must extend my thanks particularly Rtn Lucy Loko (Rotary Club of Greater Geelong D9780), chair of the Peter Nathan Loko Foundation, to builder/teacher extraordinaire Ned McLarnon, to the Rotary Clubs of Torquay, Manly and Boroko, and to the very significant help from suppliers such as LooCube in Queensland and Plumbers & Builders in Port Moresby.

John Oswald
International committee, the Rotary Club of Torquay D9780
11th November 2024
