



Honorable Laisenia Tuitubou, Minister for Youth and Sports' Response to Parliamentary Question

Thursday 8 March 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

44/2018 Can the Minister advise this House on the nature and number of youth exchange programs undertaken by Government and the qualifications for the award of such exchange programs.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon Members for the question. The International Youth Exchange program was developed in 2016/2017 financial year to accommodate globally led and organized youth development forums and activities whereby local youths are exposed to cross cultural and foreign youth and sports development initiatives and trainings.

Madam Speaker, the program target is open to youth individuals within the ages of 15 – 35 years and youth groups or organizations that wish to organize youth and sports development programs.

Madam Speaker, in 2016/17 the Ministry supported 4 locally organized youth programs involving overseas youth participation and sent 8 youths on separate occasions to Commonwealth Forums, International Youth Leadership Conferences, Educational training in dance arts and Volunteerism. Furthermore on an alternate yearly basis, my ministry supports 8 to 10 youths to attend a 4 - 6 weeks Government of Japan administered Ship for the World Youth program. The Ship for World Youth program fosters youths acquiring leadership qualities in a more internationalized society through living together and communicating with one another on board a ship over a set period of time. **Madam Speaker,** this year 2017/18, so far we have assisted 7 youths and 2 faith based organizations by way of sending them overseas to attend youth forums and trainings and also supporting the Faith Based Organizations in organizing local Youth development programs involving overseas based youths as speakers.

The Youth and Sports Exchange programs supported so far

Madam Speaker includes attendance to:

- Commonwealth Youth Forum
- International Youth Exchange Program
- Youth Leadership Training

- Youth Volunteer Program Overseas
- Dance and Theater Arts Education and Training
- Youth Conferences
- Youth Festival of Music
- Ship for the Youth World Youth program

Madam Speaker, the assistance provided ranges from airfare, conference fee, venue hire, meals, transportation, tent hire and training fees.

Madam Speaker, nomination is based on age, gender, ethnicity, urban vs rural youth and is always on a transparent and inclusive basis. In most cases an expression of interest is advertised where youths apply and are shortlisted and finalized based on the requirements of the program and the capacity of applicants.

Moreover, **Madam Speaker** all submissions requesting support under this program must be aligned to the National Youth Policy and MYS Strategic Plan.

Thank you Madam Speaker.