

ROTARY CLUB OF ST. VINCENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROTARY FAMILY IN TAIWAN, AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT, LAUNCHES CAPACITY-BUILDING TRAINING COMPONENT OF THE CLUB'S BREAST CANCER AWARENESS PROJECT

For the past eight months, the Rotary Club of St. Vincent has been actively educating the public and raising awareness on breast health matters and the importance of regular screening throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines as part of its Global Grant-funded Breast Cancer Awareness Project (GG2237589); a partnership which was birthed in 2021 in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, and the Rotary Club of Taipei Prosperity, in Taiwan. Since the official launch in November 2022, the Club and its project partners have embarked on a robust community awareness campaign on mainland and the Grenadines geared towards sensitizing the public on the importance of regular breast self-checks and screening.

As part of the project, three BenQ mobile ultrasound screening devices were purchased and have since arrived in SVG. These mobile ultrasound units will facilitate breast screening of thousands of citizens throughout SVG, directly from the comfort of their own homes, if preferred, as the lightweight equipment are designed to move about effortlessly with the Technologists. At a brief ceremony on Monday June 19th at the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan), Ambassador Peter Sha-Li Lan represented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan, and Dr. Janelle Allen, Project Lead representing the Rotary Club of St. Vincent, officially presented the equipment to the Chief Health Promotion Officer Ms. Shanika John, representing the MOHWE, who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to promote wellness, stimulate behaviour change, and build technical capacity of the medical team through this partnership. Ambassador Sha-Li Lan confirmed the Taiwanese Government's commitment to supporting the advancement of health promotion and disease prevention initiatives in SVG.

As part of the project's Training and Education component, Radiographers Celeste Cumberbatch and Genese Nichols will participate in a two-month training programme on ultrasonography techniques and the use of the mobile ultrasound equipment. This training will be facilitated at the MacKay Memorial Hospital, one of the largest medical centers in Taiwan. On their return to SVG in September, the ladies will be sufficiently equipped with the competencies required to utilize the equipment for screening purposes – phase two of this project. Taiwanese medical professionals will visit SVG during the 2023-2024 Rotary year to observe the trainees in action and facilitate additional training with other health care professionals in this field. This training component was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan, valued at US\$40,000.00.

Community awareness campaign activities are scheduled to continue throughout the month of June through to July 2024. Rotary Club of St. Vincent's President Elect Mikasha Ramsaran, in addressing the gathering, extended best wishes to the trainees for a productive, successful training exercise. She further reiterated the Club's gratitude to the Rotary family in Taiwan, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan, for their overwhelming support in ensuring that this project received the funding required

to meet its objectives of enhancing the lives of Vincentian women and girls through access to free breast screening and breast health education services. Centered on one of Rotary's seven areas of focus – Disease Prevention and Treatment, this is the first Global Grant funded project to be accessed by the Rotary Club of St. Vincent and is valued at approximately US\$223,183.00, through contributions from Rotary Clubs across twelve Districts in Taiwan, Rotary International, and the Government of Taiwan.