

SOCIAL SECURITY MAKES DONATION TO FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

Monday, April 6, 2020 - The Social Security Board (SSB) has recently donated \$25k to the Family Support Network (FSN) to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on families in the Territory.

The donation was a collaboration with SSB and the BVI Rotary to raise at least \$50k, having both agencies donate \$25k each.

Director of FSN Mrs. Sasha Stoutt received the donation at Friday's cheque handover ceremony which was also attended by Assistant Governor of the Rotary District 7020 Mrs. Lorna Smith, OBE.

The initial \$50k donation allowed families and unemployed persons to purchase essentials prior to the Government mandated curfew that began on Saturday evening. It is estimated that the combined SSB and Rotary donation will feed approximately 350 families.

In his remarks at the cheque handover ceremony, SSB Chairman Mr. Ian Smith said, "Today is another day of hope, pride, and anticipated sustained development and prosperity for these Virgin Islands. The Board is fully aware that significant improvements to the underlying social and economic infrastructure of the Territory and its residents are important."

"We are assured that this donation will provide social protection in a time of need and help to facilitate and integrate socio-economic development when our recovery commences," said Mr. Smith, adding, "On behalf of the Social Security Board, I say thanks to the people of the Virgin Islands for your support of this donation."

He also said, "Our hearts have been touched by the impact of COVID 19 worldwide, and...in the British Virgin Islands...the needs of our community. This donation is one of numerous initiatives by the Board to assist the residents, government and Territory as we combat COVID 19."

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Chairman Smith explained that the donation materialised after a meeting with the Governor, His Excellency August Jaspert, Deputy Governor Mr. David Archer, and members of the BVI Rotary family.

To that end, Mr. Smith commended the Governor, Deputy Governor, Premier and the Government of the Virgin Islands for the work being done during the pandemic crisis. He also commended the FSN and Rotary Family for their continued support for vulnerable persons in the BVI community.

The donation to the FSN is in line with the Social Security Board's longstanding commitment to the Territory to ensure the Board legally contributes to the community to maintain a level of social protection for all residents of the British Virgin Islands.

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NOTES TO EDITOR(S): Photograph is attached.

Photo caption: *Unity.* L-r Director of the Family Support Network Mrs. Sasha Stoutt, Chairman of the Social Security Board Mr. Ian Smith and Assistant Governor of the Rotary District 7020 Mrs. Lorna Smith, OBE place their hands on the cheque representing the \$50k joint donation of the SSB and Rotary Family. **(Photo credit: Michelle Todman-Smith/SSB)**