

## **ASKI trains out-of-school youth, unemployed men**



Alalay sa Kaunlaran Inc (ASKI), through the project dubbed as “Men at Work”, provides training to the out-of-school youth and unemployed men in the communities. The beneficiaries are those on the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy. Through the program, the beneficiaries are becoming productive individuals and provided with the capacity to seek employment based on their developed skills. In summary, the project enables ASKI to provide development on the following aspect: Economic – providing skills training and development through TESDA accredited technical-vocational courses. National Certification (NC II) is an advantage when seeking for employment among skilled workers; Social – providing social-development interventions such as confidence building, personality development and values formation; Spiritual – the program also promotes spiritual growth among beneficiaries.

With the implementation of the program in 2016, ASKI was able to produce 60 graduates (40 first batch; 20 second batch) for Shielded Metal Arc Welding (SMAW) (NCII), Electrical Installation (NCII) and Heavy Equipment Operation (NCII) in collaboration with TESDA.

The program created huge impact on the families of the beneficiaries because they were able to overcome all their insecurities and apprehension. Economically, the program has provided job opportunities for them.

## **TDB launches new money transfer service**

With technical assistance from the International Finance Corporation, Tonga Development Bank (TDB) launched a new voucher remittance service called ‘Ave Pa’anga Pau’.

The launch was keynoted by the Prime Minister of Tonga, Akilisi Pohiva, stating, “Tonga’s economy is heavily dependent on remittances from Tongan communities overseas, however, transferring money to Tonga has become challenging”. The Prime Minister also cited the high costs of making transfers by commercial means and the non-compliance of some local money transfer operations with strict rules around international money transfer. Because of these challenges, the government had asked the Tonga Development Bank to help in keeping the remittance channel open. The Prime Minister added, “TDB is viewed as trustworthy and stable and is committed to the development of Tonga.”