

people's survey 2007

summary

ANU Enterprise



People's Survey 2007 - Summary
Published September 2007
Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands

Cover photo: Olevugha Village, Sandfly (Simon Foale)

Acknowledgements

The organisers of the People's Survey wish to warmly thank all those who worked on the survey, especially the interviewers who divligently collected the data, the focus group facilitators, field coordinators, data entry officers and field liaison officers. The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office played an invaluable role and the expertise and support they provided is greatly appreciated. Finally, we wish to thank the 5,154 respondents in the communities and the focus group participants who generously gave up their time to express their views on these important community concerns.

We look forward to working again with the government and the people of the Solomon Islands in 2008; the People's Survey 2008.

people's survey 2007

summary

ANU Enterprise



8

provinces
(and Honiara)

85

interviewers

5154

questionnaires

‘The [people’s] survey is a way for RAMSI, the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI contributing countries to measure how RAMSI is performing against its objectives.’

57%

said there was less general crime compared with a year ago

90%

support the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands

89%

said there should be more women in parliament

62%

expected services to improve in the next two years

overview



Photo: Phillipa Roberts

The People's Survey began in 2006 as an independent annual survey to find out public perceptions and attitudes on key development and social issues related to the work of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

The survey is a way for RAMSI, the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and RAMSI contributing countries to measure how RAMSI is performing against its objectives.

In March 2006, ANU Enterprise was contracted by AusAID to design and implement the People's Survey Pilot 2006. The design was derived from the baseline assessment of RAMSI published in the RAMSI Performance Framework.

Based on performance, this contract was extended to conduct the People's Survey 2007, which was to form a baseline to measure change over future years. The survey is a voluntary questionnaire-based representative sample survey. It surveys a cross-section of the Solomon Islands population, taking into account age, education, gender, income level and geographic location.

Information obtained through the People's Survey 2007 was closely linked to the Medium Term Targets of the SIG/RAMSI partnership. These are set out in the RAMSI Medium Term Strategy. The survey has successfully measured these indicators to provide a basis for monitoring and evaluation of RAMSI's performance targets. The areas of focus are:

1. Household Economy
2. Access to basic services
3. Law and order
4. The Solomon Islands Police Force
5. RAMSI

6. Public accountability
7. Representation and civic awareness
8. Access to justice.

The 2007 survey was undertaken with the involvement of the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office in three distinct phases: design; implementation and data collection; and data analysis and reporting. All phases were completed by 16 July 2007.

The design team travelled to Honiara twice during the design phase (November 2006 and March 2007) to consult with the RAMSI Performance Assessment Working Group and key stakeholders. The questionnaire was approved on 17 April 2007 and the core team arrived in Honiara on 22 April 2007 to implement the People's Survey.

Eighty-five Interviewers, Field Liaison Officers and Supervisors were hired to implement the survey and were trained in two one week training sessions from 23-27 April, and from 30 April to 4 May. Following each training session teams of five were deployed to eight provinces and one municipal area (Honiara), across 25 Enumeration Areas selected by the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office.

From 30 April to 22 May 2007 a total of 5,154 respondents were interviewed comprising approximately equal numbers of men, women, young men and young women. This figure was 130 interviews over target.

The following document is a summary of the survey's key findings.

key findings

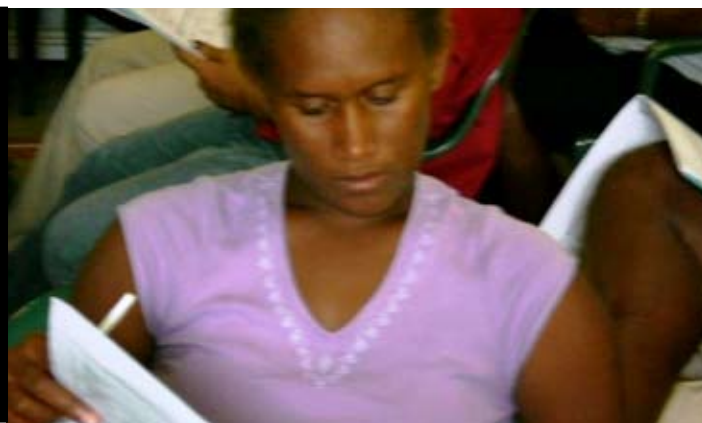


Photo: Philippa Roberts

Background Characteristics of Respondents

- Ten per cent of all respondents reported subsistence as their only occupation, and 50% reported subsistence plus another activity. Seven per cent reported housework only and 38% reported housework plus another activity. The other main activities were informal cash activity (17%), unpaid volunteer in a church or NGO (7%), full-time government worker (6%, part time 2%) full-time worker in the private sector (5%, part-time 3%) and self-employment or own business (5%).
- Eighty per cent of respondents were currently living in the province in which they were born and 20% in a different province.

Household Economy

- Thirty-five per cent of respondents said their current financial household situation was better than 2 years ago and 35% said it was worse, while 26% said it was the same (Table 2.1). Thirty-three per cent each expected their financial household situation to be better or the same in the future, and 15% worse.
- Thirty-eight per cent said conditions for starting a business were better than two years previously, 23% said the same, 17% said worse, and 20% didn't know.
- Thirty-one per cent said they had tried to start a business in the reference period. Of these 88% said they had experienced problems.
- Twelve per cent of respondents had access to either a government or NGO agricultural program and

85% did not. Ysabel, Malaita and Temotu were most likely to report access to government programs, while respondents in Central were most likely to say they had no access.

- Twenty-four per cent of respondents said they had had regular wage employment at some time, 20% had paid tax on their wages, 23% said they had a bank account, but only 14% belonged to superannuation, provident or pension scheme. Men were significantly more likely to give affirmative answers to all four questions. Compared with rural respondents, urban respondents were more than twice as likely to have had regular wage employment (43% and 21%).
- Forty-nine per cent said they had a family member working away from home (Table 2.7) and 78% said the absentee worker sends money to the household.
- The most commonly expected source of assistance for the community in the next 2 years is national government (27%) followed by the community itself (14%).
- Twenty-one per cent of respondents said there were more opportunities for youth and school leavers compared with 2 years ago, 33% said there were less, and 35% said they were the same (Table 2.9).

Access to Basic Services

- Nineteen per cent said they had a health centre in their village or community, and 31% had a primary school. A further 42% could reach a health centre in no more than an hour, and 47% could reach a school in no more than an hour. The rest took up to half a day or longer to reach either.

‘Forty-nine per cent of all respondents said health services had improved in the past two years.’

- In the preceding year 46% of respondents had visited a health centre from 1-3 times, 16% had visited 4-6 times, 14% had visited more than six times and 24% had not visited a health centre.
- Of the 76% of respondents who had visited a health centre at least once, 38% said they were always satisfied with the services received, 40% said they were sometimes satisfied and 20% gave reasons why they were not satisfied.
- Forty-nine per cent of all respondents said health services had improved in the past two years, 39% said they were the same and 6% said they had deteriorated.
- Sixty-two per cent expected services to improve in the next two years, and 7% did not expect improvement, while 30% said they did not know.
- National government was seen as the most likely source of improvement (37%), followed by foreign donors (19%).
- Sixty-four per cent said primary schools had improved in the past year, 29% said they had stayed the same and 4% said they were worse.
- Thirty-five per cent reported improved access to markets in the past year while 34% said access had not improved and 29% didn't know. Urban respondents were more likely to report improved access to town markets (72% compared with 28% for rural).
- Thirteen per cent of respondents' homes were connected to mains electricity, 6% had solar power

or a small generator (solar 3.8% and generator 2.4%) and 81% had no electricity.

- Twelve per cent of respondents had access to a fixed phone line in their community, 30% had access to a radio phone and 58% had no access to communications.

Law and Order

- Forty-six per cent described their community as safe and/or peaceful, 42% said there were sometimes law and order problems and 9% said there were many problems. Men were more likely to say their community was safe and peaceful (53% compared with 47% for women), and women almost twice as likely to say there were many problems (11% compared with 6%).
- Forty-five per cent said law and order had improved, 42% said it was the same and 10% said it was worse. Honiara (58%) Guadalcanal (54%) and Malaita (52%) were most likely to report improvement and Temotu (28%) Choiseul (15%) Western (14%) and Ysabel (13%) were most likely to report deterioration.
- Fifty-seven per cent said there was less general crime in their community compared with a year ago, 24% said it was the same, and 4% said it had increased, while 13% said they had never had general crime in their community.
- Forty-five per cent said there was less serious crime in their community, 10% said it was the same, 1% said it had increased and 42% said they had never had it.

The Solomon Islands Police Force

- Eighty-nine per cent had not had any formal contact with the SIPF in the past year and 11% had formal contact.
- Of the 11% that had formal contact, 63% initiated it themselves while 32% of the contact was initiated by the SIPF. Least likely to initiate contact were young men (50%) and young women (55%), compared with men (74%) and women (66%).
- Forty-four per cent of all respondents thought SIPF treats people fairly and with respect, 28% said they sometimes do, 16% said they do not and 12% did not know. Women (47%) and young women (45%) were more likely than men (42%) and young men (40%) to consider SIPF treatment always fair and respectful.
- Fifteen per cent said something had been stolen from their house in the past year and 18% said something had been stolen from their garden.
- Of the 33% who had something stolen, 14% had reported it to the SIPF and 85% had not reported. The main reason for not reporting was 'too minor' (25%), followed by 'no evidence /no witness' (17%).
- Of the 14% who reported the stealing, 33% said they were satisfied with the way the SIPF had handled the report and 67% said they were not satisfied.
- Fifty-two per cent said the officer's supervisor or a senior officer was the person who should be informed if a police officer was not doing his job properly, 19% said the village chief and 9% said RAMSI.

- Sixty-two per cent of respondents said they would make a formal complaint if an SIPF officer were not doing their job properly, 23% said they would not, and 14% didn't know. Men (73%) and young men (71%) were most likely to say they would complain and women least likely (47%).

General questions about RAMSI

- Ninety-eight per cent of all respondents had heard of RAMSI.
- Sixty-three per cent had seen a RAMSI police officer within the past three months and 12% had spoken to one, 46% had seen and 8% had spoken to a RAMSI army officer; and 7% had seen and 1% had spoken to another type of RAMSI official. Twenty-two per cent had not seen a RAMSI officer of any kind in the past three months and 80% had not spoken to one.
- The most common perceptions of the role of RAMSI were 'keep the peace' (62%), 'improve law and justice' (41%), 'arrest criminals' (22%) and 'help run the country' (19%). Some respondents used this question to make either positive or negative comments about RAMSI.
- Fifty-three per cent of respondents said that violence would return to Solomon Islands if RAMSI left soon, 27% said 'maybe' violence would return, and 7% said violence would not return.
- 90% of respondents said they support the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands, 4% were undecided and 4% said they did not know.

‘Forty-four per cent of respondents listen to the radio every day.’

Public Accountability

- Sixteen per cent of respondents said the national government was performing very well as regards improving basic services and the economy, 36% said satisfactory, 32% said not well and 16% did not know.
- Thirteen per cent said national government was doing very well as regards efficiency fairness and independence, 34% said satisfactory, 29% said not well and 24% didn't know.
- Twenty per cent said the performance of national politicians and government officials was better than a year ago, 53% said it was the same, 11% said it was worse and 16% didn't know.
- Eight per cent said provincial governments were performing well as regards improving basic services and the economy, 32% said satisfactory, 44% said not well and 16% didn't know.
- Seven per cent said provincial government was doing very well as regards efficiency fairness and independence, 31% said satisfactory, 39% said not well and 23% didn't know.
- Eleven per cent said the performance of national politicians and government officials was better than a year ago, 55% said it was the same, 11% said it was worse and 16% didn't know.
- Only 5% of respondents could name either of the main functions of the Leadership Code Commission, while 70% said they had never heard of it and 24% said they had heard of it but don't know what it does.
- Eight per cent said the role of the Auditor General's Office is to check that public money is spent for the proper purpose, 4% mentioned check compliance with revenue guidelines, 65% had never heard of it and 27% had heard of it but didn't know what it does.
- Fifty-six per cent said there was dishonest behaviour and/or misuse of power among senior people in their community, 35% said there was none and 8% didn't know.
- Thirty-six per cent said there was less dishonest behaviour and/or misuse of power among senior people in their community compared with a year ago, 40% said the amount was unchanged, 2% said it had increased and 13% didn't know.
- Thirty-eight and thirty-seven per cent respectively said complaints about poor performance in national and provincial officials should be addressed to the officer's supervisor or another senior official, and 22% said complaints should be addressed to the SIPP.
- Forty and forty-four per cent respectively said they would feel safe complaining about a national or provincial official, 39% and 34% would not feel safe and 20% and 19% didn't know.
- Forty-eight per cent of respondents never read a newspaper and 34% only rarely, 4% read a newspaper every day and 7% weekly or monthly.
- Forty-four per cent of respondents listen to the radio every day, 10% every week, 4% every month, 24% rarely and 18% never.

- Twenty-six per cent said the newspaper represents community views very well, 29% said satisfactorily, 5% said not well and 37% didn't know.
- Fifty-two per cent said the radio represents the community's views very well, 26% said satisfactorily, 3% said not well and 19% didn't know.

Representation and Civic Awareness

- Seventy-seven per cent said they voted in the 2006 election, and 23% said they did not vote.
- Sixty-nine per cent said one of the main jobs of an MP was 'assist individual people in their electorate', 24% said 'represent electorate in parliament', 17% said 'get better conditions for their electorate', and 15% said 'govern the country/make laws'. Some respondents used this question to criticise their MP.
- Nine per cent said their current MP is performing very well, 29% said satisfactorily, 36% said not well and 15% didn't know.
- Thirty-five per cent of respondents said it was easy to arrange a meeting with their MP, 49% said it was not easy and 16% said they didn't know.
- Thirty-four per cent said their current MP speaks out on behalf of the electorate, 39% said he does not speak out, and 27% said they didn't know.
- Thirty-one per cent said their previous MP had spent RCDF funds in the electorate, 51% said they had not and 18% did not know.
- Thirty-two per cent said their current MP had

visited the community since the election, 59% said he had not and 8.3% didn't know.

- Eighty-nine per cent of respondents said there should be women in parliament, 6% said there should not, and 4% didn't know. Men and Malaitans were most likely say women should not be in parliament (9% and 10%) and women least likely (4%).
- Ninety-one per cent said they would vote for a woman, 5% said they would not, and 4% didn't know.

Access to Justice

- The most frequently mentioned source of rights education was the local MP (34%), followed by the RAMSI outreach program (26%) and the radio (20%).
- Ten per cent of respondents said they had at some time wanted to take a case to court, while 89% had not.
- Thirty-seven per cent of those who had wanted to take a case to court had done so and 63% had not. The main reasons for not going to court were 'not having a case, not knowing how to or lacking confidence' (32% combined).
- Five per cent of all respondents knew that free legal assistance is available for criminal matters, 6% said it is affordable, 41% said it is very expensive and 46% didn't know.
- Nine per cent thought there was no cost associated with taking a civil matter to court, 17% said it was affordable, 27% said it was very expensive and 46% didn't know.

‘Ninety-three per cent said they would prefer to resolve a dispute with a neighbour entirely within their community.’

- Fifty-two per cent said they would prefer to report a crime to the SIPF, 27% to the community chief and 16% said to RAMSI.
- Ninety-three per cent would resolve a dispute with a neighbour entirely within their community, either through the chief and customary law (71%), the church (10%), by praying together and reconciling (7%) or by ‘working it out themselves’ (5%). Only 4.2% would involve either SIPF or RAMSI.
- Nine per cent said there had been a victim of serious crime in their household in the past two or three years, 90% said there had not and 1% didn’t know or preferred not answer.
- Sixty-four per cent of victims of crime were men and 20% were women.
- Two per cent of all respondents said they had been personally affected by a serious crime in the past two or three years.

For copies of the people's survey 2007 summary contact:

Office of the Special Coordinator
Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
Tel: (+677) 36249
speccoord@solomon.com.sb
www.ramsi.org

Complete copies of the people's survey 2007 can be downloaded from www.ramsi.org. Go to *useful information*.