

# people's survey 2013

## summary

ANU edge



*People's Survey 2013 - Summary*  
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*Cover photo:*

Hilda Kii (right), a long time People Survey enumerater conducting interviews with women from the Malu'u community, North Malaita.

### **Acknowledgements**

ANU edge wish to warmly thank all those who worked on the 2013 People's Survey, especially the interviewers who diligently collected data, and the data entry officers. The University of the South Pacific, Pasifiki Services Ltd, and The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office played invaluable roles in the survey and the expertise and support they provided is greatly appreciated.

Finally we wish to thank the 3405 respondents in the communities who generously gave up their time to express their views on these important community concerns.



In collaboration with



# people's survey 2013

## summary

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# 3

provinces (and Honiara)

# 56

interviewers & facilitators

# 3405

questionnaires

*‘The 2013 Solomon Islands Government-RAMSI People’s Survey was the sixth national survey since 2007 of perceptions of economic conditions, governance and law and order in Solomon Islands’*

38%

collect their drinking water from rivers, streams, springs and pools

51%

had solar electricity in their homes, three times the percent in 2009

89%

have had no formal post-secondary education

59%

said they owned a mobile phone

72%

said they did not have a bank account

# overview



The 2013 People's Survey was the sixth since 2007. It was conducted in rural Guadalcanal, Honiara and Honiara Settlements, Malaita and Western.

The Enumeration Areas surveyed (EAs) in these provinces were the same as in 2007 and 2009, so the Survey supports direct comparison of responses to 16 questions that were asked in all three years.

A total of 3,405 respondents were surveyed, with equal numbers of Men and Women aged 30 years and over and Young Men and Young Women under age 30.

As in past years, the Survey was implemented by ANU edge, but this time in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific.

The questionnaire was divided into eight areas:

- Section A: Background Information
- Section B: Access to Services
- Section C: Access to Household Service
- Section D: Household and Business Finances
- Section E: Safety
- Section F: Leadership
- Section G: Accountability
- Section H: Resolution of Disputes

**The full report is available in hard copy and online at [www.ramsi.org](http://www.ramsi.org).**

# key findings



The main findings of the tables in the complete report are summarised below. Where respondents were permitted to give up to three answers to a question, the percentages may exceed 100. Full details of responses, analysis by province and age gender groups and comparisons over time can be found in the charts and tables in the complete version of the report.

## Section A: Respondent's Background Information

### Place of residence

- 95% of respondents resided where they were interviewed
- 24% of respondents with partners had partners from a different home province

### Educational levels

- 82% of respondents had attended primary school for 5 years or more
- 49% of respondents had no secondary education
- 89% of respondents had no formal post-secondary education
- The mean years of education for all respondents was 7.5 years, compared with 7.3 for the 2007 People's Survey

## Section B: Access to Public Services

### Health services

- 67% of respondents could reach a health facility in less than one hour
- 21% of respondents thought health services had improved a lot in the past five years, and 56% thought there had been some improvement
- 71% of respondents had visited a health facility in the past year
- 46% of those who had visited a health facility were always satisfied with the services received and 28% were sometimes satisfied
- the main problems reported by those who were not satisfied with the health services received were problems with staff (64%) and shortages of medicine (55%)

### Schools

- 87% of respondents could reach a primary school in less than an hour
- 27% of respondents thought primary schools had improved a lot in the past five years, and 53% thought there had been some improvement
- 21% of respondents thought secondary schools had improved a lot in the past five years, and 50% thought there had been some improvement
- 50% of respondents with children attending primary school were always satisfied with their children's school and 30% were sometimes satisfied

# ‘Thirty per cent said the police definitely improved in the last five years’

- The main problem reported by those who were not satisfied with their children’s primary school was with teachers (58%). Generally fewer problems with primary schools were reported compared with 2011

## **Transport**

- 65% of respondents used road transport, 47% used small boats, 24% used large boats and less than 1% used air transport
- 65% of respondents said they used transport for social visits, or to reach church or sporting events, with 65% saying they used transport to access markets
- 50% of respondents used transport to reach education and health facilities
- 50% of respondents said they were satisfied with the transport available to them, and 50% said they were not satisfied. This is a decline in satisfaction compared with the 2011 sample
- 57% said better roads and tracks would improve transport, 54% said cheaper fares and fuel and 37% said more frequent transport was needed

## **Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF)**

- 14% of respondents had asked the RSIPF for assistance in the preceding year, almost the same as in previous years
- Theft and disturbances were the main reasons for seeking help (41% and 40%)
- 40% of respondents were satisfied with the help

received and 60% not satisfied

- 53% were dissatisfied because the police didn’t help and 47% because the police were too slow
- 29% of respondents said the RSIPF always treat people fairly and with respect and 41% said they do sometimes
- 30% said the police have definitely improved in the past 5 years and 34% said they had improved in some ways

## **Access to agricultural information**

- 27% of respondents said they get agricultural information from their family and community
- 11% said they get agricultural information from Agricultural Extension officers, with Men twice as likely to get information from this source
- Less than 5% of respondents receive information from any other source, and 47% do not receive any agricultural information
- Of those who mentioned any source of agricultural information, 44% had not received any information from that source for more than a year, and 10% had never received any

## **Priorities for Solomon Islands Government (SIG)**

- 49% of respondents in Honiara and 35% in rural areas said education should be the first priority for SIG
- 41% of respondents in Honiara and 35% in rural areas said health should be the second priority for SIG



# ‘Eighty-six per cent of respondents supported the presence of RAMSI’

- 33% of respondents in Honiara said the RSIPF should be the third priority for SIG
- Transport was most likely to be fourth priority for SIG by respondents in both Honiara and rural areas
- 33% of respondents in Honiara ranked RSIPF as the third priority for SIG, but rural respondents were most likely to rank RSIPF as fifth equal priority with Agricultural Extension services

## Section C: Access to Household Services

### Source of water for drinking and cooking

- 44% of respondents get water for drinking and cooking from community standpipes
- 38% collect surface water from rivers, streams, springs and pools
- 67% of respondents in Honiara have water piped to their house, but only 15% outside Honiara
- 58% said water for drinking and cooking is always available, but the rest said it was only available some of the time
- The main problem with water in both rural and urban areas was that the supply was insufficient
- Broken equipment and dirty or polluted water were each mentioned about one third as often as insufficient supply

### Electricity in respondent's home

- 28% of respondents homes were connected to an electricity grid, which was more than double the percentage in 2011

- 51% had solar electricity in their homes, which was three times the percentage for 2009
- The percentage with no electricity has halved since 2011

### Phone ownership and use

- 59% of respondents owned a mobile phone and 2% were connected to a landline
- 98% of phone owners use them to call or text family and friends
- 44% use their phones for emergencies and 17% use their phones for business or work
- Use of phones for Internet or Facebook was confined to Honiara and urban areas in Western and Malaita

### Access to radio broadcasts and choice of program

- 41% had SIBC reception in their community all the time, 45% sometimes and 14% could not receive SIBC
- 46% of those who could receive SIBC said SIBC did not provide the programs and news they want to hear, 34% said it sometimes does and 4% said they were satisfied with SIBC programs
- 29% had FM reception in their community all the time, 30% sometimes and 38% could not receive

### Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC)

- 32% of respondents listened to the radio every day, 39% a few times a week, 16% listened less

‘Eighty-seven per cent said radio was their preferred media, 35% said newspaper and 27% said TV.’

than once a week and 10% had no access to radio broadcasts

- 92% of respondents listened to the news, 38% listened to music, 36% listened to community service notices, 26% listened to health information and 12% listened to talk back
- 78% said the news was one of their favourite programs, 29% mentioned music, 19% mentioned community service notices and 16% included health information among their favourite programs. Less than 10% listed other types of program as favourites

#### **Preferred media for getting news and information**

- 87% said radio was their preferred media, 35% said newspapers and 27% said TV
- 77% of those who preferred TV were satisfied with it, while 23% mentioned problems with TV
- The main problem with TV was poor coverage (47% of the problems mentioned), followed by dissatisfaction with the programs offered (39% and poor reception (15%)
- 82% of those who preferred radio were satisfied with it, while 18% mentioned problems with radio
- The main problem with radio was poor reception (60% of the problems mentioned), followed by poor coverage (34%) and dissatisfaction with the programs offered (15%)
- 68% of those who preferred newspapers were satisfied with them, while 32% mentioned problems with newspapers

- The main problem with newspapers was that they are not available everywhere (66% of the problems mentioned), dissatisfaction with content (26%) and newspapers are too expensive (83%)

#### **Section D: Household and Business Finances**

##### **Household financial situation and income earning**

- 23% of respondents said their household financial situation was better than 2 years ago, 37% said it was the same and 37% said it was worse
- 76% of respondents said they got money by selling something, 19% got money from paid work, 12% got money from business and 22% got money from their family
- Of those respondents who said they sell something, 54% sold garden crops, 45% sold betel nut and cigarettes, 28% sold commodities, 22% sold fish and sea food and 14% sold canteen goods, with small percentages selling other things
- 69% of sellers sold their goods at the market, 34% sold at the roadside, and 31% sold goods from their house
- 61% said they could increase their income by selling more, 34% said by starting or expanding a business, and 19% by getting a new job for themselves or a family member
- 32% said family and community obligations were preventing them from increasing their income,

‘Ninety-one per cent said the main cause of conflict and problems in their community was alcohol, drugs and or kwaso.’

18% said there was insufficient market, 11% said a weak economy and 15% said nothing was preventing them from increasing their income

### **Taxation**

- 8% of respondents knew the taxation threshold is \$15,000, 6% thought it was still \$7,800, 4% guessed incorrectly and 82% didn't know
- 18% of respondents said they had paid tax, 58% said they had never paid tax and 24% didn't know
- 17% said they had earned \$15,000 or more in one year, 67% had never earned that much and 16% didn't know

### **Access to banks and credit**

- 26% of respondents had an account with a bank, and 2% with another type of financial institutions and 72% had no account
- 31% said they would seek money to start a business from their family or a wantok, 19% said they would apply to a bank or financial organization, 13% said they would use their own money and 28% didn't know where they would get money to start a business
- 53% of respondents said they would not apply for a loan from a financial institution because they didn't know how to apply, and 17% because they did not have a bank account
- 41% said a male member of their household was working away from home, and 31% said there was a female absentee worker

- 78% of the absentee workers sent money to their family

### **Section E: Safety**

#### **Safety**

- 43% of respondents said their community was safe and peaceful, 48% said there were some problems and 9% said there were many problems
- 61% of respondents always felt safe in the community, 36% sometimes felt safe, and 3% hardly ever felt safe
- 43% of respondents said they feel safer in the day, 1% felt safer at night and 55% said there was no difference
- 87% said they always feel safe in their household and 12% said they sometimes felt safe, with less than 1% hardly ever feeling safe in their household
- 14% said they always feel safe in Honiara, 45% said they sometimes feel safe there and 38% said they hardly ever feel safe in Honiara

#### **Causes of conflict**

- 91% said the main cause of conflict and problems in their community was alcohol, drugs and or kwaso, 49% said arguments and domestic disputes, 33% said land disputes, and 13% said crime, violence and murder were the main causes of conflict and problems

‘Seventy-two of respondents said honesty is the main quality of a good leader.’

### **Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)**

- 86% of respondents supported the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands and 8% did not support RAMSI
- 48% said RAMSI’s biggest achievement in Solomon Islands was bringing peace to the country and 40% said it was restoring law and order. Only small percentages mentioned other things
- 35% of respondents said Australia pays for RAMSI, 16% said NZ pays, 13% said Solomon Islands Government pays and 66% didn’t know

## **Section F: Leadership**

### **Representation**

- 72% of respondents said honesty is the main quality of a good leader, 38% said consulting with the community, 29% said good communication skills and 29% said being respected
- 91% of respondents said women make good leaders
- 18% of respondents were satisfied with the performance of the national MP, 22% were sometimes satisfied and 56% were not satisfied
- 6% of respondents were satisfied with their provincial member or city councillor, 10% were sometimes satisfied and 78% were not satisfied
- 11% said their national MP had visited their community more than once in the past year, 19%

said they had visited once and 60% said they had not visited

- 7% said their provincial member or city councillor had visited their community more than once in the past year, 6% said they had visited once and 80% said they had not visited
- 89% thought there should be female MPs in National Parliament
- Of those who supported women in Parliament, 80% thought there should be reserved seats for female candidates

### **Government performance and priorities**

- 6% of respondents thought National Government is performing very well in providing basic services and improving the economy, 48% thought performance was satisfactory and 38% said government performance is not satisfactory
- 3% of respondents thought Provincial Government is performing very well in providing basic services and improving the economy, 21% thought performance was satisfactory and 66% said Provincial Government or Town Council performance is not satisfactory
- 60% of respondents said SIG should prioritise rural development and working with the community and/or churches to improve Solomon Islands, 59% suggested economic improvement, 36% said SIG should prioritise ending corruption and misuse of funds, 24% said SIG should improve education, 17% said SIG should improve markets

# ‘Sixty-five per cent said women in their community help to resolve family disputes’

and 15% said SIG should make good policy and land reform. Only small percentages suggested other priorities

## Section G: Accountability

- 64% of respondents said they would report a public official who misused power or money or treated them unfairly and 27% said they would not report
- 57% of those who said they would report the official said they would report to the RSIPF, 36% said they would report to their boss or the PSC and 4% said they would report to a chief or elders
- 21% said they had known an official was misusing power or money or treating them unfairly, while 78% said they had not seen such behaviour
- 20% of those who had experienced this treatment by an official had reported it and 80% had not reported it
- 36% reported the official to the RSIPF and 36% reported the official to the Leadership Code commission
- 55% of those who did not report were afraid to report, 22% didn't know who to report to and 12% did not report because the official was a friend or wantok

## Section H: Resolution of Disputes

- 15% of respondents had been involved in a dispute with another person in the past year
- 69% of respondents said they were satisfied with the methods of dispute resolution available to them, and 27% were not satisfied
- 62% of all respondents said that traditional justice should be strengthened, 43% said local justice should be improved and 36% said there should be better access to the RSIPF
- 53% said government should prioritise the improvement of access to magistrate courts, 14% said the priority should be land courts and 26% didn't know
- 65% said women in their community help to resolve family disputes, 27% said they help to resolve disputes about community rules, 10% said they help to resolve disagreements about money and 27% said women do not participate in dispute resolution in their community

# highlights



Responses to questions that had been asked in other People's Surveys were generally consistent with previous Surveys, while a few new questions suggested priorities for government and knowledge of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) yielded some interesting results. The Survey findings provide the Solomon Islands Government, NGOs, donors, and communities with important information about economic and social conditions in Solomon Islands. Discussion meetings held in 2012 to disseminate the results of the 2011 People's Survey highlighted the areas of particular interest to communities. These included education levels, employment opportunities and access to services, including the services provided by the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF).

The 2013 People's Survey shows a steady increase over time in respondents' mean years of education, with that for Young Women gradually approaching that for Young Men. More than three quarters of respondents could reach a primary school in less than an hour from their homes and a similar proportion thought there had been some improvement in primary schools over the past five years. Half of those respondents with children attending primary school did not report any problems, and there were fewer reports of problems than in previous years. Of the 20% of parents who did report problems, problems with teachers continued to be the most common.

While more than 80% of respondents had 5 years or more of primary education, there is still a bottleneck at secondary level, with only around 50% of respondents having any secondary education. Progression rates to post-secondary education are even lower, with only around 10% having any post-

secondary education. These percentages are almost the same as in 2011.

The most common source of income, which was mentioned by more than three quarters of respondents, was selling goods of some kind, while less than 20% had paid work, 12% had their own business and less than 1% received money from royalties. Even some respondents with paid work said they found it necessary to engage in selling in order to obtain sufficient income, and most of those respondents who had paid work lived in or near Honiara. This was similar to the pattern found in the 2011 People's Survey. The high percentage of sellers compared to the low percentage with other sources of income means that there is clearly little scope for selling more, even though that was most commonly perceived as the best, often the only, way to increase income. This finding points to expanding opportunities for paid employment, including self-employment and small business, as a possible means to improve living standards throughout Solomon Islands.

An essential pre-condition for the expansion of employment and business is access to banking facilities, electricity and communications. The Survey data showed that, as in past years, less than 30% of respondents had a bank account or an account with another type of financial institution, and the majority of those who did have access to banks were in Honiara. Similarly, access to an electricity grid was confined to Honiara and towns such as Gizo, Noro and Auki. While around half of respondents had solar power in their homes, this is mostly used for lighting and running small appliances and most solar installations are too small to run equipment

# ‘Even some respondents with paid work said they found it necessary to engage in selling in order to obtain sufficient income

such as power tools that could provide employment. Similarly, although around 60% of respondents owned a mobile phone, use of other communications technology that could support income earning, such as computers, was generally confined to Honiara. Improving access to all these services, especially in rural areas, would help to promote alternative sources of income and reduce dependence on selling.

There were no marked differences as compared with previous People’s Surveys in perceptions of the RSIPF and community safety. There continues to be some dissatisfaction with the services provided by the RSIPF, especially in Honiara and Western. Less than 30% said the RSIPF had definitely improved in the past 5 years, although another third thought the RSIPF had improved in some ways. Ensuring adequate community safety, especially reducing stealing, is a key part of improving living standards.

As compared with the 2011 People’s Survey, there was a change in respondents’ perceptions of the main underlying causes of conflict. Whereas in 2011 60% of respondents mentioned land disputes and only around 40% mentioned alcohol and arguments, in 2013 more than 90% of respondents thought alcohol, drugs and kwaso were the main causes of conflict. Second most mentioned, by around half of respondents, was arguments and domestic disputes, and only around a third mentioned land disputes. Better control of alcohol, drugs and kwaso in the community could contribute to a substantial improvement in living standards by improving community safety, as well as by reducing expenditure on these substances.

While the percentages supporting RAMSI were similar to previous years (86%) a new question showed that only a third of respondents knew that Australia pays for RAMSI, less than 20% knew that New Zealand is also a contributor, and 13% mistakenly thought the Solomon Islands Government pays for RAMSI. Around half of respondents thought RAMSI’s greatest achievement was to bring peace to the country, while another 40% said it was restoring law and order. Another new question that enabled the home province of respondents and their partners to be matched found that almost a quarter of respondents with partners had partners from a different province. This included most possible combinations, suggesting that there may be no sharp ethnic boundaries in Solomon Islands.

A new question asking respondents to rank priorities for Solomon Islands Government (SIG) reflected the concerns expressed in the discussion meetings. Improvement of education was most often ranked first, improvement of health services most often ranked second and improvement of the RSIPF most often ranked third. Improvement of transport was usually the fourth priority and expansion of Agricultural Extension Services was usually the fifth priority.

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