

SOLOMON ISLANDS

AFP

PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEFING

CIVIL SOCIETY

WHAT IS ACFID?



- ✓ Umbrella organisation/ Peak body
- ✓ Australian Non Government Organisations (NGOs) - working in developing countries
- ✓ 20 Australian NGOs in Solomon Islands
 - Large NGOs – eg World Vision, Oxfam
 - Small/Medium – eg The Leprosy Mission, Fred Hollows Foundation
 - Church-based – eg Caritas, Marist Mission, ADRA, Anglican Board of Mission
 - Volunteer agencies – eg Australian Volunteers International, Australian Business Volunteers



CHALLENGES – SOLOMON ISLANDS

v Low life expectancy

- 62 years (males), 64 years (females) – compare with Australia (20 years more life)
- High infant mortality
- High maternal mortality
- Limited number of doctors

v High population growth

- 3% per annum population growth rate
- Population expected to double by year 2027
- 21% population – 15 to 24 year age group
- 42% population under 15 years of age

v Education

- 20% to 25% of children – no opportunity to attend primary school
- 30% of those who do attend – no opportunity to finish primary school
- Limited number of high school places
- Very few children have opportunity to go beyond high school



- ✓ Females lower school participation rates than males
- ✓ Adult literacy rates
 - many adults have not had opportunity to learn to read/write
 - 25% to 40% population not literate (varies from province to province)
 - Low literacy rates pose challenges for employment and awareness raising

✓ High Youth Unemployment

- Limited employment opportunities
- Contributes to social unrest, lawlessness
- Tensions between modern life/cash economy and subsistence village lifestyle



Activities of Australian NGOs

All work with Solomon Islands partners and

All activities involve local training/capacity building

- ✓ Health
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Conflict resolution
- ✓ Literacy programs
- ✓ Eco-forestry
- ✓ Radio and theatre
- ✓ HIV/AIDS awareness



- ✓ Water and sanitation
- ✓ Youth leadership – peer education
- ✓ Small income generating projects
- ✓ Rural agriculture
- ✓ Vocational training
- ✓ Child rights advocacy
- ✓ Reproductive health
 - nurse training



SOLOMON ISLANDS CIVIL SOCIETY

- ✓ Who they are
- ✓ What they do
- ✓ Relationship with
Australian NGOs
- ✓ Relationship with Solomon Islands
Government



WORKING WITH SOLOMON ISLANDS CIVIL SOCIETY

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- **CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING – CRUCIAL**
 - **RELATIONSHIPS – TRUST, RESPECT**
 - **COMMUNICATION – BASED ON LISTENING TO SOLOMON ISLANDS PARTNERS**

Solomon Islands Civil Society views about RAMSI

- ✓ RAMSI welcomed
- ✓ Helpem fren – focus on assisting Solomon Islanders to find their own solutions
- ✓ Failed state – not failed community
- ✓ High expectations of RAMSI
- ✓ Uncertainty over RAMSI's tenure
- ✓ 'Regional' makeup of RAMSI appreciated
- ✓ RAMSI – important to go beyond policing

People's Survey

- ✓ 48% experienced robbery or theft from garden (28% of which reported to RSIP)
- ✓ 63% not satisfied with police action
- ✓ 59% treated with respect by RSIP (48% for women)
- ✓ Most common reason for not reporting robbery (26% did not believe police would do anything, 16% no police in area)

- ✓ 43% would complain directly to police (if they thought a police officer was corrupt) but 20% prefer reporting to village chief
- ✓ Most preferred to report crime to RSIP (44%) rather than RAMSI (35%)
- ✓ 65% thought violent crime would return if RAMSI left



Australian NGOs Working in Solomon Islands:

- Give priority to needs/interests of Solomon Islands communities
- Encourage self-help and self-reliance
- Involve Solomon Islanders from earliest stages of program design
- Seek to enhance gender equity in all activities
- Appreciate Solomon Islands cultures and history
- Endeavour to communicate with Solomon Islanders in Pidgin

Solomon Islands Civil Society Representatives

