

SINSO NEWS

Your monthly guide to the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office News, Information and Events • Issue 1 • September 2017

2019 National Census prep gets underway

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) is starting groundwork for the major upcoming “2019 Population and Housing Census”. With just over a year away from the actual event in 2019, the SINSO is now on preparatory phases as the national event is fast approaching. Leading up to the event proper in 2019, the SINSO have made preliminary preparation work with the United Nations Population Fund, formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), which is a UN organization for the Census planning and budget review in August 2017. Also as part of the Census planning, the SINSO is conducting the Village Resource Survey (VRS, Village Census) and the Household listing exercise to be conducted later this year ahead of the actual event in 2019. The VRS and Household Listing exercise is part of the preparation leading up to the national census in 2019. In fact, the VRS survey will collect information on services in the village including mapping. The household listing exercise will record each household’s GPS and the number of people per household by gender. This is the basis for Census enumeration areas (EA) demarcation. This (VRS) is another of the many

survey projects that the Statistics Office will embark on under its National Statistics Development Strategy (NSDS 2015/16 to 2035) 20 year road map. Other major national projects that are also facilitated through the NSDS 2015/16 to 2035 under the leadership of the Government Statistician are;

- National Agriculture Survey (ongoing).
- Solomon Islands Demographic & Health Survey – Dissemination phase (ongoing activities).
- Household Income and Expenditure Survey – Extended for National CPI Project and GDP (ongoing activities).
- The National Statistics Development Strategy NSDS 2015/16 to 2035 (ongoing).
- Proposed quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) (new/ongoing).
- The 2019 Population and Housing Census preparations.

The responsible Steering Committee have started a series of meetings and discussions with responsible government ministries and stakeholders in the lead up to the actual kick-off of the project (VRS) later this year. In a recent meeting of the VRS Steering Committee at the NSO conference room, the NSO with representatives from the Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening (MPGIS) and the



Government Statistician Douglas Kimi.

Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS), held discussions on the definition of a “Village”, questionnaires that will be used during the survey, the project budget which will include training of enumerators, and implementation of the project (VRS). A representative from the Ministry of Lands (MLHS) stated at the meeting that the Ministry is still without and is yet to have a gazetted village names/listings for the whole country (Solomon Islands). Government Statistician, Douglas Kimi said this VRS project will be a benchmark for the official/gazetted village names in the country. He said once the survey (VRS) is conducted and successfully accomplished it will provide avenues to

look at pathways to gazette village names. Mr Kimi said to ensure this is achieved, the National Statistics Office will make sure it continues to work closely with important stakeholders and government ministries like the Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening (MPGIS) and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS). Training for VRS field enumerators will commence this month (October). The training will be facilitated by NSO staff. The NSO is also calling on development partners and donors to support the 2019 Census in terms of funding and technical assistance.

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Message from the Government Statistician Douglas Kimi

On behalf of the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO), I take this opportunity to welcome you to our first

issue of our new monthly E-newsletter. This is a wonderful opportunity for the SINSO to embrace this new communication medium and to fully maximize its capacity to disseminate statistical news, stories and information to meet the needs of its readers. This is our 1st edition thus we are grateful that you are taking your time to read it. As the central statistical agency of government, the SINSO through this newsletter will ensure that information is disseminated widely to inform the public of the activities and developments that are happening within the SINSO. In this issue, we have

updates on the Solomon Islands Demographic and Health Survey 2015 provincial dissemination workshops with accompanying photos carried out in Western, Guadalcanal, and Malaita Provinces. We also have updates on some major national survey projects that the SINSO is currently implementing such as the Village Resource Survey (VRS) which is a prerequisite to the conduct of the National Census in 2019 and general news updates. Now that the internet is increasingly becoming a channel for disseminating news and information, SINSO is very glad that through this network

(monthly newsletter), its readers can be better and easily informed on-line through this fact file on its active website. Feel free to read the bulletins inside this issue. For public interest, the issue is downloadable on our website: www.statistics.gov.sb/. This is our 1st edition and it comes out at the end of every month. We hope to continue bringing in interesting articles, news and facts via these medium now and into the future. Please feel free to also forward this issue to your colleagues and friends and also feel free to get in touch with our media team for further information.

Western Provincial Government lauds NSO for report

The Western Provincial Government (WPG) has commended the National Statistics Office (NSO) for the Solomon Islands 2015 Demographic and Health Survey (SI DHS 2015) report. This was after a successful two-day provincial dissemination workshop on the SI DHS 2015 report held at St Peter’s Conference Room in the Provincial Capital – Gizo, from Wednesday 27th to 28th Thursday September 2017.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) together with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) representative Hellen Tomasi and Dr Hugo Bugoro from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) facilitated the two-day event. The dissemination exercise, which aimed at ensuring information from the survey reached the people in the rural areas who provided the infor-



Participants that attended the 2015 SI DHS dissemination workshop held in Gizo, Western Province.

mation during the survey, attracted a total of 32 participants with active contributions during the course of the workshop. Participants included Western Province Acting Deputy Premier Malloney Lopoto, his Advisor Hendry Zimbo, representative from Ministry of Health- Gizo Hospital and other representatives from NGOs, Youth at Work, Save the

Children, Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association (SIPPA), USP- Education and the church representatives. Welcoming the NSO staff on the first day of the workshop, Mr Lopoto said the SI DHS 2015 report is significant given the reputation that it will provide the prospect for Western Province to have a clear picture of its health status on issues

and circumstances the province is facing especially in its communities. He said the workshop marks another milestone of development for health information for Western Province, adding that the DHS report, which provides data and information about the Province’s health status, would be used as a yardstick for planning purposes and implementation of its future strategies/policies as a way forward for the Province. He said, “health is for all and it is our responsibility to make sure health information/data and services carry on in our communities and provinces. “Data and information is quite lacking in the Western Province and this is where I congratulate the National Statistics Office (NSO) for producing such report and findings. This data and information are very important for our analysis and decision making

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Some of the participants at the workshop.



Acting Deputy Premier Hon Malloney Lopoto for Western Province (Left) and the NSO Senior Informaion Officer Joy Talo doing a presentation.



NEWSFLASH

NSO staff learn about “embargo, dissemination procedures”

Employees of the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) had the opportunity to learn about statistical publication “embargo and dissemination procedures” on Friday 22nd September 2017. Facilitated by Erica Tolcvay, Data Communication Officer, the purpose of the information session is to ensure workers instil the knowledge around “embargo and dissemination procedures” when it comes to the release of statistical data/information to the public domain. For some, it was a refresher while for others it was an eye opener to absorb new knowledge and learn from other neighbouring pacific island countries National Statistics Offices (NSO) data dissemination policies and processes. It was a very interactive and informative session as everyone divided into three groups to participate in various activities and presentations. The information session is also part of preparing NSO personnel for the

upcoming discussion in a few weeks’ time on concepts and points raised and what the government department (NSO) might like to implement in its office. Ms Tolcvay said ensuring correct data is release to the public domain is paramount. She said early release of information means that incorrect results may be released, which will impact the findings of those using the incorrect data and will impact on the reputation of the NSO. “...statistics are a public good used to measure improvement and make evidence based decisions to better the country. “When statistics are released at a set time to all users, all users are treated the same and no one is favoured,” she added. Ms Tolcvay said ensuing such embargo/dissemination policy will maintain the trust of users, maintain economic stability and help the public to retain trust in official statistics.



As depicted in the two photos here, National Statistics Office staff grouped in groups to answer questions as in the given activities. The excersie is a re-fresher for some while it is also an eye opener for others.



One of the facilitators Dr Hugo Bugoro (Centre) with the other two participants.

in our Provincial Government,” Mr Lopoto emphasised. The workshop was informative and interactive. Many of the participants raised comments as they saw the information from 2015 Demographic Health Survey Report revealed health issues the country faces in our island provinces, especially on child health, sanitation and family planning. Gizo child health Coordinator William Siako said, the data and information revealed in the 2015 SI DHS report indicates that Solomon Islands has not yet reached the national target for children’s health. “We need to improve the child health of our children in Solomon Islands especially here in Western Province.” He pointed out that, nutrition for our children is

important and there is a need to closely observe or monitor our children’s food consumption. Mr Siako said most local market vendors sell their local nutritious food at the market in exchange to buy manufactured food (store food), which do not contribute to children’s health. He added that, this issue on child health can be solved only if the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) together with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) collaborate together. The SI DHS workshop prompted feedback from participants as they raised important arguments/points for the responsible authority to take on board to address health concerns in the particular province (Western) and the nation as a whole. Mr Siako said the SI DHS report is a call for the

Western Provincial Government to ensure it acts on strategies that will improve health status in the province. He also thanked the NSO Office and welcomes any further surveys that the NSO will execute this year and in the future. “Statistics information helps us to see where we are in our health status and an important guide for planning purposes.” Headed by the NSO, this dissemination exercise is part of the NSO roll-out programme of the SI DHS 2015 Final Report dissemination workout into the provinces following the official launch in Honiara in June, 2017. Similar workshops were also conducted in Guadalcanal and Malaita Province. The Solomon Islands Demographic and Health Survey 2015 (SIDHS 2015) is a nationally representative survey of 6,266 women aged 15–49 and 3,591 men aged 15–54. The SIDHS 2015 was the second such survey for the country. The first one was conducted in 2006–2007. The primary purpose of the SIDHS is to furnish policy-makers and planners with detailed information on fertility, family planning, infant and child mortality, maternal and child health and nutrition, and knowledge of HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. The SIDHS 2015 is a follow up of the SIDHS 2006–2007 and is designed to provide updated data to monitor the population and health situation in Solomon Islands. The report which contains 16 chapters summarises the findings of the SIDHS 2015 implemented by the SINSO in collaboration with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Health and Medical Services (SIMoHMS). The SIDHS 2015 project was funded jointly by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)-Aid Program, SIG and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

NEWSFLASH

Malaita DHS dissemination workshop dubbed fruitful

A two day provincial dissemination workshop on the “Solomon Islands Demographic and Health Survey 2015” (SI DHS 2015) for Malaita Province was successfully held. The event was held at the Bahai Centre Conference room in the capital, Auki from Wednesday 27th to 28th Thursday September 2017. Buoyant commentaries hit the floor of discussion through the Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions. More than 20 participants and heads representing different divisions within the Malaita Provincial government ministries, police, women, NGOs, private sectors and churches attended the very important occasion. The workshop was organised by the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) within the Ministry of Finance & Treasury (MoFT) as part of its current roll-out programme on the SI DHS 2015 final report dissemination exercise into the provinces following the official launch and Honiara dissemination workshop



Participants that attended the DHS workshop in Auki, Malaita Province.

held on June 6th -7th, 2017. The purpose of the dissemination exercise is to ensure information from the survey reaches the people in the rural areas who provided the information during the survey. It was a lively and interactive workshop as participants were given the opportunity to deliberate on issues presented and health concerns in Malaita Province and to ensure government ministries and experts within

the Province (Malaita) embark on strategies to address such unrelenting problems. Opening the floor of discussion, Rockson Siliota – Program Officer Child Health said, with the report now available, it is fitting that the responsible health sectors and everybody in the province must utilize it (report) and join forces collectively to address such shocking discoveries as highlighted in the report. He said, while the survey

findings are significant and will act as a benchmark for the province in its future policy making, there is also a need for close links between each government ministry both provincial and national, NGOs, private sectors, churches and every citizens of Malaita Province and the country as a whole to guarantee identifying health indicators and methods that will address health circumstances. Commenting on “cigarette

smoking” amongst pregnant mothers, Clera Rikimani, Women’s Development Officer for Women’s Division within the Malaita Provincial Government (MPG) said, noted pregnant women smoking cigarettes for the duration of their pregnancy is really a health concern and a problem that must be addressed. She said as a mother, and someone who represents the women’s sector in the province, *Cont. pg 5.*



James from World Vision Auki Office raised a point.



Whitlam Saeni making a comment.

Principal Statistician Raphael Aipaina commends participants for their constructive comments and participation and challenges them to utilize the information and implement it in improving health services in the province (Malaita).



Principal Statistician Raphael Aipaina responding to questions and comments put forward to by participants.

NEWSFLASH



Gloria Siwainao Chief Health Inspector raised a point.



Some of the participants on the first day of the workshop.

this is an aching problem that needs to be stopped.

Mrs Rikimani said the government must develop policies that will minimise this practice and health agencies must increase awareness to make sure these women understand that “smoking cigarettes” is dangerous and a health risk to their children.

On literacy, Mrs Rikimani said there is a great need for improving the level of literacy amongst women and everybody in the province. She said, that’s an issue the education sector must take on board and look at ways to improve it.

Meanwhile, George Hoatamauri, Provincial Lands Officer (PLO) said a lack of access to clean water supply and sanitation is a health problem and an issue the government, through its responsible authorities and policy makers, must seriously ponder and execute approaches to improve it.

Willie Fafai, community policing officer for Malaita Province, while applauding the government through the National Statistics Office (NSO) for the survey report, said the only way forward is through teamwork, adding

there is a need to improve literacy in the community. He said as someone who works with the communities in and around Malaita Province, improving literacy amongst youth in the communities is paramount. “We need to educate our young people to guarantee they know/understand what is bad and wrong.

“We cannot rule out the fact that a lot of unwanted social and unlawful activities continue to sprout out from those with little education or no schooling at all. Some are even dropouts from schools who are turning to illegal undertakings – like smoking marijuana, consuming kwaso and other illegal activities,” he said. Officer Fafai said it’s a challenge for police to combat these social harms in the communities.

He added that police alone will not help solve all these social problems while stating the need for collective effort is a prerequisite and every citizen of Malaita and the Solomon Islands as a whole must join forces to end such social snags.

Andy Siarani, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Malaita Education Authority while commending the

report findings and the NSO, assured the government through the National Statistics Office (NSO) that the Malaita Education Authority will utilise the information and construct policies to improve the education sector particularly the literacy rate in the province.

He added that the report is significant given the importance that it will help Malaita Provincial Government through its Education sector in its future policy making development.

Other participants who commented said some of the findings are alarming and prompt intervention by the responsible government authorities and policy makers to ensure such health issues are lessened and addressed.

Presenting on the topic “Reproductive Health – Antenatal Care”, John Leaburi from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) said this service is still a major health problem in the country.

He admitted that the absence of medicines, no transport, distance to the health facilities, cost of treatment and no female providers are some of the

factors that impede many mothers from accessing this most important health service.

Mr Leaburi said this is a big issue that warrants the need for quick mediation by the accountable ministries to ensure such infrastructure and human resources are in place at the area health centres to guarantee mothers have access to such important and improved health services in Solomon Islands. Principal Statistician and Team Leader – NSO for Auki team Raphael Aipaina, commended participants for their constructive comments and participation and challenged them to utilize the information and implement it in improving health services in the province.

In response, the participant’s representative Whilam Saeni, assured the NSO that the information will be utilized and implemented in all means to meet the need for health improvement in the province.

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The report, which contains 16 chapters, summarises the findings of the SIDHS 2015 implemented by the SINOS in collaboration with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Health and Medical Services (SIMoHMS).

The SIDHS 2015 project was funded jointly by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)-Aid Program, SIG and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).



Willie Fafai raising a point.



Some of the participants that attended the two day dissemination workshop.

Provincial dissemination workshop for Guadalcanal held successfully

A two day provincial dissemination workshop on the “Solomon Islands Demographic and Health Survey 2015” (SI DHS 2015) for Guadalcanal Province (GP) successfully concluded on Wednesday 20th September, 2017.

The event was held at the Star Event Conference room in Honiara from Tuesday 19th to 20th Wednesday.

About 40 participants from Guadalcanal Province government departments, women’s council/organisations and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) attended the dissemination event.

The workshop was organised by the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) within the Ministry of Finance & Treasury (MoFT) as part of its major roll-out programme of the SI DHS 2015 final report into the provinces following the official launch and Honiara dissemination workshop held on June 6th -7th, 2017.

The purpose of the dissemination exercise was to ensure information from the survey reached the people in the rural areas who provided the information during the survey.

For Guadalcanal, it was a lively workshop as participants were given the opportunity to discuss topics presented and issues pertaining to health concerns in the province and to ensure responsible authorities (divisions) within Guadalcanal Province embark on ways to formulate strategies to address such pressing problems.

Presenting on the topic “Malaria” Dr Hugo Bugoro said Malaria is still a major problem in the province and the country as a whole.

He said fighting this endemic health problem means appropriate strategies must be in place and taken by both provincial and national government responsible ministries.

Dr Bugoro encouraged people to use Mosquito nets and mosquito repellent to avoid catching Malaria.

He said awareness is also important to educate people about Malaria and approaches that one



Former Politician and MP for South Guadalcanal Victor Totu raising a point during the dissemination workshop.

would take to avoid getting sick with Malaria. Other topics that also brought heated debate on the floor were child labour, women’s empowerment, HIV & Aids related knowledge and attitudes and behaviour.

Guadalcanal Provincial Member, Honourable Brian Tuva Minister for Health and Medical Services while commending the National Statistics Office (NSO) for the survey report said the report and information within it are vital and would be a yardstick for the GP health authority to ensure it frames policies to address health issues affecting the province.

He said the report is quite significant and it will help the various divisions of Guadalcanal Provincial Government in its future policy making.

Government Statistician Douglas Kimi said Guadalcanal Province was the first province for the DHS 2015 dissemination adding NSO is also eyeing to host similar workshops in other venues in the province (Guadalcanal) soon.

Mr Kimi also called on the participants to be advocates for NSO to ensure people collaborate and support the Statistics Office in providing vital and correct information during the course of its other upcoming survey projects.

He said providing correct information to the NSO is important to help the government, stakeholders and policy makers in formulating appropriate policies/strategies that will help enhance the socio-economic development of the country.



Government Statistician, Douglas Kimi far left in the front row with participants that attended the two days dissemination workshop. (Below are photos of participants who contributed in the question and answer session).



A participant made a comment during the workshop session.



Some of the participants that attended the dissemination workshop.

NEWSFLASH

Government Statistician participates in Pacific Leadership Forum



Government Statistician of Solomon Islands Douglas Kimi, far right from the middle row and Loyce Pabulu, far left from the second row with Government Statisticians and Senior Officials from other Pacific Countries that participated in the Pacific Leadership Forum, August 2017.

Government Statistician (GS) of Solomon Islands, Douglas Kimi in August 2017 joined Government Statisticians and Senior Officials from other Pacific countries for the 2017 Pacific Leadership Forum (PLF) held in Nadi, Fiji.

The two day forum started with a pre-forum on Monday 28th August, followed with the event proper on 29th and concluded on 30th August 2017.

Mr Kimi was accompanied by the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) Principal Social Statistician, Loyce Pabulu. The GS participated in panel discussions and presented updates on the leadership development within the government department (SINSO) regarding the progress and challenges of statistical development

and statistical leadership in the Solomon Islands.

Organised under the theme, “Enhancing the Public Value of Statistics in the Pacific Region through Adaptive Leadership”, the 2017 PLF is to ensure Government Statisticians from the Pacific Region come together to share ideas on ways to increase the effectiveness of National Statistics Offices (NSOs) and the demand for official statistics at a national and regional level through enhancing their public value and building adaptive leadership skills.

The annual forum provides an opportunity for NSO leaders in the region to share key achievements, learn from common challenges and discuss opportunities for collaboration and also to guarantee lead-

ers’ dialogue on the data needs and ways to narrow data gaps and improve statistics that are vital for policy.

It also aided leaders (GS’s) to know more deeply and understand the importance of statistics and its public value and consolidate their efforts as partners to deliver more accurate, timely, internationally comparable, and people oriented statistics.

The PLF is also an important juncture to ensure Government Statisticians gain further ground in their efforts to improve the access and use of statistics with regards to the event given theme, with the fact that all need good quality, reliable and timely data in order to make better informed policy decisions. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has organised four forums

since 2011. However, the 2017 PLF focused on adaptive leadership and enhancing the public value of statistics in the Pacific at the national and regional levels.

Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilising people to address tough challenges and adapt and thrive in challenging environments. Adaptive challenges are the gap between organisational aspirations and the operational capacity that cannot be resolved by current approaches, including existing expertise and practices. In this way, the adaptive leadership framework can be applied to diagnose, interpret and innovate to create capabilities that match organisational aspirations, thereby enhancing the public value of an organisation.

NSO has new web expert

Joy Talo, a senior Information Officer within the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) – Ministry of Finance & Treasury (MoFT) has been equipped with new expertise after attending a week-long training session on web development in Noumea, New Caledonia, in September 2017.

Held at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Head Quarters in Noumea from 28th August to 1st of September 2017, the SPC Pacific Regional Information System Management (PRISM) training is aimed at equipping and upskilling the statistics website administrators.

The training focused on web development with the content management systems WordPress, similar to Joomla.

Other Pacific countries that joined the workshop include; Samoa, Cook Islands, Wallies and Futuna and Solomon Islands.

Ms Talo who represent Solomon Islands said the training is a bonus for her given the huge responsibility placed on her to manage the SINSO website.

Though it was her first time to participate in such training, Ms Talo said the workshop has given her the opportunity to acquire new expertise and knowledge, that will surely boost and help support her work as an Information Officer for the SINSO on the usage of websites, how to manage websites and advocating and disseminating statistics in Solomon Islands.

“...we are able to complete the training in four days and I was able to learn a lot of things from it,” she said.

The training introduced new content of the WordPress system which covers website features with practical hands on workshops on how to set up on localhost, getting to know the WordPress Dashboard and how to create pages, posts, projects and when to



Joy Talo, second from left with participants that attended the SPC PRISM training in Noumea, New Caledonia.

use them.

“More interestingly, we were able to get to apply theme customization and global appearance settings using a Divi Theme software system and its basic concept divi builder plugin and divi modules plus how to upload statistics documents using management WordPress file downloads and more. “The most exciting thing about the training is we learned how to use WordPress practically although there was limited time,” Ms Talo added.

For Ms Talo, the training is significant considering the position she currently holds at the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office.

“The training was important for my position (Information Officer) since it supported me to use the website, upgrade my knowledge on how to manage websites and continues to support my work to advocate and disseminate statistics.” She also pledged to

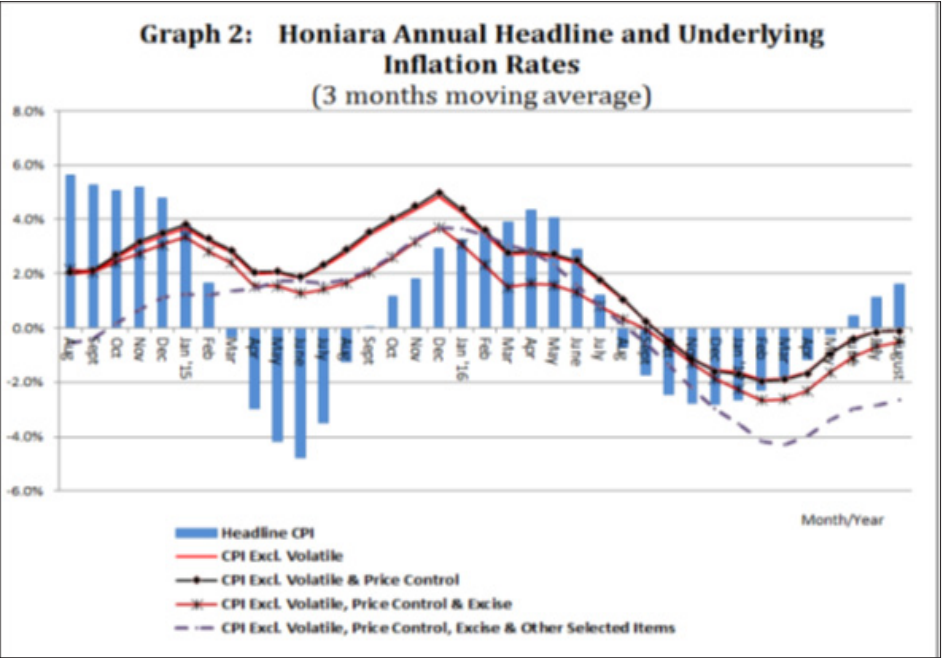
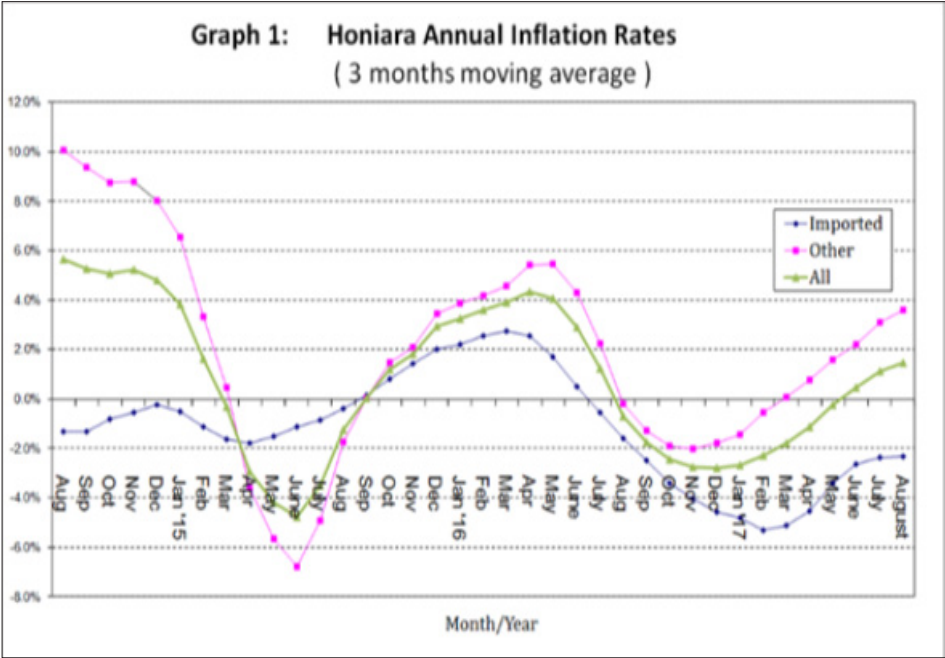
share what she learned from the training to her other colleagues.

To utilise the skills and knowledge achieved, Ms Talo is planning to work on the National Statistics Office (NSO) website this month (September) and will continue with the practice and present a pre-website to her senior staff and colleagues by the end of the month.

A fully functioning and up-to-date website is a vital communication medium that SINSO is now using to disseminate statistical data and information for decision making and policy and planning purposes as part of the National Statistical Development Strategy 2015-16 to 2035 and more specifically, to inform the mass population about key indicators affecting their lives and development trends in the country. She thanked SPC for the great and resourceful short workshop and the support rendered to SINSO through the technical training.

The training was fully funded by SPC and facilitated by Billy Somers from Papua New Guinea.

Consumer Price Index falls by 0.4 per cent in August



The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) has released its Honiara Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month of August 2017.

CPI is a monthly indicator of the variation in prices for retail goods and other items. The basket of goods chosen represents the spending behaviour of the population of Honiara and the resulting CPI is used to calculate inflation. The CPI for the month of August 2017 dropped by 0.4% from 188.3 the previous month to 187.4, said the Government Statistician Douglas Kimi while releasing the statistical bulletin.

“This was largely driven by price drops in the Food, and Transport and Communication sub-indexes.

“The Food sub-index fell during the month by 1.7% to 175.0. Price declines are recorded in cooking oil (0.9%), and fresh fruits and vegetables sold at the Honiara market; most notable are tomatoes (56.3%), spring onion (40.5%), green beans (23.7%), Chinese cabbage (31.3%), green pepper (32.2%) and fern cabbage (36.2%).

“These outweighed price increases in melon (0.8%), bush cabbage (12.8%), cassava (22.6%), kumara (9.2%), ripe banana (39.3%) and, sugar and confectionery (1.7%) to result in the fall in the overall food sub-index.”

Other major changes in other sub-indexes include;



NSO Adviser, Willie Lahari, far right, and Government statistician Douglas Kimi with NSO staff in a recent National Consumer Price Index meeting.

- Drinks and Tobacco went up by 0.4% due to increases of 0.8% and 1.0% in the prices of cigarettes and betel-nut, respectively.
 - Housing and Utilities rose by 0.9% driven by an increase of 4.7% in electricity charges outweighing declines of 1.5% and 1.2% in the prices of kerosene and LP gas, respectively.
 - Household Operations slightly went up by 0.1% on account of a 1.2% rise in the price of washing powder.
 - Transport and Communications fell by 0.2% driven by declines of 1.4% and 1.9% in the prices of petrol and diesel, respectively.
- Mr Kimi said, apart from the above, price move-

ments elsewhere in the consumption basket were negligible.

“The overall annual headline inflation rate for the month of August 2017, calculated on a 3 months moving average basis was 1.4%, up 0.3 of a percentage point from 1.1% the previous month. The corresponding inflation rates for imported and other items were -2.3% and 3.6%, respectively.”

Meanwhile, he said the main underlying rates of inflation based on a 3 months moving average for the month of August 2017 were observed between -2.6% and 0.0% while the headline inflation rate was 1.4%.



NSO Adviser Willie Lahari, far right, and the Government Statistician Douglas Kimi



Chief Statistician Joachim Gaiafuna close to camera doing a presentation on the National CPI.

National Statistics Office in pictures



VRS project coordinator Anthony Saomatangi and NSDS Assistant Accountant George MacKenzie.



Kab Rak Choi, NSO, Statistics Data Computer Programmer, made a comment on his country Statistics release procedures during a recent session on Embargo and Dissemination procedures.



Erica Tolcvay talking to the NSO staff while facilitating the session on “Embargo and Dissemination Procedures” recently. See full report and photos on page 3.



NSO and National Statistics development strategy (NSDS) staff busy discussing an activity during the information session on “Embargo and Dissemination Procedures” held recently at the NSO conference room.



ABOVE and BELOW VRS steering committee members in a recently held meetings.

NSO Adviser Willie Lahari.

NAS report to launch in 2Q of 2018

The report of the first ever National Agriculture Survey 2017 (NAS 2017) will be available and launched in the second quarter (2Q) of 2018.

Field Enumeration ended in October 2017.

National Project Coordinator, Charles Oloka told participants attended the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) Annual Staff Conference held at the Ginger Beach in West Honiara on 19 September 2017.

The annual summit was held in accordance with the MAL Corporate Plan 2015 – 19. The Department of Agriculture Planning and Land Use (DAPLU) also participated under the theme, “Pioneering effective deliberation for enriched and operational agriculture productions.”

All MAL Chief Field Officers, Officers In-Charge, Senior Field Officers, Senior Planning Officers, National Agriculture Survey Project Coordinator, Head of Urban Agriculture, Human Resource Managers, Information Officers, Financial Controllers, DAPLU Directors and Honiara-based DAPLU staff and other senior government workers attended the weeklong summit.

Mr Oloka on behalf of the Government Statistician recognised the MAL, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) for the great assistance rendered in planning and implementation of the survey project. Mr Oloka said, the survey was a great success.

He said data entry is continuing,

with data processing to be led by SPC, assisted by National Statistics Office (NSO) consultants.

Mr Oloka also thanked all Solomon Islands Government (SIG) line ministries, NGOs and partners in the steering, technical and users Committees.

“NAS 2017 report should be launched in quarter 2 of 2018,” he said.

Mr Oloka said the aim of the survey is to ensure field enumerators collect data that will confidently assist the government through the Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock with its planning to improve agriculture production in the Solomon Islands. He added that NAS 2017 will also provide benchmark data on land use, type of agriculture and related activities, structure of agricultural holdings and their main characteristics, to support the strategic plans and programmes of the Solomon Islands on agriculture production and investment as well as to support development of some Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators in the agriculture sector.

66 field enumerators were deployed in all nine provinces including Honiara to collect information/data with the help of 22 supervisors to enter data collected into the processing system.

Mr Oloka said, to further support the household enumeration targeting household agriculture holdings, 19 separate field officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) will be deployed shortly into the field to collect supplementary data targeting commercial or “big” farms.

“These big farms will be enumerated completely and will supplement the data collected from the households. Enumeration on “big” farms will soon commence but that would depend much on the availability of funds,” Project Coordinator, Oloka stated.

The survey covers both sample areas in the rural and urban sectors, approximately 80 per cent of coverage in rural areas, 10 per cent each of coverage in both Honiara (capital city) and provincial centres of the provinces.

For the NAS 2017, the NSO adopts a two stage stratified/arranged sampling methodology/approach. This practically means that all the ten provinces of the country are covered (“stratified”).

The two stages of selection include;

1. A random sample of census areas are selected using probability relative to household size (176 Enumeration Areas (EAs) covered) and
2. For each sample area selected, 24 agricultural households are selected through a random process known as circular systematic sampling. This will give an expected sample size of 4,224 agricultural households.

The NSO is grateful and thanked the public and survey respondents for the cooperation shown towards the survey teams during the course of the survey period.

However, for clarification of why some households are selected and others are missed – firstly it is a

sample survey as opposed to a census count (complete coverage) – a sample involves only a part of the population.

The process in sample selection is to give as equal chance to every household in the country to be selected, and only around a 5 per cent sample of households in the country is selected.

There are no biases in how the 5 per cent sample was selected, and the process used is random and done in two stages of operations which should give a self-weighting sample. The two stage stratified samples are the recommended sample design used in the world for this type of survey subject (agriculture statistics) for a developing country such as the Solomon Islands, and is in line with what the United Nations has recommended. As the selection is random and done in two stages with known probabilities of selection there are no biases involved, and the data should produce unbiased statistics in the analysis stage.

The project was supported by the Solomon Islands Government through both the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) with the technical support from Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the National Statistics Office resident Advisor, and the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC).

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) facilitated the project under its 20 year strategy – the National Statistics Development strategy 2015-16 to 2035.

About Us

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) is a division within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. Guided under the Statistics Act 1970 (Amendments 2007), the Census Act 1959, the SINSO is mandated to compile and disseminate official statistics of the Solomon Islands.

The SINSO serves as the leading source of quality data about the population and the economy. We honor privacy, protect confidentiality and conduct our work openly. We are guided on this mission by our strong and capable workforce our readiness to innovate and abiding commitment to our customers. It is our goal to provide the best mix of timeliness, relevance, quality, and services cost for the data we collect.

The Government Statistician (GS) and his Statistics Management team lead the SINSO.

The office is made up of four sections; the Economic Statistics Unit, Social and Demography Statistics Unit, Census and Survey Statistics Unit and Executive Management and Support Services Unit.

Altogether there are 26 staff (including the GS) in the department carrying out duties ranging from collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating information in the various subjects in the different sections.


Our core functions

As a Central Statistical Agency of the Government guided under the Statistics Act 1970, (Amendments 2007, the Census Act 1959), our role is to:

- Design standardized statistical instruments for producing Solomon Islands’ statistics: harmonized classifications, organizational methods and structures, technical standards.
- Harmonise statistical information: drawing up a set common concepts, languages and tools for producing statistics.
- Produce Solomon Islands’ statistics: consolidate the statistics of the Provinces and ensuring that they are comparable.
- Supply statistical information: identify, analyze and interpret Solomon Islands’ statistical data.
- Disseminate statistical information.
- Coordinate the Solomon Islands Statistical System.
- Advise statistical systems: help to improve the national statistical systems and promote good practice within the Solomon Islands Statistical System.
- Promote research and development: encourage research into techniques and tools for collecting, processing and analyzing data.

Coming up in our next issue

- VRS phase 1 implementation.
- NCPI staff training.
- International Merchandise trade.
- And many more updates and interesting articles on the major upcoming national survey projects that the National Statistics Office embarks on.



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