

SINSO NEWS

Your monthly guide to the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office News, Information and Events

Issue no. 14 September-December 2020

Page3. Minister Kuma launches 2019 Census Provisional Count



Left to right; Douglas Kimi Government Statistician and Census Commissioner, Harry Kuma, Minister Finance and Treasury, Dr. Willie Lahari, Advisor NSO, and Mckinnie Dentana, PS Finance and Treasury

SINSO FAREWELLS DATA ENTRY OFFICERS



The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) on Friday 16 October 2020 farewelled the last group of its data entry officers, marking the end of their employment contracts.

The thirty-plus data officers were part of a group of people recruited by the statistics office in March this year to record all the data they had collected from the 2019 nation-wide census.



The data entry was the second phase of the census project.

The first group's contract ended on the 1st of October, while the second group's contract expired on Thursday 15th October. **Continue on page 2**

pg.5 pop. growth in Honiara a concern

pg. 11 MOFT celebrates christmas

pg. 10 NSO and COVID 19 - staff share their stories

LET'S TALK

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Government Statistician Douglas Kimi’s welcome message to readers

On behalf of the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO), I take this opportunity to welcome you to the 14th issue of our monthly E-newsletter. This is a wonderful opportunity for the SINSO to embrace this 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 14th edition thus we’re grateful that you’re 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 share with you the National Statistics Office overall achievements over the month of September to December 2020 such as the launch of the 2019 Population Census Provisional results, progress made on the 2019 Census data processing-editing phase, and the release of the monthly National inflation (CPI) rates. This issue also highlights events such as the launch of the 2019 Census provisional results and the MOFT Christmas party. A section in this issue also highlights personal stories of the impact of COVID-19 in terms of the government’s preparedness and response on staff daily life. 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 online through this fact file on its active website. Feel free to read the bulletins inside this issue. For public interest, the issue is downloadable from the SIG online portal on this address/link under documents & links: <https://solomons.gov.sb/ministry-of-finance-and-treasury/solomon-islands-national-statistics-office/>. The newsletter comes out at the end of every month. We hope to continue bringing in interesting articles, news and facts regarding the NSO’s work via this 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.

“NSO has also hosted a good number of youth@ work every year in support for their projects and providing employment building capacity to youth@work participants.”

Continue
from page 1

Speaking during a brief meeting with them, Government Statistician and Census Commissioner Douglas Kimi acknowledged the group for their significant contribution towards the census project.

Meanwhile, Deputy Government Statistician Samson Kanamoli highlighted that a great number of Solomon Islands citizens have benefited from the various employment opportunities the statistics office has offered.

“In the ministry of Finance & Treasury NSO with its national projects for instance, Censuses and surveys have always given employment opportunities for all citizens dispute lacking of infrastructures and mobilisation powers,” Mr Kanamoli said.

“NSO has also hosted a good number of youth at work every year in support for their projects and providing employment building capacity to youth at work participants

“Some maybe a stepping stone for their future employment hunts and some gain better experience to their next career in the near future.”

In response, the group’s spokesperson Micheal Dimola Barasi expressed their gratitude for the opportunity they have been given.

“We have learnt a lot from our experiences with the office, including the trainings you have provided.”

“Some of us might even consider taking up studies to become statisticians in the future.”

The National Statistics Office is currently progressing the data editing processing phase which is likely to be completed by early first quarter of 2021.

Solomon Islands Population Count hits 721 thousand



Finance and Treasury Minister Harry Kuma delivering his speech

The Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma officially launched the Solomon Islands provisional population count based on the 2019 National Population and Household Census at the Ministry of Finance and Treasury Head Quarters in Honiara.

The launching took place on 16th November 2020.

The provisional results reveal that as of midnight (Census Night) of 24 November 2019, the country's provisional population count is approximately 721,455.

This represents the absolute number of people residing in approximately 124,247 private households and 1,034 institutions.

The country's population has increased to over three times the size since independence in 1978.

Figure P1: Provisional Total Population Size and Trend, Solomon Islands: 1931-2019

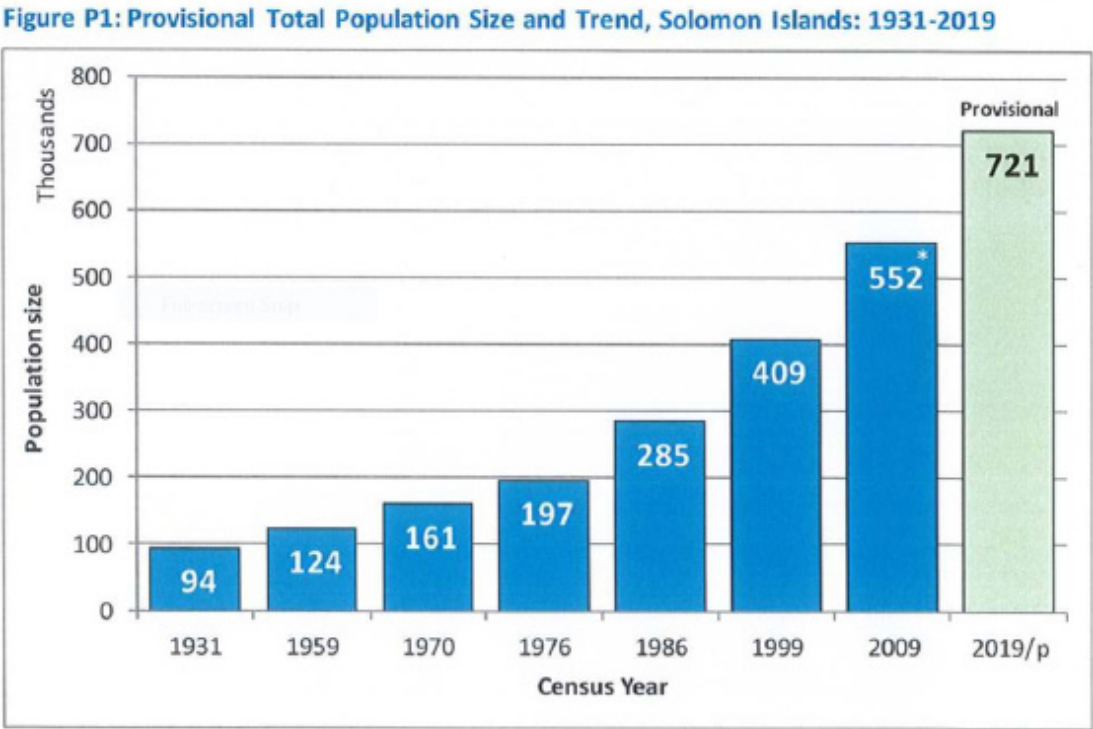


Figure P1 shows the total population by population size since 1931. Note that the 2009 population stated is the estimated adjusted population.



Guests looking through the report



More guests at the launching

The program was attended by various permanent secretaries, heads of agencies, senior government officers, development and donor partners, private sector and civil society officials.

Minister Kuma, who is also the Minister in charge of the 2019 Census Project implemented by the Census Project Office of the National Statistics Office acknowledged the Census Commissioner

and Government Statistician, Douglas Kimi and Permanent Secretary for MOFT, McKinnie Dentana for the leadership and oversight of this complex project as well thanking all Census project staff, development partners and people of the Solomon Islands who participated in the census.

The final analysis report is planned for release in the third-fourth quarter of 2021. The final 2019 Census

figures are expected to slightly vary from this provisional figures depending on the data processing and validation exercise currently being progressed.

The nation-wide census enumeration was conducted from 4th November to 8th December 2019 with reference to the Census Night of 24 November, 2019 and was the largest operations of its kind in the country.



Douglas Kimi Government Statistician and Samson Kanamoli deputy Government Statistician listening to Minister Harry Kuma

NEWSFLASH

Honiara population growth a concern

Honiara, the capital of the country and the main commercial hub of the nation continue to be the most highly concentrated area with a very high population density of 5,950 people per square kilometre compared to all other provinces.

This is according to the recent 2019 Census provisional population results launched on the 16th of November 2020 by the Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuman.

Rennell-Bellona records the lowest density of 6 persons per square kilometre.

At the national level, the 2019 population density is 24 persons per square kilometre. Although the 2019 population density is relatively low by regional standards, it has progressively increased

from 18 to 24 persons per square kilometre since 2009.

The Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma while giving his speech at the launch of the 2019 Census provi



A view overlooking Koa Hill in Central Honiara

sional results, mentioned that, like many of us who reside in Honiara, he was concerned with the rapid

growth in Honiara and the high population density of close to 6,000 people per square km.

“...urban city planning is therefore critical now than ever before...”

It is clear that the growth in Honiara alone is driving urban growth in the country. Many of us who have lived in Honiara have personally experienced the urban challenges

facing Honiara.

Urban city planning is therefore critical now than ever before, and government intervention is needed to overcome overcrowding and the increasing demands for more housing, utilities and other basic services”

The 2019 Census provisional results showed that during 2009-2019 Honiara recorded the fastest annual growth of 5.8% with an increase of 57,033 people and growing by 5,700 people annually. This is followed by Guadalcanal with an annual growth of 3.7%. The province with the slowest annual population growth (0.4%) is Temotu where growth continues to slow down even from 1999-2009.

This and related statistics were released by the National Statistics Office through the Census 1/2020 release report that was officially launched by the Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma.

Inflation drops 1.3 percent in July

The country’s inflation also known as the change in the National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) has dropped 1.3 per cent to 105.8 in July 2020.

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) revealed in its latest NCPI statistical report.

Releasing the NCPI report on Friday 9th October, Government Statistician and Census Commissioner, Douglas Kimi said through the year compared to the same month in 2019, the National CPI increased 0.8 percent.

The major changes in other expenditure categories from the previous month include:

- Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages -0.5 per cent.
- Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics -6.9 per cent.
- Clothing & Footwear +0.1 percent.
- Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels -1.4 per cent.
- Furnishings, household equipment & routine maintenance +0.4 per cent.
- Transport +0.9 per cent.

Mr Kimi said the Solomon Islands inflation rate for the month of July 2020 calculated on a 3 months moving average basis was +3.4 per cent, the corresponding inflation rates for imported items was -3.1 per cent while other (domestic) items inflation rates was +6.3 per cent.

“The Solomon Islands underlying rates of inflation based on a 3 months moving average for the month of July 2020 was observed between +0.8 per cent and +1.6 per cent.

“The headline inflation rates for the respective provincial towns calculated on a 3 months moving average basis were:

Honiara: (+3.2%) down 2.6 percentage points; Auki: (+5.8%), down 1.1 percentage points; Gizo:

(+1.8%), a drop of 0.1 percentage points; Noro: (+1.4%), a rise of 0.1 percentage points.”

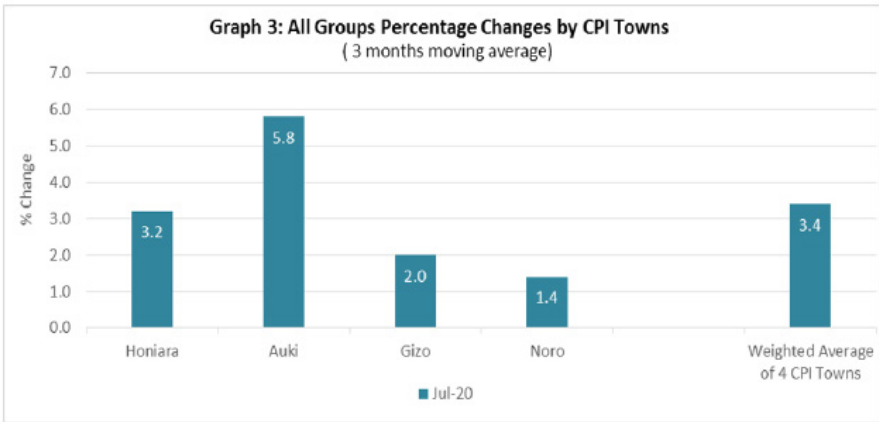


Chart shows National Consumer Price Index (CPI) percentage changes by CPI towns.



Clothing and footwear expenditure according to the July monthly report has changed +0.1 percent compared to the month of June.

NEWSFLASH

Solomon Islands urban population increases by 5.3 per cent

The urban population in Solomon Islands has increased with a higher annual growth rate of 5.3 per cent or an increase of 75, 750 people.

The provisional count based on the 2019 Census has revealed this.

The country’s urban population has increased from 109,082 in 2009 to approximately 184,832 in 2019.

The urban growth outpaces by close to three times the growth in rural areas.

Following on from the 2009 Census and for purposes of analysis, the distinction of urban areas includes Honiara, and all provincial administrative centres except Rennell-Bellona.

The proportion of the population residing in urban areas continues to increase since 1976, and from close to 20% in 2009 to 26% in 2019. Similarly, the reverse trend is observed in the progressive decline in rural population.

Close to 26% of the population live in areas that are defined as urban compared to 74% who reside in rural areas.

In 2019, Honiara, the capital and commercial hub of the country comprised of over two-thirds of all urban residents, excluding residents in the adjoining urban areas of Guadalcanal.

This and related statistics were released by the National Statistics Office on the 16th of November 2020 through the Census 1/2020 release report that was officially launched by

the Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma.



Harry Kuma, Minister Finance and Treasury and Douglas Kimi, National Statistician and Census Commissioner at the launching.

DATA EDITING STAGE BEGINS

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office has begun the editing process for the 2019-nation wide census with a series of successful consultations with its stakeholders.

The office has completed the data entry stage and has now progressed into the data editing and validation stage.

To begin the process, the office held a three day consultation with its stakeholders on Tuesday 29th September, Wednesday 30th September and Tuesday 8th October 2020 to check through the data they have collected.

The stakeholders included the People With Disability Solomon Islands, PWDSI, Language Translation, Central Bank, Rural Water Sanitation and Hygiene Home, RWASH, Ministry of Lands and Housing, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, the National and Disaster and Management Office and Our Telekom.

Chief Statistician Anterlyn Tuzakana said the

consultations were very important because they were able to cross check the data they collected from the 2019 census with the stakeholders.

“The data we have is related to the stakeholders’ organisational goals and information. We had to check what we have with what they have so our data actually reflects the truth of what is happening in the country,” Mrs Tuzakana said.

“They’ve been with us all the way ever since we started the census. They were with us when we formed the questionnaires for the survey and now we’re ready to start the editing stage, we have also involved them.

“Despite being struck with the COVID-19 pandemic, we have forged on and reached this stage. We are happy that we’ve come this far.”

The data editing phase is likely to be completed by early first quarter of 2021, and then to be immediately followed by the data analysis phase towards mid-2021.

The 2019 census survey was conducted in the country in early November 2019.

It was the largest and most important project undertaken by the Solomon Islands Statistics Office.



Eddie Limoni Internal Risk Compliance Manager for Our Telekom with the NSO officers, Anna Pitaboe NSDS Manager, Anterlyn Tuzakana Chief Statistician and Loyce Pabulu, Principal Statistician.

Population growth shows signs of slowing down

According to the 2019 Census, the provisional data shows an increase of approximately 169,930 people (30.8%) since the last 2009 Census. This increase represents an average annual growth rate of 2.7% for the period 2009-2019, or an increase of 17,000 people per year. Although the annual population increment is increasing, the inter-censal growth shows signs of declining from 3.0% annual growth in 2009-1999. The new growth rate of 2.7% reflects changes in the annual growths of provincial populations.

According to the Minister of Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma, who officially launched the provisional results, he mentioned that even though our population growth is slowing down, it is still the highest growth rate in the pacific region. The current growth rate has implications on income per-capita and also poses policy challenges to manage population growth so that it does not outpace economic growth as is currently the case.

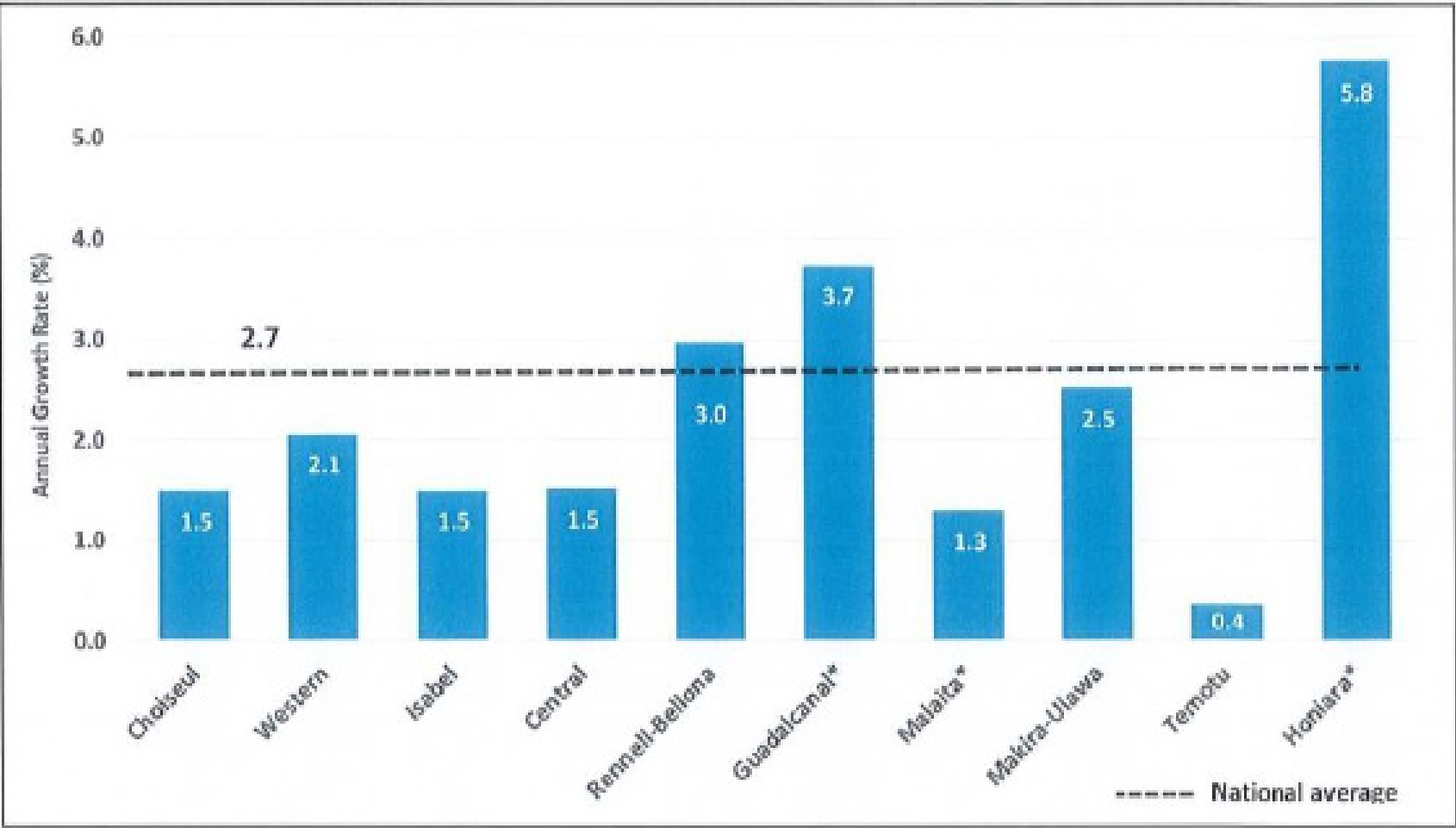
The 2019 provisional results showed that at the provincial level, the provisional count shows that Honiara recorded the fastest annual growth of 5.8 per cent with an increase of 57,033 people (78.0%) since 2009 or 5,700 people per year. This is followed by Guadalcanal, driven by an annual growth of 3.7 per cent with an increase of 48,127 people (45.4%) since 2009 or 4,800 people annually.

Temotu province has the slowest annual population growth (0.4%) which continues to slow down even from 1999-2009.

Malaita province records the highest population of 173,347 (24.0%), followed by Guadalcanal 154,150 (21.4%) and Honiara with 130,176 (18.0%) people. The least populated province is Rennell-Bellona with 4,091 (0.6%) people.

The 2019 Census Project is also a key project implemented under the framework of the National Statistics Development Strategy 2015-2035 that aims to support key data requirements for our nation’s National Development Strategy, Medium Term Development Strategy and our Fiscal and Monetary policies. This key indicator and other statistics were released by the 2019 Census Project Office of the National Statistics Office on the 16th of November 2020 and was officially launched by the Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Harry Kuma.

Figure P3: Provisional Average Annual Population Growth Rate (2009-2019) by Province, Solomon Islands



The 2019 Census Population provisional report says even though the population growth rate in the Solomon Islands is slowing down, it is still the highest in the Pacific region.

NEWSFLASH

NCPI DROPS 0.7 PER CENT IN AUGUST

The National Consumer Price Index (CPI) has dropped 0.7 percent to 105.1 in August 2020 and rebounded by 0.3 percent to 105.4 in September 2020.

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) revealed in its latest NCPI statistical report.

Releasing the NCPI report on Friday 27th November, Government Statistician and Census Commissioner, Douglas Kimi said through the year compared to the to the same months in 2019, the National CPI remained stable in August but dropped 0.1 percent in September.

The most significant changes by major expenditure groups from the previous corresponding months of August and September include:

- Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages (August, -1.4%; September, -0.3%)
- Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics (August, -1.4%; September, +3.2%)
- Clothing & Footwear (August, -1.0%; September, +0.1%)
- Housing, water, electricity, gas

and other fuels (August, +1.3%; September, -0.4%)

- Furnishings, household equipment & routine maintenance (August, 0.0%; September, +0.1%)
- Transport (August (-0.9%; September, -0.3%)
- Recreation and culture (August, 0.0%; September, +0.1%)

Mr Kimi said the Solomon Islands inflation rates for the months of August and September 2020 calculated on a 3 months moving average basis were +1.2 percent and +0.2 percent respectively.

“The corresponding inflation rates for imported items were -3.6 percent and -3.5 percent, while other (domestic) items inflation rates were +3.3 percent and +2.0 percent respectively.

“The Solomon Islands underlying rates of inflation based on a 3 months moving average were observed between +0.8 percent and +1.4 percent in August 2020, and +0.5 percent and +1.3 percent in September 2020.”

The Government Statistician said the

headline inflation rates for the respective provincial towns calculated on a 3 months moving average basis were: Honiara: August (+0.7%) and September (-0.3%); Auki: (+4.4%) and (+2.9%); Gizo: (+1.8%) and (+1.2%); and Noro: (+1.3%) and (+1.2%) for August and September respectively.



Food and non-alcoholic beverages expenditure changes in August was -1.4 percent compared to September -0.3 percent

SINSO concludes SIG procurement processes training

Managers and senior officers within the National Statistics Office have acquired more knowledge about the Solomon Islands Government’s procurement processes after concluding a half day training on Wednesday 23rd September 2020.

The Ministry of Finance and Treasury’s Financial Controller, Bebeno Belo Mulesae facilitated the training.

“It teaches the officers how to do simple and complex procurement and focuses on the annual procurement plan”, Mr Mulesae said.

“We want to improve compliance with the NSO when it comes to procuring goods, works and services.

“I believe they are better equipped now and will do better than before.”

Heads of Units division, projects accountants and senior administration officers participated in the training including the Government Statistician and Census Commissioner Douglas Kimi, the Deputy Government Statistician Samson Kanamoli and the Deputy Census Commissioner, Michael Dimola.

Topics covered included the requirements when submitting payments to Treasury for simple, complex and annual Procurements, and the process involve before the Accounting officers for approvals.

The Government Statistician and Census Commissioner, Douglas Kimi confirmed this training is important and timely.

Mr Kimi said introducing the procurement processes to NSO and project staffs empowers and equip staff to be more aware of the processes, procedure and attached quotations/specifications before submitting the request to the certifying officer and further to the Accounting officer.

“It is important that the different procurements simple and complex must be done in alignment with the procurement & Contract Administration

Manual and the PFM Act guidelines. It is important that these procurement are done with compliance to avoid delays from queries that might challenges work plan implementations.”

Assistant Accountant for the National Statistics Development Strategy Project, NSDS, George McKenzie said the training was an eye-opener for him.

“There were some things I didn’t know before that I know now. I understand the process better.”

Echoing Mr McKenzie’s sentiments was Linda Walesara, NSDS Project’s assistant administration officer.

“I was particularly interested in the Evaluation and Specification topic. “It is important for us supporting staff because we are always part of the implementation and coordination process of the different projects under the NSDS.”

Meanwhile senior Secretary Anastasia Taghanepari described the training as useful, short and sharp.

“I am delighted that all the relevant officers were part of the training so that we are all on the same page. The NSDS is a 20 year project so there should be more trainings.”



Left to right; George Mackenzie, Anstasia Taghanepari, Micheal Dimola, Anterlyn Tuzakana, Anna Pitaboe and Linda Walesara

Highlights of Launch Event



Highlights of Launch Event



COVID 19 : NSO Staff share their experiences

The outbreak of the global pandemic the Corona Virus and its subsequent threat brought much fear, confusion and changes to the Solomon Islands in April last year.

It was the start of what was to be a ‘new normal’ for the country as the people struggle to cope with the health advices and regulations imposed by the health authorities and the government at home, schools and work places.

Now almost eight months later, some of the staff at the National Statistics Office recalled their experiences on how the pandemic affected their personal lives and work.

Nancy Vagha is a project officer who was recruited in 2015 initially under the Labor Force Survey Project. She has been part of several projects at the NSO including the 2019 national census.



Nancy Vagha, LFS Officer

“I was so scared when the news broke out in April. It created a great fear within me. I felt that my life and my family’s lives were in danger.

“It affected me holistically- spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically. I felt sick.
“It was the same situation for my colleagues. We would spend our time at the office just talking to each other about the pandemic.

“Then the health regulations came. I was afraid to socialize with people. At the time, social distancing was very much enforced.

“Even coming to work on the bus was a stressful ordeal too. There were times I just didn’t want to come to work.”

“My morale was low and it affected my work performance.
“I usually sell some food to make

extra money for my family, so when they banned the selling of food, it affected my family’s financial situation.”

Mrs Vagha however notes that the pandemic has brought some positive impacts.

“It has improved my family’s knowledge on looking after our personal hygiene. We uphold the health regulations.

“We were also able to stay together, to support each other at the time so it made our family bond stronger.”

The NSO’s economic section staff has also experienced its own challenges.

Betsy Uruhiaro a young mother of one is from the Consumer Price Index.

She found it difficult to adhere to the health authorities’ advices.
“To be honest it was a new thing, they were introducing new things and I found it quite difficult to comply.”

“There were times, we would go out to the shops to collect prices and the shops would be closed because of the virus. Another time we went to the Central market and it was closed.

“Sometimes the shops required us to wear masks but we would forget to bring our masks along with us and so we had to skip those shops. It affected our price collections.”



Betsy Uruhiaro, CPI Officer

For Principal Statistician Henry Risoni also from the Economics section, it was not so challenging.

“Yes there were new measures introduced by the health authorities for us to practice in our homes, offices and in public places.

“They are regulations so we have to comply with them.

“I was at first fearful because I didn’t understand the disease. Now I understand it better and its containment has been successful so I am no longer afraid.

“It did affect the output of my team initially, but then we coped and overcame it. It only affected us for a short time.

“Our institutions were very much affected, but this was only for the first two months, and then things slowly started to be managed.

One major Challenge faced by the NSO office was finance.



Andrew Nunugu, Census Accounts Clerk

Andrew Nunugu, the accounts clerk for the Census Project is all too familiar with that.

“When the pandemic was announced, Prime Minister Sogavare decided that all non-essential ministries would stop working.

“My first thought was, how will I get the money to feed my family? I will no longer have my salary.

“I was worried. Like most of the public servants, I tried to find ways to secure some money.

“We tried the National Provident Fund, the DBSI bank and other banks in the country for loans.

“Our thoughts were very strong on securing money in case of any major emergencies like a long-term lock down.

Mr Nunugu noted that things were different to last year in terms of his work.
“Last year, our requests for money to the headquarter went smoothly with no delays or hassle.

“This year after the pandemic broke out, the Government controlled the spending so it affected our work.

“There were claims from service providers during the 2019 Census project that we were not able to pay.

“There were also budget cuts, and we couldn’t use some budget line because the headquarters say they had to reserve the money.

“There were other things under strict control of spending, including the control of fuel and the delay of some of the NSO’s projects.”

With the last month of 2020 left, the staff however are feeling more optimistic for the future and for 2021.

“Our front-liners have managed to contain the virus so it didn’t transmit to the community. We are thankful to them,” said Mrs Vagha.

“The fear I had is gone now.”
“I believe that since we are a Christian country, God is protecting us. The virus will not touch us.”

Similarly Ms. Uruhiaro echoed her sentiments.

“I am no longer afraid. I am looking forward to making new things for myself, my family and my job next year.”

Perhaps, Mr Risoni sums it up best.

“2020 has brought us the Corona virus – a big challenge for everyone.
“2021 will have its own challenge. We are yet to find out.

“I look forward to finding out what that challenge might be and overcoming it.”



Henry Risoni, Principal Statistician

Finance Minister highlights NSO 2020 achievements

The National Statistics Office has concluded the year 2020 on a high note as it joined other divisions within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury for the annual Christmas party. Held on Friday 11th December 2020 at the Ministry’s car park, it was a colourful evening of fun and entertainment for the staff. The program started with a Christmas message followed by a speech from the Finance and Treasury Minister, Harry Kuma. Acknowledging that 2020 has been a challenging year for the Ministry, Mr Kuma however highlighted and recognized the achievements of each division within the Ministry as they cope with the challenges. Kuma said despite the challenging year, the NSO has achieved the following in 2020;

- Production and release of the Gross Domestic Product 2003-2017 and Re-base of the Estimates to 2012 constant prices (actual numbers)
- Launch and release of the 2019 National Population and Housing Census Project Provisional Results
- Completion of Asset Retrieval Exercise for the 2019 National Population and Housing Census Project Provisional Results
- Completion of Data-Entry Processing for the 2019 National Population and Housing Census Project Provisional Results
- Successful regular (monthly) release of the National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) and Inflation
- Completion of annual data collections on business, employment and non-profit institutions to support 2018-2019 GDP compilation

work. The Finance Minister said overall, the announcement of the COVID-19 pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) has changed everything almost overnight.



“The ministry has faced a difficult working environment due to competing priorities and expectations. There is an urgent need to work.” Mr Kuma said the ministry has felt the hardship of sharing the limited resource because of the Pandemic. “It has come to stand still as consequence of rigid processes to complete the ministry’s new structure which could have contributed a lot in certain gaps in the ministry. “There is a lack of commitment and understanding by each division on the connectivity and relationship of each divisions responsibility

ties in achieving the main goal of the Ministry. One specific example, is recruitment. The process needs the input of all division to progress.” But he said, these challenges the ministry faced can be converted into opportunities. “I believe these opportunities can motivate us in 2021 to achieve greater things under our mandated responsibility because we have learnt a lot this year 2020 with the current situation.” The presentation of awards followed shortly after the Minister’s speech. The awards recognise teams and individuals that foster the Ministry of Finance and Treasury’s principles of being innovative, being accountable, being responsive and being reliable during the course of their duties throughout the year.

Two NSO staff received awards on the night. Mr Andrew Kakate received the 2020 Excellence in Service Management Award and Ms. Joana Basi received the National Statistics Office divisional award. See page 14



SINSO conducts training for price collectors

The National Statistics Office on 11th September 2020 concluded a one week training for its price collectors to ensure prices of selected samples of goods and services captured in the Consumer Price Index, the country’s official measure of inflation, reflect the reality of price behaviour of the country’s goods and services in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Nine (9) price collectors from the Statistics Office in Auki, Noro, Gizo and Honiara participated in the training.

Facilitated by Principal Statistician Anna Luvu from the Economics section, the ‘Maintaining the Basket’ training looked at missing products, adjusting for changes in quality and substitution.

Ms Luvu said the training was important to ensure the price collectors take into account in particular, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic when collecting their samples.

Each participant was asked to update their samples where necessary to maintain the principles of like-for-like comparison and to ensure they reflect actual expenditure patterns of households in Solomon Islands.

“The price collectors are the eyes and ears of the Consumer Price Index unit,” Ms Luvu stressed. “If they see an item missing they will conduct an investigation to see if it is temporary or permanent and the Price Control Unit will take appropriate measures to address it. “Similar to products, outlets too go out of business every now and then. This is also the work of the price collectors to investigate and those outlets will be dealt with accordingly.”

average market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households. The National Government, businesses and individuals are influenced by the CPI in their respective decision making and planning purposes. The government uses the CPI to adjust for changes in wages due to changes in living costs, monitor monetary and fiscal policies, while businesses can use it to monitor business costs, profit margins and investments. Individuals also use the CPI to compare prices to maximize expenditure choices and savings.



MoFT 2020 Christmas party



highlights



MoFT NSO Awards for 2020

1. **Andrew Kakate**, Chief Statistician, Economics Unit, received the award for EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE MANAGEMENT AWARD

This officer has shown improved technical leadership and professional in his capacity in addressing and resolving the challenges in economic compilation and analysis of the country gross domestic product (GDP) and has contributed in the publication of the 2017 GDP estimates in early 2020. He implemented the draft completion of Rebase of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Estimates 2012-2017. He supported the publications and analysis of the country’s rebase gross domestic product (GDP) estimates 2003-2017 that impacted on MoFT’s economic policy and forecasting, and CBSI monetary policy and other sector policies.

2. **Joana Basi**, Principle Statistician, Economics Unit, received the award for the MOST OUTSTANDING STAFF

This award recognizes outstanding officers within each division. The selection of the awardee is based solely on the respective Head of Department’s discretion.



Andrew Kakate recieving his award from Minister Harry Kuma



Joana Basi is the Most Outstanding staff for 2020 in the Economics division

NSO and its all female-office



Left to right; Alison Haomae, Sharon Misialo and Gwen Vola



Having lunch in the kitchen with colleagues



A group photo



Situated on the left side of the two level National Statistics and Census Office in Point Cruz, is an office filled with six females.

At first one will be suprised by the all-female office. It brings the word ‘gender equality’ to another level.

The officers are all working under the National Strategic Development Survey, NSDS, project.

A room at the back is occupied by Anna Pitaboe, the NSDS project Manager

The bigger space is occupied by the very capable Anastasia Taghanepari NSDS Secretary, and Linda Walesara, the administration Officer.

They are joined by Gwen Vola, Labour Force Survey Secretary, Sharon Misialo her assistant and Alison Haomae, Village Resource Survey Secretary.

The all-female office is often filled with jokes and humorous laughter as they work on their daily tasks.

Meanwhile on Friday 18th December 2020, the NSDS staff took some time out with other colleagues to go to the beach. It was a fun-filled day for everyone.

There was a light lunch, some group photos and even a Christmas cake. The highlight was the giving away of ‘secret-friend’ gifts. The group returned very much refreshed and happy.



Anastasia Taghanepari and Linda Walesara



Gwen hands over her gift to her ‘secret friend’ Alison.



Two NSDS staff ; George Mackenzie and Andrew Nunugu

Coming up in our next issue:

- Final Stages of 2019 Census data processing and Editing
- Data Analysis
- Inflation (CPI) releases
- Trade Estimates
- More Stories and other news

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