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SOLOMON ISLANDS: HONIARA URBAN PROFILE



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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

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FOREWORDS



According to research published in UN-Habitat's¹ flagship report, *The State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*, all developing regions, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, will have more people living in urban than rural areas by the year 2030. With half the world's

population already living in urban areas, the challenges we face in the battle against urban poverty, our quest for cities without slums, for cities where women feel safer, for inclusive cities with power, water and sanitation, and affordable transport, for better planned cities, and for cleaner, greener cities is daunting.

But as this series shows, there are many interesting solutions and best practices to which we can turn. After all, the figures tell us that during the decade 2000 to 2010, a total of 227 million people in the developing countries moved out of slum conditions. In other words, governments, cities and partner institutions have collectively exceeded the slum target of the Millennium Development Goals twice over and ten years ahead of the agreed 2020 deadline.

Asia and the Pacific stood at the forefront of successful efforts to reach the slum target, with all governments in the region improving the lives of an estimated 172 million slum dwellers between 2000 and 2010.

In sub-Saharan Africa though, the total proportion of the urban population living in slums has decreased by only 5 per cent (or 17 million people). Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda were the most successful countries in the sub-region, reducing the proportions of slum dwellers by over one-fifth in the last decade.

Some 13 per cent of the progress made towards the global slum target occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions since the year 2000.

Yet, UN-Habitat estimates confirm that the progress made on the slum target has not been sufficient to counter the demographic expansion in informal settlements in the developing world. In this sense, efforts to reduce the numbers of slum dwellers are neither satisfactory nor adequate.

As part of our drive to address this crisis, UN-Habitat is working with the European Commission and the Brussels-based Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group to support sustainable urban development. Given the urgent and diverse needs, we found it necessary to develop a tool for rapid assessment and strategic planning to guide immediate, mid and long-term interventions. And here we have it in the form of this series of publications.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is based on the policy dialogue between UN-Habitat, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission which dates back to the year 2002. When the three parties met at UN-Habitat headquarters in June 2009, more than 200 delegates from over 50 countries approved a resounding call on the international community to pay greater attention to these urbanization matters, and to extend the slum upgrading programme to all countries in the ACP Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for ACP countries provided EUR 4 million (USD 5.7 million at June 2011 rates) to enable UN-Habitat to conduct the programme which now serves 59 cities in 23 African countries, and more than 20 cities in six Pacific, and four Caribbean countries.

Indeed, since its inception in 2008, the slum upgrading programme has achieved the confidence of partners at city and country level in Africa, the Caribbean and in the Pacific. It is making a major contribution aimed at helping in urban poverty reduction efforts, as each report in this series shows."

I wish to express my gratitude to the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat for their commitment to this slum upgrading programme. I have every confidence that the results outlined in this profile, and others, will serve to guide the development of responses for capacity building and investments in the urban sector.

Further, I would like to thank each Country Team for their continued support to this process which is essential for the successful implementation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

Dr. Joan Clos

Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

¹ UN-HABITAT - United Nations Human Settlements Programme



Urbanization in the Solomon Islands is a relatively recent phenomenon, but it is expanding steadily. In the 2009 census, almost 20 percent of the country's total population lived in urban and peri-urban areas. However, with an annual urban growth rate of 4.7 percent, it is projected that, by 2020, about 25

percent of the country's population will be living in urban areas.

In the Solomon Islands, urban growth is often not perceived as a potential path for economic growth and prosperity, but as the cause of increased poverty, unemployment, and crime, as well as environmental degradation, high socio-economic inequality, and growing informal settlements which lack access to basic urban services. These unfortunate trends, however, are the result of weak urban planning and management and poor governance. National policies and priorities tend to put more emphasis on rural development than upgrading provincial towns and other urban areas.

Honiara is the capital of Solomon Islands and serves as the main administrative, educational, and economic centre for the country. It has a population of just over 64,600 and an average density of 2,953 people per square kilometre. The last national census (2009) registered the city's growth at a rate of 2.7 percent per annum between the two most recent censuses.

This urban population growth rate is alarming when the peri-urban areas on the outskirts of Honiara are also considered, and is a serious concern for the Honiara City Council, which lacks the technical and administrative capacity and resources to effectively manage this population growth rate and related challenges. This Urban Profile, executed by UN-Habitat through the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, is timely as the Honiara City Council is beginning to reassess current policies and introduce new ones on improving service delivery in the city.

The Honiara urban profile will no doubt assist the Honiara City Council to identify key urban issues to be included in the overall city council plans. The ultimate aim is to alleviate poverty at the city level and improve service delivery, particularly the provision of better waste management, sanitation, and public amenities, as well as better education and health services and informal settlement upgrading. The Honiara urban profile has identified a number of key institutional and capacity issues, which the Honiara City Council

can support with its own resources and through donor partners.

The Honiara City Council executive is preparing to formulate city development strategies and activities to promote and improve urban management and planning.

On behalf of the Honiara City Council and the residents of the city, I fully endorse the Honiara Urban Profile and look forward to further interventions from UN-Habitat to support the efforts and plans to improve the image and progress of our city.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Israel Maeoli'. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Israel Maeoli
Honiara City Mayor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



INTRODUCTION

Honiara is a small city, but the rapid pace of change and the resultant problems are no less acute than those found in other Pacific island countries. There are problems relating to increasing poverty, inadequate and poor provision of basic urban services, environmental degradation, and a rise in the number and size of informal settlements. To better respond to these problems, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey has requested UN-Habitat for support to undertake the urban profiling in the Solomon Islands.

The urban profiling constitutes of a set of actions to assess urban needs and capacity issues at the city level. It employs a participatory approach where priorities are agreed on through consultative processes and has been implemented in more than 20 countries in Africa and the Caribbean and 3 Pacific island countries under the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme. The model consists of three parts:

- (1) the use of questionnaires to collect information and seek opinions from senior representatives of public, private, and popular institutions at national and city levels in selected thematic areas in order to suggest priority interventions and devise brief proposals through a city consultation;
- (2) undertaking pre-feasibility studies on selected priority projects; and
- (3) carrying out the project implementation.

The Honiara Urban Profile includes a general

background and a synthesis of seven thematic areas: governance, informal settlements and housing, gender and social environment, urban–rural economy, security and resilience, land and urban planning, and basic urban services.

BACKGROUND

Honiara is the capital of Solomon Islands and is situated on Guadalcanal Island. It serves as the main administrative, educational, and economic centre for the country. It has a population of just over 64,600 with an average density of 2,953 people per square kilometre. Honiara city was developed from the rubble of an American war base established during the Second World War, and has grown at a rate of 2.7 percent per annum over the years to become the primary city in the country. The city is made up of diverse ethnic groups and indigenous people.

The main economic activities in Honiara are in the services sector. Rising unemployment, poverty and high costs of living are common features in Honiara. Some residents, particularly those of informal settlements, are engaged in a range of informal economic activities (Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, 2009).

Basic urban services (water and power provision and garbage collection) vary between the formal and informal settlements. While formal residential areas are often serviced, the informal settlements are not, with a number of households resorting to illegal tapping of water pipes. Public transport needs to be improved,

and the existing roads need to be upgraded, especially in informal settlements. Education and health care facilities are available, but they are often poorly resourced and run-down.

Honiara city is faced with poor service delivery, lack of public sanitation, poor planning, a shortage of housing, high costs of living, environmental degradation, and a rise in informal settlements. There are two key challenges for the Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners and Policymakers:

- (1) achieving good governance and effective urban planning and management, particularly with regard to informal housing and the provision of land to meet the demands of the growing town population, and
- (2) achieving and maintaining a clean and healthy city.

GOVERNANCE

The Honiara City Council is the governing body for Honiara city and has 23 members². It is mandated to deliver a range of basic urban services, including education, health, garbage collection, recreational areas (parks, playing fields), public sanitation, maintenance of feeder roads to all suburbs, and town planning. It is linked to the central government through the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Honiara City Council has a long history of bad governance, weak administrative and technical capacity, and limited finances, which has resulted in the poor delivery of services to city residents. The council has benefited from a five-year project (2006–2011) under the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Project (supported by the New Zealand Aid Programme) that aims to strengthen and improve the institutional and basic service delivery capacity of Honiara City Council. There is still a need for the Honiara City Council to ensure the effective and equitable distribution of basic urban services to all residents of Honiara, especially those living in the informal settlements, and to improve its technical and management capacity.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING

Approximately 35 percent of Honiara residents (22,600 persons) live in informal settlements (Solomon Islands Government, 2011). The city has 30 informal settlements located within the town boundary, and 6 have encroached on customary land. While population growth and increasing rural–urban migration are considered key to the prolific growth of informal

² The Honiara City Council consists of 12 elected officials, 8 appointed officials and three ex-officio Honiara members of parliament.

settlements in Honiara, the lack of affordable housing and developable land for low and middle income earners also drives the trend. The informal settlements are unplanned and therefore lack adequate services (roads, power, sanitation, policing, water, and garbage collection). Poverty and unemployment are often higher in the informal settlements, as most residents depend on gardening and informal economic activities such as street vending for their livelihoods (Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, 2009, Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2006).

A housing shortage exists, despite about 15 percent³ of the city's land (22.73 square kilometres) being underdeveloped. Of that 15 percent, informal settlements occupy about 13.5 percent. Informal settlement residents have continued to improve their homes over the years, resulting in a mixture of housing quality. About 65 percent of houses in informal settlements lack durability (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2006) and therefore cannot withstand strong winds and cyclones. As a result of the housing shortage and high rental costs⁴, increasing numbers of middle- and high-income earners are moving to informal settlements.

GENDER AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Although the National Council of Women and the Ministry of Youth, Children and Women Affairs have made consistent efforts to address gender inequality, social and cultural forces continue to constrain women's participation in nation building. Unemployment rates among the youth (45 percent) and women (44 percent) are higher in Honiara due to poor access to education, inadequate economic opportunities, and more home duties (Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, 2009:16).

THE URBAN–RURAL ECONOMY

Honiara's economic base is dominated by the service sector, highlighting its role as the main commercial and administrative centre for the Solomon Islands. Wholesaling, retailing, banking, and restaurant and hotel related businesses, are the main economic activities in the city. Honiara City Council internal revenue collection from all the economic activities in Honiara was Solomon Islands Dollars (SBD) 11 million in 2010 (Honiara City Council Budget, 2010).

The informal sector provides job opportunities for people without a formal education and is a vital link between the rural and urban economies, with

³ Note: these are estimates, as there is no hard data available at the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey to ascertain the amount of developed and vacant land.

⁴ Rental for a three-bedroom executive is SBD 18,000, and a two-bedroom house is SBD 3,000 per month.

the marketing of food products and handicrafts. The Honiara City Council depends on the central government for budgetary support to meet its major infrastructure requirements such as roads, as its internal revenue is insufficient to cater for such projects. The economic base of the city is small and needs to be diversified for greater resilience. The challenge for the city council and the central government is to create a friendly socio-economic and political environment that will allow the formal and informal sectors to flourish.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

A high rate of youth unemployment and alcohol consumption, the increasing economic gap between the rich and the poor, low staff-related policing capacity, and poor policing resources have given rise to safety and security concerns in Honiara. This has repercussions for the local and national economy, investment, and the tourism industry.

A major goal for the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and the local police constabulary is to contain the illegal production, sale, and consumption of beer and *kwaso* (homemade alcohol) in and around the city and to provide effective policing with better community participation and partnerships.

Honiara city is located along the coast and is susceptible to sea level rise, other climate change impacts, and natural hazards. However, people continue to build houses on steep gradients, along riverbanks and coastal areas and in low-lying areas. The key challenge for the Honiara City Council and the central government is to relocate the most vulnerable settlements and ensure zoning and development controls.

LAND AND PLANNING

Honiara is located on 22.73 square kilometres of land, which was acquired by the government. An estimated 20 percent of this land is unsuitable for development due to poor topography and environmental constraints. About 65 percent of the developable land has already been developed.

Honiara city cannot expand its boundary without purchasing from or negotiating a lease with the customary land owners. Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey Planners and Policymakers desire to work more closely with the Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and traditional landowners for the sustainable development of land and services beyond Honiara's administrative jurisdiction and to ensure that land in the city is well planned and managed.

Honiara city's local planning scheme is not effectively implemented. The rapid growth of unplanned houses

erected along road reserves and on steep slopes is a clear sign of ineffective planning and development control. The goal of Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey Planners and Policymakers is to include informal settlements in their corporate plan and link it to the Honiara Local Planning Scheme.

BASIC URBAN SERVICES

Honiara faces a high urban growth rate and increasing demands placed on the current urban services. Open dumping and burning of solid waste, irregular garbage collection, and littering are common features of the city. The Solomon Islands Water Authority has nine boreholes, but these are not enough to meet the increasing demands in the city. An estimated 30 percent of all households in the city are connected to sewerage lines.

Honiara City Council has 14 primary and secondary schools in Honiara. The student–teacher ratio in most schools is higher than 40:1. Secondary schools in particular lack adequate offices, libraries, classrooms, playgrounds, and laboratories. Honiara hosts the national hospital and nine clinics (funded by the city council) which are distributed in the suburbs. These clinics have too few nurses. Private clinics in the city provide the best service, but are pricey.

The Solomon Islands Electricity Authority powers 72 percent of the households in Honiara, of which 7 percent are located in the informal settlements. Most households in informal settlements use kerosene lamps, fire and candles as their main light sources.

Buses, taxis and pick-up trucks provide public transportation in Honiara, but the system is yet to be formalized and regulated. Many roads are not properly maintained or clearly marked.

Banking services are provided by the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group, Westpac and Bank South Pacific. Solomon Telekom and B-Mobile provide telecommunications and their mobile services have been extended throughout the islands and into rural villages. Honiara is the gateway to the nine provinces in Solomon Islands and is home to the only international airport. The city is the only seaport.

BACKGROUND



INTRODUCTION

Honiara is a small city, but the rapid pace of urbanization and resultant problems are no less acute than those found in the urban areas of other Pacific island countries. There is increasing poverty, inadequate and poor provision of basic urban services, environmental degradation, and a rise in informal settlements that lack decent sanitation, water, power, garbage collection, roads, and policing services (UNDP/Solomon Islands Government, 2008). As part of a strategic approach to better address these issues, the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey has requested UN-Habitat support to undertake the Urban Profiling in Solomon Islands (Kudu, 2010:2).

The urban profiling constitutes of a sequence of actions to identify development needs and capacity gaps at national and city levels. The model encourages a participatory approach in which priority interventions are agreed on through a consultative process. The urban profiling has been implemented in more than 20 countries in Africa and the Caribbean and in three Pacific islands countries under the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

This study intends to assist Honiara City Council to identify development needs and capacity issues, which will support them to design enabling urban policies and regulations that focus more on poverty reduction at the city level. This contributes towards efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal 7, Target C (reducing by half the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water) and Target D (achieving significant improvements in the lives of at least 100

million people living in informal settlements by 2020)⁵. The study focuses on seven thematic areas: governance, informal settlements and housing, gender and social environment, security and resilience, urban–rural economy, land and planning, and basic urban services.

METHODOLOGY

The urban profiling consists of three phases:

- Phase one deals with the use of localized questionnaires to collect information and seek opinions of senior representatives of public, private, and popular sector institutions at national and city levels, examining governance structures and approaches in selected thematic areas in order to agree on priority interventions and develop brief proposals through broad-based city consultations, using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis framework.
- Phase two undertakes pre-feasibility studies for selected priority projects.
- Phase three implements projects and links them to potential capital investment financing opportunities.

⁵ In response to Millennium Development Goal 7, Target D, the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey has a work plan with the intention to convert all temporary occupation licenses to fixed-term estates by 2020 (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2010).

URBAN PROFILING IN HONIARA

Honiara is one of three profiles undertaken in Solomon Islands (the two others are of Auki, Malaita Province and Gizo, Western Province). Each profile is published as a separate report. This is the Honiara City Profile and it presents the outcome of Phase One of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

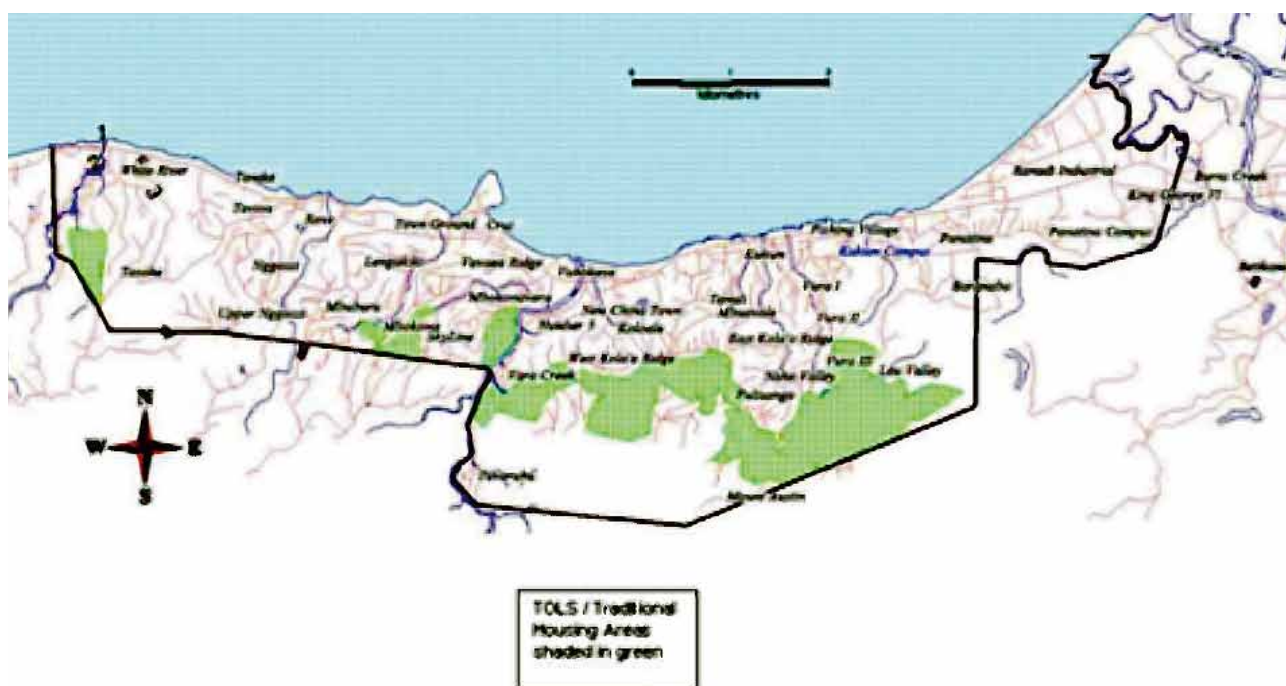
This report has three sections. Section one provides the background situation and includes city administration. Section two examines the seven thematic areas and outlines their structure, regulatory framework, resource mobilization, accountability, and performance. Section three includes a SWOT analysis and an outline of priority projects for most of the key areas.

DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF HONIARA

Honiara is the capital of Solomon Islands and serves as the main administrative, educational and economic centre for the country. It is the nation's gateway to the world. Honiara has a population of just over 64,600, with a population density of 2,953 people per square kilometre, and is growing at a rate of 2.7 percent per annum, with a doubling time of 40 years. The city is made up of diverse ethnic groups and indigenous people from the nine provinces, expatriates, mixed descendants, and a large Chinese community (Solomon Islands Government, 2011).

Honiara City Council employs more than 150 staff in its service delivery operations, of which 90 percent are direct employees and 10 percent are transferred from the central government. Direct employees occupy the lower and middle technical levels and about 80 percent of the upper management level. Some of these employees lack the technical and management capacity to carry out their work effectively. Priority, therefore, should be given to providing them with long and short term training in technical and managerial areas such as financial management, town planning, and environmental and strategic management.

GOVERNANCE



TOLS / Traditional Housing Areas shaded in green

The Honiara City Council is linked to the central government through the Ministry of Home Affairs and is the governing authority for Honiara. It has 23 members (12 are elected by residents in each of the 12 wards, 8 are appointed⁶, and 3 are Honiara Members of Parliament) who serve a four-year term. The elected councillors and the Honiara-based members elect the mayor, who heads the council's executive. The mayor appoints chairpersons to head the overall administration of the council's eight portfolios⁷. Each councillor appoints persons from their respective wards to serve as members of a Ward Development Committee. The committees work with their ward councillors and solicit financial support from them to meet minor development and community needs in their respective local area.

Honiara City Council has had a long history of weak governance, which has led to large debts and a dysfunctional institution. The continuing political interference in decision making has resulted in expenditure on projects that have not been budgeted for. In 2004, the Minister for Home Affairs terminated the elected councillors and replaced them with an appointed authority awaiting new elections (Parker, 2010).

The ineffective political administration of the council is also linked to insufficient internal revenue collection and

limited financial support from the central government⁸. This has often reduced the ability of the council to provide quality services to the city's population. In addition to lacking the required technical and managerial staff in most of its departments, the council does not have a human resource development policy or a system to measure the work performance of individual employees. Promotions and recruitments are often made on a "who-you-know" basis, ultimately resulting in poor work outputs.

The active local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Honiara appear to be working in isolation, with no formal mechanisms established for developing partnerships with the Honiara City Council, which would have clear benefits. The establishment of the Ward Development Committees provides an entry door for better governance, but they need coordination and empowerment to improve and maximize their participation and potential.

The Honiara City Institutional Strengthening Project coordinated by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum improved the Honiara City Council's service delivery capacity. Achievements of the project include improved internal revenue collection from businesses, property rates and market fees; enhanced management systems; and weekly garbage collection in and around the city (Parker, 2010). However, there is still need for the council to ensure the effective and equitable

6 The Minister of Home Affairs has the power under the Honiara City Council Act of 1999 to appoint eight members from various stakeholders to the council.

7 Education; land and planning; works and transport; trade and commerce; law enforcement; finance/administration; health and environment; and youth, sports, and women.

8 The central government contributed SBD 4 million of the council's SBD 19 million budget in 2010 (Honiara City Council Budget, 2010).

distribution of basic urban services to all housing settlements, especially informal settlements. In order for the council to achieve and maintain this, better development partnerships with various stakeholders will be required.

INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- The Honiara City Council is the governing local authority mandated under the Local Government Act and the Town and Country Planning Act to provide effective urban management and planning in Honiara.
- Honiara City Council receives limited funds from the central government through the Ministry of Home Affairs and tied funds for specific programmes.
- Insufficient funds and weak administrative and technical capacity continue to impede the effective delivery of better services.
- Decision making in the city council is still heavily top-down.
- There is no system in place to collectively engage urban stakeholders in activities such as a public forum.
- Honiara City Council has outsourced garbage collection and road maintenance to the private sector, but it lacks a monitoring system to ensure quality service delivery.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Public Health Act empowers Honiara City Council to enforce environmental and health standards in Honiara.
- The city council is empowered by the Local Government Act to make by-laws and regulations to control governance at the city level.
- The Minister for Home Affairs has the power under the Local Government Act to dissolve the Honiara City Council government for malpractice and appoint a more competent team.
- The Town and Country Planning Act empowers Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey physical planners to carry out physical planning in Honiara through the Town and Country Planning Board. However, the planning departments in the council and ministry are under-resourced and lack the technical capacity to effectively plan and manage the city.

- A building by-law guides building and design standards in Honiara, but it has never been effectively enforced.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Honiara City Council lacks a performance and appraisal system and suffers from nepotism and politically based appointments and promotions.
- The Ward Development Committees lack the capacity (and mandate) to ensure their councillors are financially accountable.
- The mayor is elected by the elected councillors; the mayor is therefore more accountable to the councillors than to city residents.
- Financial accountability and transparency remain elusive within the council.
- Limited internal revenue and support from the central government impede the council's efforts to execute its mandatory functions effectively, as expected by the citizens.
- Civil society organizations are active in Honiara but lack the coordination to make a significant impact on service provision and poverty alleviation.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The central government's annual grant to the Honiara City Council is not enough to improve service delivery in Honiara.
- The city council's internal revenue base (businesses, market fees, and property rates) is small and does not make a significant positive impact on service delivery or city development.
- Internal revenue collection has improved, but ongoing efforts must be maintained to achieve a 100 percent collection rate.
- There is an urgent need for effective strategic planning to link social and urban management and planning of the city.

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Improve corporate planning and management practices to achieve more accountability and transparency within Honiara City Council.
- Design new strategies or strengthen existing ones to improve internal revenue collection within the council.
- Formulate a comprehensive human resources training policy relating to capacity gaps and competence.
- Design mechanisms (e.g. a forum) to allow for wider participation of key stakeholders in the city in order to improve accountability and decision-making processes.
- Review the Honiara City Council ward boundaries in order to cover a reasonable geographical area.
- Review the current operations of the Ward Development Committees to make them more people oriented and responsive to the needs of urban residents.
- Improve coordination among Honiara City Council departments as well as between the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey and NGOs.

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	Honiara City Council capacity building and training	

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	Design a mechanism for public participation	

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING



A 2006 survey⁹ of households in Temporary Housing Areas under the temporary occupation license¹⁰ scheme noted that only 10 out of 3,000 households had a valid temporary occupation license, diffusing the myth that the majority of these households held a license. Informal settlements are perceived as “sensitive”, and policymakers, particularly Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners and Policymakers have paid them little attention.

Informal settlements represent approximately 33 percent of the 9,000 households in Honiara and 35 percent of the city’s population. The informal settlements are growing at an alarming rate (Solomon Islands Government, 2011, Ministry of Lands,

Housing, and Survey, 2006). Honiara has 30 informal settlements located within the town boundary and six others located on customary land. Informal settlements pose a critical challenge for the city planners because they are poorly resourced and lack the technical and administrative capacity to effectively respond to the difficulties faced in the informal settlements. The Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey Planners do not coordinate well with one another, as a result the informal settlements remain unplanned, lacking adequate roads and services (power, sanitation, water, and garbage collection) and providing a home for criminals (Amnesty International, 2011).

Urban poverty and unemployment are highest in these informal settlements and most residents depend on informal economic activities for their livelihood.

Informal settlement residents lack the security of a fixed-term estate¹¹ on land they occupy but continue to improve their homes, resulting in varying housing quality in these settlements. Of the 3,000 households surveyed in 2006, 29 percent are deemed permanent houses, 34 percent semi-permanent, and 37 percent temporary (Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, 2006). Informal settlement residents are at risk of losing their homes should the Commissioner of Lands give the land to formal property developers. Housing improvements continue, as a number of middle and high income earners are moving to the informal

9 The household survey was funded by AusAID through the Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project and was coordinated by the URS consortium.

10 The temporary occupation license was introduced to control illegal settlement growth on crowded land and is permitted under the Land and Titles Act and granted by the Commissioner of Lands. It allows the construction of a temporary house with basic amenities on crowded land while waiting for proper subdivided plots. The tenure of their residency is short, with an annual fee of SBD 10 (now 100). Nominated headmen in each area are to effectively control allocation and advise the ministry accordingly. There was no survey or demarcation of plots, and people erected their dwellings at random, often as directed by the headmen of the particular area. However, this control system has suffered from weak land administration, dishonest dealings of some headmen, and uncontrolled issuing of temporary occupation licenses from the ministry (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2006).

11 A fixed-term estate is a legal document granted to an individual or group by the Commissioner of Lands for a registered parcel of land with a 50-year lease, indicating legal ownership.

settlements as a result of the shortage of formal housing and high rental costs¹².

Over 65 percent of the informal settlements (or 1,950) of the 3,000 houses lack durability and therefore cannot withstand strong winds and earthquakes. These settlements, some of which are located on steep slopes, are at high risk of collapsing in the event of a natural disaster.

Weak administration of temporary occupation licenses has led to licensees ignoring the requirement to annually renew their license, with arrears accumulating to approximately SBD 2.8 million in 2006 (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2006).

As part of the government's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal 7 (Target D), the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey has included in their corporate plan a policy intention to convert all temporary occupation licenses in the city to fixed-term estates by 2020 (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2010). A temporary occupation license taskforce consisting of six ministry staff (headed by the acting Director of Planning) was formed and a draft work plan, which outlines activities for 2011, has been prepared (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2011). These efforts, however, were affected by inadequate funds and skilled planners. Weak development control continues to allow the increasing construction of unregulated temporary houses on road reserves and in planned residential areas.

The challenge for the Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners and Policymakers is to improve planning so that informal settlements can be mainstreamed into the strategic planning and management of the city. Some informal settlements residents are going to be relocated or removed to make way for public access and municipal services and to reduce the high population density. Many of these residents will require to be compensated. These issues are documented in a draft policy framework as part of the Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project's preparatory work towards the continuation of the temporary occupation license scheme (Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, 2006). There is need for the temporary occupation license taskforce to take this document further with the department heads of the ministry, as it tackles the core issues that continue to block any effective plans to upgrade informal settlements in Honiara and elsewhere.

¹² Following the arrival of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands in June 2003, housing rental in the open market has increased from SBD 5,000 to SBD 18,000 per month for a three-bedroom executive house, SBD 3,000 to SBD 10,000 for a non-executive three-bedroom house, and SBD 1,500 to SBD 3,000 for a two-bedroom house.

INSITUTIONAL SET-UP

- The Town and Country Planning Board has the power to undertake physical planning and development control in Honiara and delegate such powers to the ministry and city council planners. They require additional resources and skilled personnel¹³ to execute their responsibilities effectively.
- There is a lack of forward physical planning in Honiara, in spite of a local planning scheme.
- The power to allocate land rests with the Commissioner of Lands under the central government's Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Regulatory frameworks such as the Town and Country Planning Act, Land and Titles Act, Honiara City Council building by-law, and Public Health Act provide for settlement upgrading in Honiara.
- The links between the Town and Country Planning Act and the Land and Titles Act are tenuous, leading to the Commissioner of Lands granting areas of land to developers that are yet to be properly planned or are reserved for future road expansion.
- The city council's building by-law guides the standards and design of buildings in Honiara, but this by-law has not been enforced effectively.
- There are no policies and plans in place to respond to informal settlements issues.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey have no current budgetary support for informal settlement upgrading and the development of new residential sites.
- Ministry planners formed a temporary occupation license taskforce and are undertaking a plan to regularize informal settlements, but they lack funds and qualified staff.
- The Ward Development Grant is limited and is often misused.
- National politicians have access to a range of development funds (Constituency Fund, Livelihood Fund, and micro-funds), but these are not used to support urban service provision.

¹³ The Honiara City Council has one planner and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey has four.

- Development of a partnership framework may encourage community participation in service delivery, particularly in the informal settlements.

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Review and update the current data on informal settlements in the city to provide evidence for the need for the development of settlement regularization and upgrading policy.
- Devise subdivision plans for the upgrading of the informal settlements through inclusive and participatory dialogue.
- Undertake a city and peri-urban housing assessment to provide evidence for the need for the development of a housing policy.
- Secure political support and funds to assist with the implementation of the proposed regularization and upgrading strategies and plans for the informal settlements.
- Establish a partnerships framework with key stakeholders and communities to strengthen efforts to improve living standards in underserved settlements.
- Improve and strengthen the capacity of the current Ward Development Committees to coordinate settlement activities such as ward planning, policing, garbage collection, and drainage clearance.
- Conduct regular awareness programmes to inform residents of informal settlements about their rights and obligations under the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act.
- Review the Land and Titles Act to identify processes that enable easier and more effective land administration and management.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°1	Project proposal	Page 34
	Develop awareness programmes in informal settlements	

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°2	Project proposal	Page 35
	Prepare subdivision plans for the informal settlements	

GENDER AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT



Gender inequality continues to exist in Honiara despite consistent efforts from the National Council of Women and the Ministry of Youth, Children and Women Affairs (with financial and technical support from Australian Agency for International Development, World Bank, New Zealand Agency for International Development, and UNDP) to address the problem. Solomon Islands is a male-dominated country and this will continue to constrain women as they try to participate in development activities. Traditionally and culturally, women are obligated to take on household roles, rearing children and undertaking other domestic duties. Males make most decisions, at household, community, local, and national levels.

Despite these cultural restrictions, many women now hold key positions (managers, lecturers, pilots, and doctors, etc.) within the public and the private sectors, which were previously dominated by men. But participation of women in governance and decision-making processes still remains low, and this is a key challenge for both Honiara City Council and the central government. There is a need to create more opportunities for women in these areas so they can improve their economic well-being and consequently the standard of living of all citizens.

Unemployment is higher in Honiara than in other urban centres, although the city remains Solomon Islands' main source of work opportunities. Many households find it difficult to meet their basic needs (UNDP/Solomon Islands Government, 2008:3). Women and youth are more vulnerable to crime and unemployment and constitute the majority of those who are

unemployed in Honiara. The population of youth (15–24 years) in Honiara is 15,580 (24 percent of 64,609), and this group has an unemployment rate of 45 percent (Noble, 2011:101). Women meanwhile account for 44 percent of the 1,906 unemployed in Honiara (Solomon Islands Government, 2011). These statistics are linked to females' low level of formal education and the lack of employment opportunities for the increasing number of young school dropouts (*Solomon Star*, 21/6/2011:8). Policymakers and community leaders do not pay much attention to the welfare of youth in Honiara, and many of them remain marginalized, wandering around the city (Christine, 2008:32). As a result, a higher number of women and youth are engaged in informal economic activities, with some young women involved in casual prostitution (Donnelly and Jiwanji, 2010:81).

The Honiara City Council's Department of Youth, Sports, and Women continues to engage the youth in sports and establish youth networks in the suburbs. The department engages 25 youth (on a temporary basis) to work with them during major sports events and other youth activities in an effort to involve the youth in development. The department also works alongside NGOs such as Save the Children and Oxfam to give awareness talks on domestic violence, crime prevention, and teenage pregnancy in the informal settlements. The recent youth policy intends to formally set up a youth council to work with the department in implementing this policy (Honiara City Council, 2011). However, limited funds from the city council may affect such efforts.

The high unemployment rate among youth and women

in Honiara is being addressed partially by the World Bank-supported Rapid Employment Programme, which is coordinated by the Ministry of Industrial Development and the Honiara City Council. The programme aims to employ a maximum of 7,500 casual workers (women and youth) from the city's 12 wards over a 5-year period to clear and clean footpaths, side roads, and drainages. Additional inputs from the city council will be necessary to make the programme sustainable and link it to other donor and community activities.

- Donors and international and local NGOs are supporting empowerment programmes for women and youth through capacity building, but on an ad hoc basis.
- A unit within the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force deals with domestic issues and assists women in the city to prosecute offenders.
- The Family Support Centre, an NGO, also provides free counselling for victims of domestic violence in the city.

INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- The Gender and Development Officer at the Ministry of Youth, Children, and Women Affairs and the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination are responsible for promoting gender equality in the country.
- The National Council of Women works closely with the Ministry of Youth, Children, and Women Affairs to ensure that gender equality is a part of the decision making at the city and national levels.
- Honiara City Council has a department to address youth and gender issues at the city level. It recently launched its youth and gender policy, but it lacks adequate funding and technical support.
- Local and international NGOs are actively involved in addressing gender and youth unemployment issues in Honiara, but their efforts are not integrated or coordinated enough to make a significant impact in the city.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Donor agencies such as the World Bank, Australian Agency for International Development, New Zealand Agency for International Development, and the European Union provide financial and technical support for activities addressing gender issues and unemployment in the country.
- The Ministry of Youth, Children and Women Affairs also has youth programmes but lacks integration with other agencies dealing with the same issues in the city.
- Honiara City Council's Department of Youth, Sports, and Women lacks adequate funding and technical support.

EMPOWERMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Governance and decision-making processes are still male dominated, both at the city and national levels.

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Consolidate and strengthen the links among institutions addressing gender and youth issues in the city.
- Develop and implement domestic violence awareness programmes in the media and at school and community levels.
- Strengthen the capacity of the youth and gender department of the Honiara City Council to effectively carry out their functions.
- Develop and implement awareness activities on gender and youth issues in Honiara.
- Encourage Honiara policymakers, planners, and community leaders to solicit views from women's groups on issues affecting women and youth in the city and options to address such issues.
- Create more training opportunities for city council female staff in managerial and technical positions to improve their participation in decision-making processes.
- Provide more socio-economic opportunities for youth and women in the city.

GENDER AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT N°1	Project proposal	Page 36
	Develop gender and youth awareness programme	

THE URBAN–RURAL ECONOMY



Honiara's economic base is dominated by the service sector, as the city is Solomon Islands' main commercial and administrative centre. Wholesaling, retailing, banking, and restaurant and hotel related businesses are the main formal economic activities. The formal sector employs just over 27 percent of city residents or 17,425 out of 64,609 people (Solomon Islands Government, 2011).

An increasing share of national wealth has been produced in Honiara, with a range of urban economic activities strengthening the viability of rural economic development by providing markets, processing centres and trans-shipping points for rural produce. The city has benefited from major infrastructure investments in recent years, making it the most attractive destination for rural–urban migration in the country. Honiara hosts many international development agencies, companies, NGOs, and government agencies and institutions that enhance service delivery to both the urban and rural population of the country.

No large-scale manufacturing industry exists in Honiara, besides a number of construction companies, a brewery and printing presses. The Honiara City Council internal revenue collection from economic activities in Honiara was about SBD 11 million in 2010, representing 58 percent of the SBD 19 million in the annual budget (Honiara City Council, 2010 budget). This is inadequate for providing quality services to the city residents. The council relies mostly on the central government (and donors) for its infrastructure budgetary support. It also receives (limited) annual

grants¹⁴ from the central government. The economic base of the city is small and should be diversified to increase its resilience. The challenge for the city council and the central government is to create a better socio-economic and political climate that will allow the private sector to grow in the future.

THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Unorganized and unregulated informal economic activities in Honiara provide job opportunities for many among the urban and rural population, especially those without a formal education. This includes the selling of betel nuts, cigarettes, stationery, handicrafts, and food along the streets in Honiara (Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, 2009:32). Kukum Market was the single designated area for selling betel nuts and cigarettes, but was closed down in 2009 due to its unhygienic state. Honiara City Council lacks the funds to upgrade the market, and this has led to an influx of street vendors in the city and the creation of a temporary market near the Kukum Market site on private premises. Such activities are prohibited under the city council's by-laws, but the city council lacks the capacity and resources to effectively address this issue.

Honiara's main market lacks space for the numerous vendors who arrive daily from the rural areas. They thus display their products unhygienically on the ground,

14 In 2010, for example, Honiara City Council received a grant of SBD 4 million from the central government (Honiara City Council, 2010 budget).

and small markets have emerged along the roadside in White River, Kola Ridge, Fishing Village, and Borderline. These markets lack proper sanitation and parking areas, posing risks to people and vehicles. Both women and men are engaged in informal economic activities, but women tend to outnumber men in market sales. They work for longer hours, often in unhygienic and unsafe environments. Given the importance of the informal sector for unskilled and unemployed rural and urban dwellers, it is vital that Honiara City Council provides decent venues that are not congested and have sanitation and sanitary facilities. The city council needs to work closely with the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey to identify sites for new satellite markets in White River and Borderline.

LINKING RURAL-URBAN ECONOMIES

Solomon Islands consists of six main islands and many smaller ones, justifying the need to decentralize certain services and functions from the central government to the provincial and rural levels to improve service delivery to the rural population. As part of the implementation strategy, the central government established eight provincial centres and several substations throughout the country. However, the geographical isolation of the islands often makes the provision and maintenance of effective and efficient services expensive. Services have deteriorated in the provincial towns and at rural substations, causing people from rural areas to migrate to Honiara. The informal sector links rural and urban economies, as rural goods are sold at the main market in Honiara. There is need to improve this socio-economic relationship by improving market facilities in the city and building better roads and transportation network systems (shipping, wharves and service centres) in the rural areas.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

The central government is responsible for the provision of rural and urban infrastructure, and so the Honiara City Council is dependent on the Ministry of Industrial Development to meet its major infrastructure development needs in the city.

The city council is under-resourced and has limited ability to improve its service delivery to the city population.

Local and international NGOs and church-based groups are actively involved in health and education delivery in Honiara and its informal settlements, but no formal mechanism exists to harness the potential partnerships with authorities.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Local Government Act empowers Honiara City Council to pass ordinance and regulations that enhance economic growth and promote a healthy city.
- The Local Government Act gives the power to the Minister of Home Affairs to suspend any city council councillor for malpractices or irregularities in the administration of the town.
- Honiara residents elect members to the national parliament and the city council to represent their interests.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- The provision of quality services remains a key challenge for the Honiara City Council.
- Limited internal revenue and limited financial help from the central government hinder the effective delivery of services.
- Lack of skilled human resources and weak administrative capacity contribute to poor service delivery in Honiara.
- Civil society organizations and churches are active development partners in Honiara, but lack government and city council support.
- Ward councillors are expected to ensure the fair distribution of economic benefits within their wards. This expectation is yet to be realized, as councillors are keen to support their relatives and supporters only.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Honiara City Council receives limited financial support from the central government (annual grants), which is usually too small to provide the required services.
- Honiara City Council's internal revenue collection needs to improve further to meet and maintain quality services in the city.
- There is limited international development support for service projects in Honiara. More assistance is required to stimulate the city and national economy.
- The city council and the central government need to provide an investment-friendly socio-economic and political climate in the city.

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Honiara City Council is to provide backup support (vehicles) to the work of the Rapid Employment Programme to improve garbage collection and drainage clearance in the city and suburbs.
- Honiara City Council is to enforce its littering and market by-laws.
- Honiara City Council is to work closely with the central government through the Ministry of Industrial Development to upgrade the existing road infrastructure and build new roads.
- Devise mechanisms to improve Honiara City Council's internal revenue collection and identify alternative revenue sources.
- Improve existing market facilities and build new ones to cater for the influx of market vendors from rural areas.

URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY N°1	Project proposal	Page 37
	Upgrade the existing Kukum Market	
URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY N°2	Project proposal	Page 38
	Devise mechanisms to improve Honiara City Council's internal revenue collection	

URBAN SECURITY AND RESILIENCE



The law and order situation in Honiara is relatively peaceful despite minor incidents relating to beer and homemade alcohol (*kwaso*) being consumed in public. However, the following are increasing in the city: juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, anti-social behaviour, personal assaults, and break-ins. The rise in crime in Honiara is partly linked to the high rates of youth unemployment and alcohol consumption, the widening economic gap between the rich and the poor, and the breakdown of cultural values that promote respect. Most of the house break-ins, particularly in residential areas, are committed by unemployed youths.

The old Mataniko bridge, Burns Creek, and Borderline areas are perceived as spots where crimes often occur (*Solomon Star*, 13/5/2011:1). These areas are often not safe at night or during the weekend. Poor street lighting in public and residential areas has contributed to rising criminal activities, a decline in public safety, and an increase in robberies. This situation has repercussions for the local economy, investment and the tourism industry.

Law and order in the country is to be maintained by the central government through the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. The Honiara City Council has a Law Enforcement Unit (with a staff of 30) to implement its ordinances¹⁵ and by-laws, and it works closely with the police force to maintain peace in the city (*Solomon Star*, 28/6/2011). The Law Enforcement Unit operates with limited resources in a poor working

environment and lacks the cooperation of the public to fight against illegal street vendors and the sale of *kwaso*. The ineffective enforcement of city council by-laws is partially attributed to the low staff capacity and morale (which is due in part to the non-provision of housing). At times, this has resulted in corrupt dealings by some of the law enforcement staff.

In the past, the city council has relied on the police force to help them curb the growing numbers of street vendors and illegal sales of alcohol and *kwaso* in the city. This link needs to be reinforced and the efforts renewed. The police force has set up a Community Police Unit at the city council, and this will further enhance the links between the two and the National Community Police Unit to address crime in the city (*Solomon Star*, 28/6/2011).

While the police force and city council have responded well to crisis situations, the public perception is that they are undisciplined and corrupt (*Solomon Star*, 14/5/11:2). This lack of confidence has led to private firms, NGOs, and international agencies hiring private security firms to protect their premises, and private security services are now a thriving business. The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands is providing support to strengthen the judicial system so it can deal with cases in a reasonable time frame. Collaboration between the assistance mission and the police force has lowered crime rates by 6 percent, from 6,833 reported cases in 2009 to 6,420 in 2010 (*Solomon Star*, 7/01/2011:3).

Honiara is located along the coast and is susceptible to rising sea levels and storm surges. The coastal settlements

¹⁵ The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force often assists the Honiara City Council law enforcement staff on request.

of Lord Howe, Fishing Village and Mamanawata – located five metres from the current high-water mark – are the most vulnerable settlements in the city. Climate change and natural disasters are a serious concern in the city, as construction continues to take place on steep gradients, along riverbanks, and along shorelines, all of which are prone to natural disasters such as storm surges, erosion and coastal flooding. Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey need to regulate housing development in such places through a zoning plan and effective surveillance.

INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- Law and order is maintained by the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force in Solomon Islands.
- The Honiara City Council Law Enforcement Unit is responsible for enforcing council by-laws and working with the police force to maintain law and order in the city. Limited resources and a poor working environment continue to negatively affect efforts to provide better policing in the city.
- Supported by the Government of Australia, the Correctional Service Centre provides rehabilitation programmes for prisoners and engages churches to visit prisoners.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force lacks the funds and resources to effectively police the whole city, particularly the informal settlements in Honiara and peri-urban villages.
- Local courts are under-resourced and poorly equipped, leading to cases not being heard for many years. The Justice and Legal Institutional Strengthening Project is trying to remedy this.
- The recent establishment of a Community Policing Unit at Honiara City Council will further strengthen the links between the police force, the city council, and the National Community Police Unit and enable them to better address crime in the city.
- A formal system is required to harness effective partnerships between private security firms and the city council and police force.

EMPOWERMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Family disintegration and the erosion of cultural values contribute to the lawlessness and decline of public safety in the city.
- Police professionalism is still affected by nepotism.

- Community policing in Honiara needs to be strengthened through the provision of training and resources to enable communities to address law and order issues in effective partnerships with the police force, city council and other stakeholders.

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Improve the working environment for the Honiara City Council law enforcement staff.
- Improve resources and training for community policing and reinforce the links between the police force, the city council, and NGOs in fighting against crime in the city.
- Install more street lights in and around the city and in the suburbs.
- Secure land for the relocation of settlements and houses located on vulnerable areas.
- Conduct public awareness programmes about the effects of climate change and disaster prone areas.
- Improve the links between the National Disaster Management Office; the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Meteorology; the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey; and Honiara City Council Planners to ensure that areas that are prone to natural disasters have no settlements and buildings.

**URBAN
SECURITY AND
RESILIENCE**
Nº1

Project proposal

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Improve community policing

LAND AND URBAN PLANNING



LAND ISSUES

Honiara is located on 22.73 square kilometres of land, which was acquired by the colonial administration. Of this land, an estimated 20 percent is unsuitable for future growth due to topographical and environmental constraints. About 65 percent of the city's developable land is fully developed, 1.5 percent is held by private developers (still undeveloped), and 13.5 percent is occupied by informal settlements. Many of the currently available sites in the city are in the informal settlements, and planning for these areas is a daunting task.

Until 1990, all state land was subdivided and allocated by public tender, providing new residents with the option to purchase a fixed-term estate¹⁶. In the early 1990s, the moderately effective Site Development Fund (for providing services) was bought back into consolidated revenue and funding ceased, thereby ending the tender process due to the lack of a budget. This move effectively stopped proper subdivision planning and gave rise to direct land allocation by the Commissioner of Lands, which accelerated the growth and expansion of informal settlements and pockets of unplanned houses in the city. The state land allocation process is often lengthy and subject to corruption, as the power to allocate land is vested only with the Commissioner of Lands.

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey provides the updated records of fixed-term estate holders in

Honiara to Honiara City Council, which helps the council calculate property rates. However, the city council's mechanisms for collecting its property rates need urgent repair; currently, only 25 percent of more than SBD 2 million a year is collected (Douglas and Marjorie, 2008:315). A poor work ethic, corrupt practices, and non-payment of land rents continue despite the past efforts of the Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project¹⁷. Land rent collection in the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey is weak due to non-compliance from the fixed-term estate holders, who are capitalizing on the poor land administration. As a result, land rents due to the government have accumulated to SBD 29 million dollars (*Solomon Star*, 2/7/2011:1). The World Bank and the Australian Agency for International Development intend to work with the government in its efforts to improve the land governance system by undertaking a scoping mission for strengthening public land administration (World Bank, 2011).

Honiara is facing problems meeting future road needs, as all the suitable land for roads has already been acquired and developed. To address road congestion by building new roads, the Commissioner of Lands needs to reacquire those strips of land.

The lack of effective town planning has resulted in increased land use conflict in the city centre. This may

¹⁶ The grant conditions included a no sale clause within a certain period and a development clause (normally the erection of a substantive dwelling within 18 months).

¹⁷ The Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project was funded by the AusAID (2000–2007) to improve service delivery within the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey.

affect the future development and growth of the city, and effective physical planning is urgently required. The Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Physical Planners and Policymakers need to better manage and control the development of Honiara's available land.

Honiara cannot expand its physical boundaries without negotiating with customary landowners. In April 2011, the Guadalcanal Provincial Government refused city expansion into their jurisdiction (*Solomon Star*, 12/4/2011). The chairman of the tribal groups (Tandai, Malango, and Ghaobata) that owned Honiara and the surrounding lands expressed an interest in having fair representation in land negotiation processes and did not want to be represented by the Guadalcanal Provincial Government or other bodies (*Solomon Star*, 19/4/2011). This situation highlights the need for the inclusion of landowners in development planning processes.

There is a critical need to work together with the Guadalcanal Provincial Government and the indigenous landowners associations to access land for the development of new satellite towns beyond the current city boundaries.

PLANNING ISSUES

Honiara city suffers from poor physical planning due to the lack of political will, funds, and skilled physical planners, in spite of the existence of a local planning scheme¹⁸. This is evidenced in the poor transportation network, dysfunctional drainage and sanitation systems, and rising number of informal settlements. Improving the technical capacity of the city's planners is crucial, so that they are able to systematically address informal settlements and ensure that key urban issues are factored into their overall corporate plan for the city as it continues to grow.

Honiara city needs a proper drainage system to cater for the overflow of road surface water and to counter erosion during heavy rains. It also requires properly designed parking areas, landscaping, more street lights, and an improved road design. Physical planning and decision making in the city currently have limited public participation.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners are responsible for administrative and planning functions but lack the power to allocate state land for development (this

power is vested with the Commissioner of Lands). Planning and land decision-making processes are not integrated, resulting in conflicting decisions.

- Ministry and city council physical planning links are weak.
- Physical planning in the ministry and the city council is poorly resourced and lacks skilled staff.
- The Town and Country Planning Act allows for stakeholders to take part in the development of a local planning scheme, but the city council planners are not effectively implementing the act.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Town and Country Planning Act determines the way state land is to be used and sets development controls. This power is delegated to the Town and Country Planning Board in each provincial town, including the Honiara City Council.
- Planning appeals are referred to the Minister for Lands, Housing, and Survey, who has the power under the Town and Country Planning Act to reject or overrule the planning boards' decisions and can grant a final decision.
- The Land and Titles Act administers the allocation and registration of all state land.
- There is no land policy that addresses the urban poor and squatters.
- Honiara's local planning scheme is not effectively enforced.
- Honiara City Council has three staff responsible for enforcing the Town and Country Planning Act (serving notices to illegal developers and ensuring compliance with city council building by-laws).

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey have no budgetary support for the preparation of subdivision plans for new residential sites.
- Ward Development Grants are limited and often redirected to support relatives and political allies instead of improving existing services or supporting the development of new ones.
- There is no formal partnership arrangement to encourage community participation in service delivery such as garbage collection.

¹⁸ The local planning scheme intends to control planning requirements (road design, types of buildings, site yards, parking areas, etc).

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Despite the enormous efforts by the Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey to better manage state land, the ministry still has poor state land administration, weak revenue collection, widespread corruption, and a poor work ethic.
- State land is no longer put to public tender, which deprives the public of the opportunity to apply. The Commissioner of Lands directly allocates state land, hindering efforts to create a transparent, accountable, and fair process.
- There are weak links between the Commissioner of Lands, Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey Planners, resulting in land use being contrary to city zoning and the local planning scheme.

- The Commissioner of Lands is unable to evict illegal developers or occupiers of state land.
- The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey's system to retrieve unpaid land rent and expired leases has not been effective over the years, resulting in high land rent arrears.

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	Review the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act to improve land administration and planning processes	

LAND AND URBAN PLANNING N°2	Project proposal	Page 42
	Review the Honiara local planning scheme	

AGREED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Improve the technical and administrative capacity of Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners through specialized short and long term training in town planning and transport planning.
- Improve land administration processes in the ministry with a view to reducing or eliminating corruption and irregular practices.
- Improve the coordination and links between Solomon Islands Electricity Authority, Solomon Islands Water Authority, Commissioner of Lands, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, Honiara City Council, and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey Planners, and other stakeholders in urban planning (for example, private surveyors) to ensure inclusive city development.
- Solicit political support to provide sufficient funds for city planning and the upgrading of informal settlements.
- Develop a settlement upgrading plan for the informal settlements in the city.
- Review the Town and Country Planning Act to identify processes that enable easier and more effective land administration and planning.
- Improve the central business district to be more appealing and free from pollution.
- Take back fixed-term estates that are not developed within the legal minimum time.
- Review the Honiara local planning scheme.

BASIC URBAN SERVICES



As the population of Honiara continues to grow, solid waste from households, shops, offices, and markets also increases, as does coastal pollution. Honiara faces a high urban growth rate, putting pressure on urban services. The current capacity of the water and sewerage systems (designed for a population of 30,000 people in the 1970s) cannot cope with the present demands.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Open dumping and burning of solid waste, irregular garbage collection, and littering are common features of the city. Honiara City Council has five compactor trucks and a bin vehicle (to carry a waste bin) for garbage collection and hires six private contractors for weekly collection in the suburbs. Poor garbage collection has led to people dumping their solid waste on the shoreline, polluting the coastal and marine environments. The landfill is located approximately three kilometres from the city and is likely to run out of space within the next six years.

Honiara's central business district and the areas along the feeder roads leading to the suburbs have become visibly cleaner with the implementation of the Rapid Employment Project¹⁹, which employs more than 300 casual workers (youths and women) from the 12 wards in Honiara to clear footpaths and drains and collect

garbage. Despite this improvement, rubbish heaps can still be found in some parts of the city and are often left uncollected for weeks, increasing health risks for the public. Sustaining and improving current services will require additional resources and community partnerships. The key challenge for the city council is to build the capacity of the existing Ward Development Committees to mobilize community members to actively participate in waste management.

WATER

The Solomon Islands Water Authority provides water for slightly more than 77 percent of the 8,981 households in the city (18 percent of which are located in informal settlements). The authority has nine boreholes within the town boundary, but these are not enough to meet the increasing demand of the city due to the lack of financial resources to repair the aging system and address ongoing illegal connections. The Solomon Islands Water Authority relies mostly on the Kongulai water source (acquired by the government from the customary landowners) and faces excessive demands (more than SBD 1 million) for land rent payment from the landowners. Land disputes at Kongulai and other issues led the Government of Japan to suspend its SBD 90 million project for Honiara water improvement (*Solomon Star*, 15/4/2011). This has seriously affected the authority's efforts to improve Honiara's water supply. In the meantime, the authority has formed a team to identify and disconnect or charge for illegal water connections.

¹⁹ The Rapid Employment Project is funded by the World Bank and NZAID to provide employment opportunities for the unemployed people in the city to do general cleaning. It is a five-year project (2010–2014) administered by the city council and intends to employ up to 7,500 workers.

SANITATION

An estimated 30 percent of all households in the city are connected to 14 (deteriorating) sewerage lines whose outlets flow directly into the sea from the central market and King George VI area, polluting the coastal environment and raising health concerns for coastal settlements and the coastal environment. While many new buildings have septic tanks, littering – especially in drains – and the lack of public amenities (sanitation in particular) are serious environmental concerns for the city council.

EDUCATION

Honiara City Council provides 14 primary and secondary schools, which are distributed according to the main population catchment areas of Honiara. However, students and teachers are often late to school due to traffic congestion and unreliable public transportation. The student–teacher ratio in most schools is higher than 40:1, with schools lacking adequate space and resources. Secondary schools in particular lack facilities such as offices, libraries, classrooms, playgrounds, and laboratories. Upgrading the existing school facilities and building decent houses for teachers are the key challenges for the city council.

The central government has implemented a free education policy²⁰ since 2009 to relieve parents of the burden of paying school fees and to increase access to basic education for all children (*Solomon Times*, 30/9/2008). However, the city council schools impose enrolment and development fees, which are often higher than the original school fees, making it difficult for poor families to send their children to school. The city hosts the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education and other tertiary institutions and privately run schools that provide a higher standard of education, but they are affordable for only a few.

HEALTH

The national hospital and nine city council clinics in the suburbs serve Honiara residents. Seventy-four registered nurses run the clinics, but this number is inadequate for providing quality services to the residents. Private clinics in the city provide better services than the city council clinics and the state hospital, but only a small proportion of the city's population can afford them. The poor delivery of health services can be linked to inadequate facilities, a lack of resources, poor working environments, and the non-provision of staff housing. Malaria, diarrhoea, and

²⁰ The free education policy means that children will attend school from Standard 1 to Form 3 without paying school fees. The central government will meet this cost. School heads are allowed to charge other fees such as a development fee, but these must be approved by the Minister of Education (Coalition for National Unity and Rural Advancement, 2008).

pneumonia are Honiara's most common diseases. As the city's population continues to rise, it is critical that the existing clinics are upgraded and new ones are built to cater for current and future needs.

ENERGY

The Solomon Islands Electricity Authority powers 72 percent of the 8,981 households in Honiara, of which 7 percent are located in informal settlements. Most of the households in the informal settlements use kerosene lamps, fire, and candles as their main lighting sources. The authority struggles to provide reliable power and meet the present demands – regular breakdown of generators lead to blackouts. Given the recent rise in development activities in and around the city, there is need for the electricity authority to upgrade its generators and provide a reliable power supply for current and future development needs.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In Honiara, buses, taxis, and pick-up trucks provide public transportation, but the system is yet to be formalized. Bus operators design their own routes, which reduces availability in some parts of the city. Public buses operate until 8 p.m., while some taxi fleets provide a 24-hour service. Transport providers cooperate informally to set fares, providing some uniformity in rates.

The safety standards of buses and taxis are questionable. There is a need to regulate public transport to improve urban transportation, planning and management in the city.

ROAD NETWORKS

Prince Philip Road, which runs through the city from White River to Burns Creek, and some feeder roads leading to the suburbs are tar-sealed but are not well maintained. The remaining roads (serving Honiara's suburbs and informal settlements, as well as the rural settlements of Guadalcanal) are not properly maintained. The roads in Honiara are poorly linked due to a lack of strategic planning and challenging topography; this leads to traffic congestion and reduces safety. Roads are not marked clearly, which poses risks for both pedestrians and drivers.

BANKING AND COMMUNICATION

Banking services are provided by the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group, Westpac, and Bank South Pacific. These banks provide personal, property and school fees loans for the general public, but accessing these services requires capital and collateral. Accessing loans from these banks is often impossible for the urban

poor and low and middle income earners in Honiara.

Solomon Telekom and B-Mobile provide telecommunication services in the country. Their mobile services have been extended throughout the islands and into rural villages, with a great deal of improvement in coverage since 2010.

AIRPORT

Honiara is the only gateway to the nine provinces and is home to the country's only international airport. Solomon Airlines provides daily flights to outer islands, making inter-island travelling easier, but these services are unaffordable for many families. Solomon Airlines, Air Niugini, Air Pacific, and Virgin Blue provide weekly international flights.

PORTS

Honiara is the only seaport in the country and serves as the main link between international and domestic sea routes. The main wharf at Point Cruz provides a channel for the export and import of goods (both consumer and non-consumer goods), especially from Australia, New Zealand, China, Papua New Guinea, and Malaysia. The port has a limited storage area for containers, making clearing goods a daunting task for importers.

CONCLUSION



The urban population of the Solomon Islands (20 percent) is relatively low by world standards, but the pace of change and its outcomes resemble those found in other developing countries. There is, however, a unique set of issues in Solomon Islands – for example, weak urban institutions and a customary land tenure system. The customary land tenure system allows migrants to negotiate directly with landowners regarding their right to reside on certain land, paving the way for informal settlements and settlers to encroach onto customary land on the outskirts of Honiara city.

Honiara faces a number of critical issues: socio-economic disparity, inadequate and poor provision of basic urban services, environmental degradation, a lack of public amenities, a shortage of housing, high cost of living, and increasingly underserved settlements. As a strategic move to better address these issues, the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey requested UN-Habitat for financial support to undertake the urban profiling in Honiara.

The Honiara Urban Profile examines seven key areas (governance, informal settlements and housing, gender and social environment, urban–rural economy, urban safety and resilience, land and urban planning, and basic urban services) and highlights a lack of effective city administration, planning, and management in Honiara, which is linked to inadequate technical resources, lack of experienced human resources, lack of political will, inadequate funds, and bad governance. However, a window of opportunity exists to better respond to these issues by building on the current work of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum

and the Rapid Employment Project, setting up Ward Development Committees, and ensuring the continuing participation of local and international NGOs, donors, and national politicians in service delivery in the city. There is a need for Honiara City Council to build and maintain proactive development partnerships with these stakeholders to improve governance and follow an integrated strategic development path to improve service delivery in the city, especially in the informal settlements.

GOVERNANCE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>The current work of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and Rapid Employment Programme – capacity building and training.</p> <p>Existing activities of NGOs, churches, and donors in service delivery in the city.</p> <p>Political support exists for the current Honiara City Council executive.</p> <p>A legal framework is provided for in the Honiara City Council (regulations and by-laws).</p> <p>Established institutions (churches) participate in governance.</p> <p>Established Ward Development Committees are to translate community needs to the Honiara City Council executive.</p> <p>Three national members of parliament are ex-officio members of the Honiara City Council executive.</p>	<p>Continued diversion of funds to other development areas.</p> <p>Weak links between civil society groups, donors and the Honiara City Council.</p> <p>Corruption and nepotism/favourism still exists in the government.</p> <p>Existing city council by-laws are not enforced effectively.</p> <p>Rural areas have more weight, given their 47 members of parliament; hence there is little focus on city management.</p> <p>Honiara City Council does not have the power to implement decisions.</p> <p>Site planning regulations are not approved.</p> <p>Weak cooperation exists between councillors and city council management to carry out city council policies.</p> <p>There is insufficient citizen ownership to form a forum and take part in the planning and management of the city.</p>	<p>Donor support is likely for identified priority interventions.</p> <p>Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey corporate plans are to support urban programmes.</p> <p>The status of Honiara City Council can be improved to better discharge its mandated roles.</p> <p>Fighting corruption leads to improved accountability and transparency.</p> <p>Honiara City Council's relationships with other cities in the Pacific can be improved, e.g. through the Pacific City Forum.</p> <p>The three members of parliament can voice urban issues in the national parliament.</p> <p>Honiara City Council ward boundaries need review.</p> <p>Establishment of a citizen forum.</p> <p>Constituency Development Funds from the three members of parliament and ward grants from the 12 councillors can assist in improving service delivery.</p>	<p>Political uncertainty and political interference in planning and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Weak governance and technical and administrative capacity.</p> <p>Higher urban growth rate and increasing illegal settlements in the city.</p> <p>Inadequate revenue collection.</p> <p>There is a need for the improved incorporation of the Honiara City Council urban profile into work plans and policies.</p> <p>Corruption and lack of forward planning.</p>

GOVERNANCE N°1	Project proposal
	Honiara City Council capacity building and training

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: 12 months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council staff and councillors, community members, and civil society in Honiara

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, training organizations, and civil society, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COSTS: USD 60, 000

BACKGROUND: The ability of Honiara City Council to provide better services to city residents rests entirely on

the technical and administrative capacity of its human resources. The city council needs to provide enabling mechanisms to allow for improved service delivery and informal settlement upgrading. The city council, however, is poorly resourced and lacks the technical and administrative capacity to effectively address these challenges. Most councillors are not aware of their obligations and responsibilities. The capacity of the city council needs to be strengthened so that it is able to carry out urban development and planning processes effectively in a sustainable and transparent fashion.

OBJECTIVE: To improve the capacity of the city council staff and councillors to perform their duties effectively and efficiently to promote and sustain good governance.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Conduct a training needs analysis of the councillors and city council staff;

Governance (Continued)

- (2) identify a staff member within the council to act as training coordinator;
- (3) identify local institutions to carry out the training;
- (4) develop relevant training modules based on the training needs analysis; and
- (5) implement the training programme.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: Training needs are identified, with a training manual to address these needs; the majority of the councillors and city council staff have undergone training; and staff performance has improved.

STAFF REQUIRED: An experienced consultant (with a curriculum development background).

- (4) conduct public discussions with stakeholders to determine membership; and
- (5) devise regulations and rules to guide the operation of the public forum.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A framework for public participation is completed; key stakeholders and community membership are identified; regulations and rules guiding the operation of the forum are established.

STAFF REQUIRED: An experienced consultant (with a development planning background).

GOVERNANCE N°2	Project proposal
	Devise a mechanism for public participation

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council, NGOs, the national government, the business sector, community members, youths, and city residents

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, the national government, the business sector, and NGOs, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: Participatory planning improves the ability of the local authority to respond to issues and builds effective local governance. It improves sharing of information, reduces duplication of resources, improves work outputs, and creates good working relationships among different stakeholders. Honiara City Council needs to create an avenue for city residents to participate in the planning and governance of the city.

OBJECTIVE: To promote city ownership through public participation in the city's governance and planning.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Devise a development framework to allow for public participation;
- (2) conduct consultations with the city council and other stakeholders regarding the framework;
- (3) review any city by-laws that may object to this proposal;

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Existing activities of NGOs, churches, and donors in service delivery in the informal settlements.	The lack of housing upgrading plans for informal settlements has led to the rapid expansion of illegal settlements.	Donor support is likely to improve informal settlements' plans and conditions.	Political uncertainty and lack of political support.
The existence of readily available workers.	Inadequate financial support from the Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey for informal settlement upgrading.	Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey corporate plans to support informal settlement upgrading.	Social disruption of families.
The Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey work programme/strategy to address informal settlements.	Poor service delivery in the informal settlements.	Improve the status of Honiara City Council and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey to effectively discharge their duties.	Inadequate financial support from the government.
Housing is provided for lower, middle and higher income earners.	Weak links among civil society, the city council, donors, and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey.	The social and physical environment of informal settlements should be improved.	Some occupants may be displaced during settlement upgrading.
Shelter is provided through the <i>wantok</i> system.	Honiara City Council is not providing services to the informal settlements.	There is room for wider community participation in the planning/management of informal settlements.	Loss of economic livelihoods through the destruction of farmland (which occupants depend on for gardening).
Local building materials are used to build houses.	Weak enforcement of the Town and Country Planning Act (to reduce illegal developments).	Internal revenue is likely to rise through increased land rents for the ministry and property rates for the city council.	Corruption and lack of forward planning.
Local socio-political institutions exist in the informal settlements.	Weak enforcement of the Land and Titles Act (to avoid non-title holders encroaching on state land).	Land availability and housing developments will increase.	Non-compliance with existing regulations and laws.
	Squatters are not recognized by the financial institutions.	Temporary occupation licenses should be converted and buildings approved.	Weak accountability and transparency.
	Increased non-compliance with planning regulations.	The Rapid Employment Project will improve the image of the settlements.	Inability and lack of capacity of the city council and the ministry to control the growth of squatters.
		Socio-economic activities need to be increased.	

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°1	Project proposal
	Develop awareness programmes in informal settlements

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, Honiara City Council, physical planners, and informal settlement dwellers in the city

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey and Honiara City Council physical planners and civil society, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: Approximately 33 percent (22,000) of the city's total population are residing in informal settlements, which have poor water, power, sanitation, road, housing, and garbage collection services. The city council and ministry, however, consider them a low priority and, indeed, a 'sensitive issue'. As a result, there is a lack of awareness among residents of the settlements about their rights and obligations under the Land and Titles Act and the Town and Country Planning Act.

OBJECTIVE: To inform the informal settlement residents about their rights and duties so that they are able to comply with planning regulations.

ACTIVITIES:

(1) Engage a consultant to identify the rights and duties

Informal Settlements and Housing (continued)

of occupants as stipulated in the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act;

- (2) undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders and informal settlements on the methodology to use;
- (3) design the awareness programme; and
- (4) implement the programme.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: An awareness programme is completed and a report is compiled.

STAFF REQUIRED: A local social scientist and four fieldworkers.

are likely to be affected;

- (4) digitize the plans and ensure that they are approved by the Honiara Town and Country Planning Board; and
- (5) supervise the field survey.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: Subdivision plans are computerized and surveyed and a report on affected settlements and residents is completed.

STAFF REQUIRED: Two local consultants (Geographic Information System expert and qualified surveyor).

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°2	Project proposal	
	Prepare subdivision plans for the informal settlements	

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: 12 months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council, Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, physical planners, and informal settlement residents in the city

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey planners and civil society, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 100,000

BACKGROUND: Informal settlements constitute about one-third of the city's population and are increasing at an annual growth rate of 6 percent. These settlements are unplanned and therefore have poor water supply, sanitation, road, housing, electricity, and garbage collection services. The city council and ministry continue to perceive informal settlements as a low priority. This results in a lack of plans and policies for upgrading informal settlements and assisting residents secure the land they are currently occupying.

OBJECTIVE: To develop subdivision plans with inputs from the beneficiaries and make the plans readily available in order to guide land allocation.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Engage a planning consultant to design subdivision plans for informal settlements;
- (2) undertake consultations with relevant stakeholders and informal settlement residents;
- (3) identify and assess settlements and residents that

GENDER AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Legislation and policy on gender exists with the Honiara City Council and at the national level.</p> <p>Donor support exists for capacity building for women.</p> <p>Honiara City Council has a department on gender, youth and sports.</p> <p>Sports events assist in building unity and peace in the city and country.</p> <p>Churches contribute to social harmony and service delivery.</p> <p>Community youth organizations exist in the city.</p> <p>The Rapid Employment Project through the city council provides employment opportunities for youth and women in the city.</p> <p>Centres for domestic violence victims and counselling are available in the city.</p>	<p>Cultural attitudes are key factors constraining women's participation in governance.</p> <p>The increasing alcohol consumption often leads to increased domestic violence.</p> <p>Social values are breaking down and family units are disintegrating.</p> <p>Recreational areas are few.</p> <p>Lack of political will to implement gender conventions.</p> <p>Lack of financial resources for keeping the city clean.</p> <p>Low participation of women in Honiara City Council decision making and planning.</p>	<p>An improved socio-economic environment can be created for the safety of the general public.</p> <p>The design of roads, pedestrian walkways, parking areas, bus stands, and taxi stands can be improved.</p> <p>Gender-related partnership networks can be formed with donors, community groups, and the city council.</p> <p>Capacity-building programmes to empower women and youth.</p> <p>Honiara City Council provision of temporary or voluntary work attachments for youths.</p> <p>Links with community youth groups and women's groups can be improved.</p> <p>Strengthening the existing women's institutions in the city.</p>	<p>Increased petty crimes in the city.</p> <p>Difficult attitudes and behaviour regarding keeping the city safe.</p> <p>Lack of political support.</p> <p>The Honiara City Council Law Enforcement Unit is poorly resourced and equipped.</p> <p>Growing black market for beer and home-brewed alcohol.</p> <p>Vulnerability of certain settlements.</p> <p>Disadvantaged people (e.g. mentally ill persons, etc) moving freely in the city.</p> <p>Donor funding may not reflect the real needs of people.</p> <p>Political uncertainty.</p> <p>Limited funds from donors to fund a given programme.</p> <p>Growing economic disparities.</p>

GENDER AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT N°1	Project proposal
	Develop gender and youth awareness programme

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council, youth groups, women's groups, NGOs, and Honiara residents

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, youth, women and sports, councilors, civil society, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: Approximately 33 percent (22,000) of the city's total population are residing in informal settlements, which have poor water, power, sanitation, road, housing, and garbage collection services. The city council and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, however, consider them a low priority and, indeed, a 'sensitive issue'. As a result, there is a lack of awareness among residents of the settlements about their rights and obligations under the Land and Titles Act and the

Town and Country Planning Act. This contributes to the uncontrolled growth of illegal settlements in and around the city.

OBJECTIVE:

To inform the informal settlement residents about their rights and duties so that they are able to comply with planning regulations.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Engage a consultant to identify the rights and duties of occupants as stipulated in the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act;
- (2) undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders and informal settlements on the methodology to use;
- (3) design the awareness programme; and
- (4) implement the programme.

OUTPUT INDICATORS:

An awareness programme is completed and a report is compiled.

STAFF REQUIRED: A local social scientist and four fieldworkers.

URBAN–RURAL ECONOMY

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Kukum Market is under the management of Honiara City Council.</p> <p>Revenue generated from the market comes directly to the city council.</p> <p>Donors (Asian Development Bank and Australian Agency for International Development) funded the upgrading of water systems in the city.</p> <p>The Rapid Employment Project is currently funding drainage clearance and garbage collection in the city.</p> <p>Employment opportunities are being provided for less educated people.</p> <p>Availability of financial institutions.</p> <p>Public transport is readily available.</p> <p>Improvement in the Honiara City Council internal revenue collection.</p>	<p>Limited market outlets and poor facilities to cater for the increasing number of vendors.</p> <p>Lack of storage and other facilities for market vendors.</p> <p>Lack of adequate parking space for vehicles and land for future expansion.</p> <p>Low quality of imports and weak economy.</p> <p>Lending rates of financial institutions are high.</p> <p>Lack of a Transport Act to guide public transport in the city.</p> <p>Honiara City Council is too poorly resourced and equipped to improve and sustain service delivery in the city.</p> <p>Weak enforcement of city council by-laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lack of coordination among donors, the Ministry of Industrial Development, and the Honiara City Council with regards to drainage and road improvement.</p>	<p>Improvement of the socio-economic environment for the market vendors and the general public.</p> <p>Upgrading the existing market facilities is likely to make the site a tourist attraction.</p> <p>Space is required for vendors to properly display their goods.</p> <p>Partnership networks among donors, community groups and the city council will improve service delivery in the city.</p> <p>Rules can be provided to improve the informal sector.</p> <p>A Transport Authority Act will guide and manage public transport in the city.</p> <p>Establishment of a user-pay system for certain services such as parking.</p> <p>Improvement of efforts to beautify the city.</p>	<p>Storm surges and sea level rise (climate change).</p> <p>Social insecurity for the vendors.</p> <p>Difficult attitudes and behaviour regarding keeping the town and market clean.</p> <p>The new Honiara City Council executive may not support the upgrading of the existing market and the development of new ones.</p> <p>Limited land for future business expansion.</p> <p>The black market for liquor and street sellers dealing in alcohol are increasing.</p>

URBAN–RURAL ECONOMY N°1	Project proposal	
	Upgrade the existing Kukum Market	

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council, the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, vendors, and Honiara residents

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, and civil society, with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: Honiara has a population of 65,000 who depend on the local markets as their main source of food. Local markets link the rural and urban economies, as rural goods are sold in city markets that serve the urban population and local businesses. Informal economic activities in Honiara provide job opportunities

for numerous urban and rural people, especially those without a formal education. Kukum Market has an incomplete building and inadequate space for the growing number of vendors, resulting in products being displayed unhygienically on ground. The market lacks basic services such as storage, sanitation, and parking areas.

OBJECTIVE: Improve Kukum Market in order to cater for the increasing number of market vendors.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Engage a consultant to design the overall plan for Kukum Market;
- (2) undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders on the plan; and
- (3) develop the proposed plan, including costs.

OUTPUT INDICATORS:

A detailed design plan for Kukum Market is completed.

STAFF REQUIRED: A consultant (with a background in architecture and planning).

Urban–Rural Economy (Continued)

URBAN–RURAL ECONOMY Nº2	Project proposal	Page 38
	Devise mechanisms to improve Honiara City Council's internal revenue collection	

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council and city residents (including informal settlements)

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, New Zealand Agency for International Development, civil society, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: The capacity of Honiara City Council to delivery better services to city residents depends on its financial ability. Because the city council depends so much on donor assistance, it needs an improved revenue collection system and must diversify its revenue base. There is a need to assess the existing institutional situation to review processes, assess the alternative revenue sources, establish a computerized system, and consult taxpayers and other stakeholders. This will provide the basis for recommendations to improve and strengthen the city council's overall revenue collection system.

OBJECTIVE: To improve Honiara City Council revenue collection and transparency and to ensure efficient financial management, monitoring, and reporting.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Undertake an institutional needs assessment of the city council financial management processes through a review of revenue collection and financial systems with stakeholders;
- (2) conduct consultations with key departments of the city council to agree on revenue collection priorities;
- (3) assess potential revenue sources; and
- (4) conduct public discussions with stakeholders and other ratepayers to determine the high-priority issues and improve financial management.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A report highlighting the areas for improvement completed, a computerized system established, and alternative revenue sources identified.

STAFF REQUIRED: A qualified professional with a financial background.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Establishment of a Community Policing Unit at the Honiara City Council.</p> <p>Regular police surveillance in the city and suburbs.</p> <p>The city council has an Environmental Unit to deal with environmental issues and climate resilience in the city.</p> <p>An awareness programme on climate change has been undertaken by NGOs.</p> <p>Existence of a national policy on climate change and plans for climate change programmes.</p> <p>Planning regulations restrict development on swampy land and on steep slopes.</p> <p>Community leaders are intact and are recognized by Honiara City Council and the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.</p> <p>The <i>wantok</i> system provides security and protection.</p> <p>Private security firms exist.</p> <p>Improved judicial system.</p>	<p>The Law Enforcement Unit of the city council is poorly resourced and equipped.</p> <p>Weak enforcement of the Town and Country Planning Act regulations, which prohibit development in swampy areas and on steep slopes.</p> <p>Inconsistent policing approaches and nepotism.</p> <p>Over-dependency on the formal policing system.</p> <p>Only one main road in the city, leading to traffic congestion.</p> <p>Limited employment opportunities exist.</p> <p>Overhead crossings are not used by pedestrians.</p> <p>Poor street lighting in some parts of the city.</p>	<p>Redesigning the road system (pedestrian walkways, parking areas, bus stands, taxi stands, etc.) will improve safety and movement.</p> <p>Risk management (road signs) can be introduced.</p> <p>Provision of a safer environment for investors and the general public.</p> <p>Potential for more business activities (tourism, wholesaling and retailing).</p> <p>Improve the links among different state institutions, NGOs, and the private sector in their efforts to keep the city safe and clean.</p>	<p>It is expensive to fund and secure parks and monuments and to relocate the most vulnerable settlements.</p> <p>People may refuse to move to a new place.</p> <p>People continue to build in areas that are prone to natural disasters.</p> <p>Politicians may not support relocation as this may affect their votes.</p> <p>Ethnic affiliation is growing in the city.</p> <p>A culture of demanding excessive compensation is emerging in the city, often along ethnic lines.</p> <p>Troubled or mentally ill people are moving freely in the city.</p>

URBAN SECURITY AND RESILIENCE N°1	Project proposal	Page 39
	Improve community policing	

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Honiara City Council Law Enforcement Unit, civil society groups, local communities, the business sector, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, and Honiara residents

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, civil society, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: In recent years, law and order problems have had adverse effects on the city's economy. Juvenile delinquency, robbery, and anti-social behaviour in the city continue to rise, partly linked to

high rural–urban migration, increasing unemployment among the youth, and the decline of cultural values that promote respect. The city council and police force lack the resources and capacity to effectively address law and order problems in the city. The problems can be better addressed by involving the whole community and reinforcing the existing Community Policing Unit.

OBJECTIVE: To promote and consolidate the community policing network by involving the whole community and encouraging everyone to become proactive in addressing law and order issues in the city.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Use the community consultative approach to identify key causes of the law and order problems;
- (2) devise key intervention strategies to address these issues;
- (3) undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders; and
- (4) design plans to implement these strategies.

Urban Security and Resilience (Continued)

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A detailed plan designed on how to implement community policing, improve links between the community and the city council and police force, and increase security and safety in the city.

STAFF REQUIRED: An expert in law and order, with support from the city council and police force.

LAND AND URBAN PLANNING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project has made some improvements to the current land administration processes (mapping, procedures, etc.).</p> <p>Australian Agency for International Development plans to support land administration and management within the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey.</p> <p>Ministry work plans will provide for subdivision plans in the informal settlements for residents to acquire fixed-term estates.</p> <p>Existing legislation, such as the Land and Titles Act, Town and Country Planning Act, and Health Act, all intend to promote better planning.</p> <p>Honiara City Council has a Physical Planning Unit and building inspectors to implement the Town and Country Planning Act.</p> <p>Honiara City Council has a planning board that controls development in the city.</p>	<p>Current land administration processes are lengthy.</p> <p>Land administration malpractice exists within the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey.</p> <p>Lack of skilled and adequate planners and resources at the ministry and city council.</p> <p>Political inference in planning and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Weak enforcement of the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act, leading to growing numbers of squatters.</p> <p>Lack of forward planning and weak implementation of the Honiara local planning scheme.</p> <p>Weak links among the ministry, city council, and developers.</p> <p>The Minister of Lands, Housing, Survey has more power under the Town and Country Planning Act.</p> <p>The Commissioner of Lands has more power under the Land and Titles Act.</p>	<p>Reactivating the current Land and Titles Act to ensure that developers forfeit land that is not developed within the legal minimum period.</p> <p>Improving land rent revenue collection.</p> <p>Providing planned areas for new residential sites leads to quick land allocation for developers.</p> <p>Reducing squatting on state land.</p> <p>UN-Habitat may support priority projects.</p> <p>Setting up real estate developers to get land from customary land owners for investment.</p> <p>Research into the impacts of returning alienated land to the land owners.</p> <p>Establishment of a land tender board.</p> <p>Land audit to discover current availability of state land.</p>	<p>Political uncertainty and lack of budgetary support.</p> <p>Corruption still exists within the system.</p> <p>Weak link between the Town and Country Planning Act and the Land and Titles Act, leading to the Commissioner of Lands granting land to developers that is yet to be properly planned or is reserved for future road expansion.</p> <p>Limited land is available in the city.</p> <p>Informal settlements are too influential or powerful.</p> <p>Land speculation.</p> <p>Direct land allocation increases room for malpractice.</p> <p>The Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and customary landowners near the city refuse to allow the expansion of the city boundary into their land.</p>

LAND AND URBAN PLANNING N°1	Project proposal
	Review the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: Six months

BENEFICIARIES: Property developers and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey and Honiara City Council planners and land administrators

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey and Honiara City Council planners, Attorney General Chamber, civil society, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: The Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act were based on the British system, which is highly centralized, giving more power to one person. Planning- and land-related decision making is not integrated or well coordinated, resulting in a high incidence of bad or conflicting land decisions over the years. The process of acquiring land and getting planning approval is lengthy under these current acts. This creates more room for internal malpractice and paves the way for the growing illegal settlements in and around the city. A review of these acts is likely to improve land and planning management systems.

OBJECTIVE: To improve land administration and planning processes in order to eliminate or reduce malpractice.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Consult key staff within the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey and the Honiara City Council

Land and Urban Planning (Continued)

to review the current land and planning processes in order to identify areas that need to be changed;

- (2) undertake wider consultations with relevant key stakeholders on what changes should be made and how they are going to be implemented;
- (3) prepare a submission to the Attorney General Chamber for review; and
- (4) prepare a final submission to the minister responsible for approval.

OUTPUT INDICATORS:

Alterations are made to the Land and Titles Act and Town and Country Planning Act, which are approved by the minister responsible.

STAFF REQUIRED: A qualified lawyer, with support from the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Engage a local consultant to review the current Honiara local planning scheme;
- (2) undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders on how these changes can be implemented;
- (3) review the current site planning regulations; and
- (4) submit the report to the minister for approval.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A revised Honiara local planning scheme and site planning regulations are completed and approved by the minister responsible.

STAFF REQUIRED: A qualified town or regional planner, with ministry and city council planner support.

LAND AND URBAN PLANNING N°2	Project proposal	
	Review the Honiara local planning scheme	

LOCATION: Honiara

DURATION: 12 months

BENEFICIARIES: Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey, Honiara City Council, property developers, NGOs, and residents of the city

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Honiara City Council and Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey planners, civil society, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 60,000

BACKGROUND: Honiara suffers from poor physical planning due to the lack of a comprehensive local planning scheme. The current Honiara local planning scheme was developed and approved in 2007 and did not include the informal settlements and other state land outside the city boundary. The scheme is a legal instrument that will legalize the change of land use in some of these areas, making land allocation conform to the legal requirements stipulated under the Town and Country Planning Act. The local planning scheme should be reviewed after a five-year period. The review of the Honiara scheme will ensure that the city is replanned or rezoned to cater for the increasing illegal developments currently taking place in and around the city.

OBJECTIVE: To develop the capacity of the ministry and city council planners by involving them actively in a review of the Honiara local planning scheme to promote orderly planning of the city.

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HONIARA URBAN PROFILE

The Honiara Urban Profiling consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions, focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at local and national levels. The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national, and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders, including local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academics, and others. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction. The urban profiling is being implemented in 30 ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

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