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SOLOMON ISLANDS: GIZO URBAN PROFILE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gizo Town Profile was prepared by Tony Hou and Donald Kudu with information collected through interviews with key urban stakeholders in Gizo. We wish to thank them for their time, efforts and contributions toward this report. This project and report was coordinated by Peter Buka (Director of Lands in Gizo) and Stanley Wale, the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS) with constructive inputs provided by Sarah Mecartney, UN-Habitat's Pacific Programme Manager based in Suva, Fiji and the Senior Human Settlements Officer, UN-Habitat Regional Office for the Pacific, Mr. Chris Radford.

Design and layout: Moses Ochieng

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme publications can be obtained from

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Website: <http://www.unhabitat.org>

HS Number: HS/079/12E

ISBN Number (Series): 978-92-1-132023-7

ISBN Number (Volume): 978-92-1-132493-8

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FOREWORD



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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joan Clos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Joan Clos

Executive Director, UN-Habitat

¹ UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme



The population of the Pacific is relatively small by world standards, but it is facing a fast rate of urbanisation and high population growth. The 2009 national census revealed that almost 20% (102,030) of Solomon Island's total population lived in urban areas. But population growth is rapidly

increasing, with the annual rate of 4.7% urban growth, it is projected that by 2020, 26% of the country's population will be living in urban and peri-urban areas if the present trend continues.

In the Solomon Island, urban growth is often negatively perceived as unemployment and environmental degradation have increased and poorly serviced informal settlements have continued to develop. These trends have been exacerbated by weak planning, management and governance and national policies which have prioritised rural development over urban development. Consequently, it is hoped that this Urban Profiling study will assist in mitigating these unfortunate trends.

Gizo is the provincial centre for Western Province and is located approximately 370 kilometres from Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands. It serves as the main economic link between Honiara and the rural villages in the Western province. Gizo has a population of 7,177 and has grown rapidly over recent decades to become the second largest town in the Solomon Islands.

Gizo is renowned for its lagoon and prime diving sites and is a major tourism destination in the country. But, in spite of this favourable economic condition, Gizo still experiences incidents of poverty as reflected in the rapid growth of sub-standard housing, inadequate water supply and a lack of amenities (sanitation and solid waste management in particular). The major concerns for the Western Provincial Authority (WPA) are: (1) good governance and effective town planning and management of informal settlements and land mobilization to meet the demands of the growing town population and, (2) the provision of quality urban

environmental services. The Gizo Urban Profile examines five key areas (governance, informal settlements and housings, the urban-rural economy, urban safety and resilience, and land and planning issues) which have highlighted the ineffective town administration and poor urban planning and management partially due to a lack of technical and experienced human resources, limited financial support from the central government, poor internal revenue, and bad governance.

This study intends to assist Gizo authorities to identify development needs and capacity issues that will support them to design enabling policies and regulations focusing more on poverty reduction at the provincial and rural levels. This is an important contribution towards the Solomon Island's national efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 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). As part of the government's efforts to achieve the MDG 7 (Target D) the Ministry of Lands Housing and Survey has included in their Corporate Plan a policy intention to regularise Temporary Occupation Licences to more secure fixed term estates by 2020 (MLHS, 2010).

On behalf of the Western Provincial Authority and the residents of the city, I fully endorse the Gizo Urban Profile and look forward for further engagement with UN-Habitat to support the efforts and plan to improve the image and progress of our city.

George Lilo
Premier, Western Province

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) is an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building gaps at the city level. The programme is supported by funds from the European Commission's European Development Fund and it is currently being implemented in over 30 African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries. PSUP uses a structured approach where priority interventions are agreed upon through consultative processes. The PSUP methodology consists of three phases: (1) a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on Governance, Local Economic Development, Land, Gender, Environment, Slums and Shelter, Basic Urban Services, and Waste Management, and proposed interventions; (2) detailed priority proposals; and (3) project implementation. PSUP in Solomon Islands encompasses a national profile, as well as profiles for Honiara, Auki and Gizo, each published as a separate report. This is the Gizo report and it constitutes a general background, a synthesis of the five themes; governance, informal settlements and housing, urban-rural economy, security and resilience, and land and planning.

BACKGROUND

Gizo is the provincial centre for Western province and is located approximately 370 kilometres from Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands. It serves as the main economic link between Honiara and the rural villages in the Western province. Gizo has a population of 7,177 and has been growing rapidly over the recent decades to become the second largest town in the Solomon Islands.

Gizo is renowned for its sparkling lagoon and prime diving sites and is a major tourist destination in the country. But, in spite of this favourable economic condition, Gizo still experiences high rates of poverty as reflected in the rapid growth of sub-standard housing. Inadequate water supply, lack of amenities (sanitation and solid waste management in particular), and a rise in informal settlements are key features of Gizo. The major concerns for the Western Provincial Authority¹ (WPA) are: (1) good governance, effective town planning and management of informal settlements and land mobilization to meet the demands of the growing town population and, (2) the provision of quality urban environmental services.

GOVERNANCE

The Western Provincial Authority is mandated under the Provincial Government Act (PGA) and the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) to provide town

¹ Western Provincial Authority (WPA) and Gizo authority are used interchangeably. They refer to the provincial executive or government that heads the provincial administration.

planning and urban management to the urban and rural population on behalf of the central government. The capacity to deliver better services and good governance are the main concerns that the Western Provincial Authority faces as it tries to respond to new challenges after years of neglect and political interference. The Authority is under-resourced, poorly equipped and lacks skilled human resources. It is further constrained by the dependence on (limited) central government grants and poor internal revenue, which is currently addressed through the operation of the Provincial Government Strengthening Project (PGSP).

Public participation in civic issues affecting the welfare of citizens is weak. The setting up of the Gizo Town Committee (GTC) and a Local Business Group (LBG) in Gizo may provide the entry point for better governance. It will also require coordination by the Western Provincial Authority to improve communication and meaningful participation from various stakeholders in Gizo.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING

About 25 percent of Gizo's population (7,177) resides in four informal settlements and pockets of temporary housing located on crown land. Informal settlements are situated on vulnerable locations such as on steep slopes and swampy areas. The residents of these settlements lack water, sanitation, health services, power, security, garbage collection facilities, and security of land tenure. They are at risk should the Commissioner of Lands give the land to property developers. The quality of houses in these settlements is poor as they are erected from bush materials. Residents of these settlements depend entirely on informal economic activities for their daily survival.

Gizo Authority is unable to effectively address the increased demand for better infrastructure and services in these settlements. The Authority does not have a policy to manage or upgrade informal settlements or the resources and personnel to implement an action plan. The key challenge for Gizo authorities and physical planners is to improve planning and effectively implement a strategic action plan that better manages informal human settlements.

THE URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY

Gizo Authority relies on three main sources of revenue for its budget; internal revenue (fishing, logging, business licenses, land rent, property rates, and transport levies), which contribute 45 percent, annual grants from the central government (42 percent) and the remaining 13 percent from the Provincial Capacity Development Fund (PCDF). Internal revenue collection has improved from 47.5 percent in 2009 to

75 percent in 2010. Businesses contribute 38 percent of Gizo Authority's total internal revenue, followed by return from investments (36 percent). There is a need to diversify the economic base, to build proper road networks and improve inter-island shipping to encourage more rural people to participate in the local economy.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

Law and order is provided by the Central Government through the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF). The Gizo police station is manned by 34 staff who work with few resources under poor working conditions. The security situation in Gizo is described as peaceful except for minor incidences relating to drinking beer in public. The major challenge for the police is to contain drinking beer in public places and to provide effective policing as the population in Gizo increases.

URBAN RESILIENCE

Gizo town is located along the coast and is vulnerable to sea level rise. The Titian and Fishing Village are located less than ten metres from the shoreline and are the most vulnerable settlements on Gizo Island. Climate change and natural disasters are a growing concern with the increased frequency and intensity of weather events (earthquakes, landslides and storm surges). However, people continue to build their houses on steep gradients, along the coastal and low-lying areas. The key challenge for the Gizo Authority and the central government is to relocate the most vulnerable settlements and to ensure zoning and development controls are in place to prevent future construction on steep sites and along the coast in the future.

LAND AND PLANNING ISSUES

Access to land is a critical issue in Gizo as the process of acquiring land is lengthy given that power to allocate land rests with the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara. Gizo town suffers badly from ineffective planning as evidenced by poor parking, poor road design, lack of recreational areas, and poor drainage. The rapid growth of informal settlements and erection of sub-standard housing on steep slopes are signs of ineffective planning and poor enforcement of land and planning regulations. The key challenge for policy makers and physical planners is to effectively and systematically address the rising number of unregulated settlements in Gizo. Shortage of skilled personnel, funds, and resources are additional obstacles in the improvement of the town's management.

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is increasingly seen as the heart of socio-economic transformation in the Solomon Islands as it brings in greater wealth and economic opportunities for the national population. However, unless these economic opportunities are managed effectively through a balanced growth development policy, they can lead to increase in urban poverty¹, a rise in socio-economic inequality and informal settlements poorly served with basic services as experienced in the Solomon Islands (APHEDA, 2009, UNDP/SIG 2008). In recognition of the need to better respond to these challenges, the Ministry of Lands and Survey has requested UN-Habitat for financial support to undertake 'Urban Profiling' in the Solomon Islands (Kudu, 2010:2).

Urban Profiling embraces a sequence of actions taken to assess the standard of existing urban services in order to identify development needs and capacity issues at national and local levels. Urban Profiling has been widely applied in over 30 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific under the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

This study intends to assist Gizo authorities to identify development needs and capacity issues that will support them to design enabling urban policies and regulations focusing more on poverty reduction at the provincial and rural levels. This is vital because it contributes towards efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing by half the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and achieving significant improvements in the lives of at least 100 million people living in informal settlements by 2020. The study focuses on five key areas: governance, informal settlements and housing, urban-rural economy, security and resilience, and land and planning issues.

METHODOLOGY

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 to formulate detailed proposals through broad-based city consultations, using the SWOT analysis framework,

Phase two undertakes pre-feasibility studies on selected priority projects, and

Phase three consists of project implementation, linking them to potential capital investment financing opportunities.

This report presents the outcome of phase one of the Gizo Town Profile.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report has three main sections. Section one provides the background situation and includes town administration and basic urban services. Section two assesses the five key themes: governance, informal settlements and housing, urban-rural economy, urban security and resilience, and land and planning issues, pertaining to their structures, regulatory framework, resource mobilization, and accountability and performance. Section three presents a SWOT analysis and outlines the project priorities for each of the five key areas.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GIZO TOWN

Gizo is the provincial centre for the Western Province and it is located approximately 370 kilometres from Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands. It was developed in the 1950s as the main economic and administrative centre for the Western district (now province). Gizo has a population of 7,177 (including settlements on Gizo Island) with an annual growth rate of 12 percent (SIG, 2011). It has been growing rapidly in the recent years to become the second largest town in the Solomon Islands (Kudu, 2010:6) and provides central services and market to surrounding rural communities. This rapid growth rate is alarming and poses a critical concern for the Western Provincial Authority,² given the fact that access to adequate water supply, waste management and sanitation are already a pressing issue in Gizo.

Gizo has benefited from major development projects in the recent years making the town an attractive place for inter-island migration, more so than other sub-stations in the province. The increasing inter-island migration to Gizo after the April 2007 tsunami has accelerated the growth of informal settlements and temporary housing, contributing to the daunting task for the Western Provincial Authority and physical planners to provide for a healthy and vibrant economic town.

¹ Poverty in the Solomon Island context does not necessarily mean hunger or destitution, but rather struggling to meet daily living costs, especially for those that require cash payments (UNDP/SIG, 2008:10).

² The Western Provincial Authority is the elected government, headed by the Premier. It is used interchangeably with the Gizo authority in this report.

THE TOWN ADMINISTRATION

The Western Provincial Authority is mandated under the Provincial Government Act and the Town and Country Planning Act to provide effective and sustainable town planning and management, service delivery and administration to residents of Gizo and the surrounding areas. The Provincial Government Act allows for the Western Provincial Authority to set property rates, market fees and business licenses and to collect such revenues. In executing these duties, the Western Provincial Authority has been historically affected by bad governance and weak finance and technical capacity, leading to poor delivery of quality administration and planning. High dependency on (limited) central government grants³ a small internal revenue base and weak collection continues to affect effective service delivery in Gizo.

The ongoing political interference in the budget, staff appointments and promotions has hampered the effective administration of Gizo's affairs over the past years. However, following the operation of the Provincial Government Strengthening Project (PGSP)⁴ internal revenue collection has improved and sound financial management practices are in place, leading to improved work ethic and work outputs (Rodi, 2011). The Western Provincial Authority however, still lacks capable personnel in some of its departments, partly due to lack of housing availability in Gizo and a constrained operational budget, limiting the Western Provincial Authority's ability to effectively execute its mandatory duties and functions.

The Western Provincial Administration has a total staff of 190, of which 130 are direct employees and 60 have been transferred from the central government. Direct employees occupy the lower and middle technical level and about 10 percent of the upper management level. Many of these employees are inexperienced and unskilled and lack the technical and administrative capacity to execute their duties effectively. Priority therefore, should be given to these direct employees for long and short term training in technical and managerial areas.

Gizo authorities face many critical capacity issues. A corporate planning framework, which integrates other stakeholders (civil society, donors, private sector, and government) to provide a platform that can ensure effective delivery of services to Gizo residents and rural citizens, is recommended. The framework is likely to enhance effective planning, management and control in areas of settlement planning and illegal development and to enforce Gizo policies on standard buildings and design in the interest of the long term planning and management of the town. There is need to strengthen local governance in order to sustain its legitimacy and improve capacity of other institutions and departments to discharge their functions (Storey, 2006:6) more effectively. This requires a combination of legal, administrative and financial reforms.

BASIC URBAN SERVICES

As Gizo's population grows rapidly, so does the solid waste generated from households, industries, offices, local markets, and shops, which has a negative impact on the coastal environment. Gizo's high urban growth rate places a heavy demand on already stressed services and infrastructure. The existing water and sewerage reticulation systems, which were designed for a population of 1,000 people in the 1950s, cannot cope with the present demands.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The town lacks proper landfill facilities and dumping and burning of solid waste on open land is common. Gizo town suffers badly from littering and lack of regular rubbish collection. These problems are compounded as Western Provincial Authorities lack the financial resources, proper refuse facilities and skilled human resources. Solid waste management is therefore, a critical environmental issue for the Western Provincial Authorities.

WATER

Gizo town has been experiencing deteriorating water quantity and quality over recent years. The existing water system was designed in the 1950s for a population of 1,000 and cannot cope with the present demand. Solomon Islands Water Authority (SIWA) is yet to formally set up in Gizo. About 60 percent of 1,335 households in Gizo that have access to the water supply, which includes shared communal stand pipes, have no metres. Water is an issue that needs urgent attention by the Water Provincial Authorities in close consultation with donors, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

3 WPA received 62.5 percent or SBD\$13, 645,621 from the Central Government and 37.5 percent or SBD\$5,117,107 from internal revenue (Western Province, 2009/10).

4 The Provincial Government Strengthening Project (PGSP) is funded by the UNDP and operates through the Ministry of the Provincial Government. It is aimed at building the capacity of the Gizo Authority in terms of financial management and planning.

SANITATION

Gizo has a sewerage system that serves less than 30 percent of 1,335 houses in Gizo. The new buildings use septic tanks. The majority of houses that are located along the coast dump their human waste into the bush and near the sea.

EDUCATION

Gizo and nearby villages have six pre-schools, four primary and three secondary schools, with more than 2,000 students and 96 staff members. These schools have been destroyed during the April 2007 tsunami and have been rehabilitated with financial support from the New Zealand Agency for International Development, Australian Agency for International Development and European Union (EU), allowing for adequate space for students and staffing needs. Student to staff ratio in most schools has been reduced to 35:1 compared to 60:1 in 2008. There is still a need to improve the existing teaching facilities in some schools and to build decent houses for teachers.

HEALTH

Gizo town and surrounding communities are served by Gizo hospital and two aid posts, with a total staff of 62 (42 nurses, three doctors and 17 nurse aides). The hospital has 3 wards and 30 beds with a staff to patient ratio of 1:50. Acute respiratory diseases such as pneumonia, malaria and diarrhoea are the most common diseases. The existing hospital was built in the 1950s and was badly damaged by the April 2007 tsunami. The Japanese Government funded a new hospital, which was officially handed over to the central government on 19 August 2011. The new hospital will be a referral hospital; therefore it is critical that the existing aid posts are upgraded to the status of clinic so that accessibility to health services is improved for Gizo residents and other villagers near the town. The major challenge for the Western Provincial Authority is to maintain the standard of the new hospital and its facilities.

GARBAGE COLLECTION

Garbage collection is a critical environmental issue in Gizo. The Western Provincial Authority set up the Gizo Town Committee⁵ and receives an annual grant of SBD 150,000 to carry out garbage collection in the town. Gizo Town Committee lacks proper landfill equipment and the use of open spaces for garbage disposal and burning is frequently practiced in Gizo. The main landfill is located on the coast, approximately three kilometres from the town. Garbage is often pushed into the sea polluting the marine and coastal environments.

Lack of proper refuse facilities, shortage of workers and limited funds continues to affect service collection in Gizo. This has led to residents dumping their garbage in the bushes and along the roads which is an eyesore. Solid waste generated from shops, households and offices are dumped on the roadside and often not collected for weeks, creating public health and road safety risks and resulting in the degradation of the environment.

The current environmental regulations and by-laws need re-enforcement and reviewing to better reflect the changing socio-economic climate (for example, regulation governing littering in public places). Training in environmental planning and assessment for staff is vital as well as environmental awareness programmes for Gizo residents. The need to work together with all urban stakeholders with regards to environmental planning and management is critical, if the environmental image of Gizo is to be improved and in order to enhance tourism development.

There is need for wider participation from the Gizo community in waste management and to educate residents to be more responsible for their waste. The challenge for the Gizo Town Committee is to provide rubbish bins in strategic locations in the town and to resume with garbage collection on a regular basis.

⁵ Gizo Town Committee consists of representatives from the World Wildlife Fund, Telekom, Red Cross, and the community. The committee works closely with the Western Provincial Authority in managing the urban environment in Gizo town.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport is yet to be formalized in Gizo, but transport providers cooperate informally to set their charges, which results in uniform, zone based fares. The main road in Gizo is tar-sealed, while other feeder roads that lead to residential areas in Gizo and to the informal settlements and villages are not properly maintained. The use of out-board motor boats is common for travel between the town and other islands. Air transport routes connecting Gizo to other islands and Honiara are also reliable but too costly for the majority of the population. Inter-island transport linking Honiara and other islands in the province operate in Gizo. This makes Gizo town alive and busy as people from different islands and provinces are able to interact with each other on a daily basis.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The Solomon Islands Electricity Authority (SIEA) provides power for about 50 percent of households in Gizo. The informal settlements and pockets of temporary houses in the town boundary are not served by the Solomon Islands Electricity Authority power supply. Most of these households rely on kerosene lamps, firewood and candlesticks as their sources of power.

Power supply in Gizo is sufficient to meet the present demand, but with the increase in development activities in and around Gizo, there is need for the Solomon Islands Electricity Authority to assess its capacity to meet increased demand for electricity in the future.

COMMUNICATION AND BANKING SERVICES

Telecommunication services in Gizo and surrounding areas are provided by Telekom and B-mobile. Postal and banking services are provided by the Australia and New Zealand Bank (ANZ) and the Bank of the South Pacific (BSP). Accessing loans from banks usually requires huge capital and collateral items for security, which many people lack, especially the urban poor and low-middle income earners. The challenge for the Western Provincial Authority is to assist low-income earners to access commercial banks and other available micro-loan schemes.

GOVERNANCE



The Provincial Government Act provides for three levels of governance,¹ where the central government transfers certain functions and powers to the provincial and area levels to administer on its behalf. The Act allows for transfer of personnel from the central government to the provincial level and creates a dependency link between these levels of governments and duplication² of resources.

The Western province has 26 wards and each ward elects their provincial member for a four year term. The elected provincial members then, elect the Premier to head the provincial executive. The Premier appoints its ministers to oversee the overall administration of different departments.

Governance in Gizo over the years has been consistently plagued by malpractices, limited finance, poor internal revenue collection, inadequate and lack of skilled and experienced personnel, and poor accountability. These issues have impaired effective administration and service delivery in Gizo and surrounding rural areas which has been exacerbated by dependence on (limited) central government grants and poor internal revenue collection.

The Western Provincial Authority does not have a human resource development policy or a system to

measure work performance of individual employees. Promotions and recruitments are done on the basis of 'who you know best' or wantok bisnis and this has resulted in poor work outputs and poor service delivery.

Accountability and transparency is weak, partly due to lack of technical and managerial capabilities. Politicians often interfere in planning decisions, staff promotions, allocation of funds, awarding of contracts, and appointment of staff. As a result, basic urban services in Gizo have not been improved and no new investments have been made in the area of basic urban service provision.

There is lack of public participation in town matters affecting the welfare of the citizens and local and international NGOs active in Gizo appear to work in isolation with no formal mechanism in place to allow for partnership. Gender equity is given low priority and consideration by the management of the Western Provincial Authority. The recent establishment of the Gizo Town Committee and a Local Business Group (LBG) in Gizo may provide the entry point for better governance. This needs coordination by the Western Provincial Authority to improve communication links and meaningful participation from various stakeholders in Gizo.

The Western Provincial Authority lacks the capacity and resources to implement policies effectively. Building strong partnership with key stakeholders such as local and international NGOs, donors and the private sector is therefore critical. Partnership

¹ The current legal instrument provides for three levels of government: national, provincial and area council.

² The central government makes laws, budget and plans for development at the national level, so does the provincial and area councils at their respective levels. Each levels of government operate independently and as a result each has its own budgets and development plans.

arrangement often enhances sharing of information; reduces duplication of actions and resources and builds good working relationships among different stakeholders. Storey (2005:6) for instance, states that creating better communication through partnership and the ability to respond to issues, rather than to lead, are seen as building blocks of effective local governance. The challenge for the Western Provincial Authority is to build and maintain a strong development partnership with all stakeholders in Gizo.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- The Western Provincial Authority depends on the central government (through the Ministry of the Provincial Government) for its budgetary support, which is inadequate to improve services in Gizo. It also receives tied-funds for specific projects and programmes.
- Insufficient funds and weak administrative capacity continue to impede the effective delivery of services and physical planning.
- Decision making is still heavily top-down.
- A number of civil society groups are actively involved in urban affairs but no formal mechanisms exists to formalize their activities such as a public forum to collectively engage all stakeholders in civic affairs, and
- Outsourcing of services (example garbage collection and infrastructure maintenance) to the private sector is an alternative option for improved service delivery and employment creation. This is yet to be critically explored by the Western Provincial Authorities.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Public Health Act (PHA) empowers Gizo authority to enforce health and environmental standards in the town.
- The Western Provincial Authority has the power under the Provincial Government Act to make by-laws, ordinances and regulations to control governance at the provincial level.
- Under the Provincial Government Act, the Minister for Provincial Government has the power to dissolve local government if they commit malpractices and to appoint a new competent team.
- The Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) empowers the Physical Planning Department through the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board (PTCPB) to carry out physical planning and development control in Gizo, but lacks resource and

technical capacity to plan and manage Gizo town, especially the informal settlements.

- The Western Provincial Authority has a building by-law to guide the standard of buildings and design in Gizo.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- There is no performance and appraisal system that exists and often direct employees are promoted on the basis of 'who you know best' or wantok bisnis.
- Effective and efficient service delivery is a major challenge for the Western Provincial Authority partly due to the rapid urban population growth.
- The Premier is elected by the provincial members and is often more accountable to them than to the citizens.
- Financial accountability has improved after the operation of the Provincial Government Strengthening Project in 2009, but there is still need for improvement in planning and budgeting.
- Weak internal revenue, poor work ethics and limited financial support from the central government continues to affect the ability of Gizo authority to deliver quality services as expected by the citizens.
- Civil Society Organizations are active in Gizo but lack effective coordination with provincial authorities.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

- The Western Provincial Authority receives an annual grant from the central government with considerable shortfalls to meet the minimum requirement for basic service delivery to the urban and rural population.
- The Western Provincial Authority receives internal revenue which is too little to improve basic service delivery in Gizo.
- The internal revenue collection is still weak due to shortage of staff and outdated system of revenue collection.

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Design new strategies to improve internal revenue collection and diversify revenue base.
- Develop a comprehensive training policy and undertake staff development based on capacity gaps and competence.
- Design mechanisms to allow for wider participation from stakeholders operating in Gizo in order to improve accountability and transparency.
- Review the Western Province Town Council Ordinance 1995 to give more administrative and financial powers to the Gizo Town Committee.
- Improve the budget and planning formulation processes to enable more cost-effective use of funds to give the best return to the community.
- Develop a framework that allows for local authorities, stakeholders and community participation in the project processes to improve project sustainability.

	Project proposal	Page 27
GOVERNANCE N°1	Review the Western Provincial Town Council (1995) Ordinance	

	Project proposal	Page 27
GOVERNANCE N°2	Devise a new mechanisms to improve internal revenue collection and diversify revenue base	

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING



An estimated 51 percent of Gizo's total population resides in four main informal settlements¹ and several scattered pockets of temporary houses located within and on the edge of the Crown land (Zutu, 2007, SIG, 2011). High population growth rates and the influx of rural-urban migration are primarily considered as key factors for the prolific growth of informal settlements in Gizo. These informal settlements exert additional pressure on the existing basic urban services infrastructure, especially on the water, health and education services.

The 'popular' places for new rural migrants and urban poor to erect their houses are on steep slopes and swampy areas which are considered unsuitable for formal development. Most people prefer to settle in such areas because the risk of being evicted by the Western Provincial Authority is low.

Informal settlements in Gizo are often excluded from the mainstream of urban management and physical planning. They are poorly served and lack water, sanitation, health, electricity, security, and garbage collection services. Dumping of waste in open spaces has resulted in pollution and degradation of the natural environment. Access to water supply is limited to few communal shared stand pipes and most households use kerosene lamps and candlesticks as their sources of power and firewood for cooking.

The rising numbers of informal settlements in Gizo are not going to just 'go away'. The Western Provincial Authority needs to factor in the informal settlements in the physical planning of the town. The key challenge for Gizo's physical planners and policy makers is to reverse the rapid growth of informal settlements. As Jones (2010:8) puts it "there needs to be a mindset change" towards the informal settlements; they must be included as part of the western provincial main strategic management plans.

Unemployment and poverty² are growing in these informal settlements as reflected by the rising number of informal economic activities, illegal and illicit activities taking place in the settlements. The rise of food prices in Gizo market due to limited food supply has made it even more difficult for residents of informal settlements to meet their nutritional requirements and has further pushed the urban poor into the poverty trap. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has set up three marine conservation areas and several income generating activities to assist residents of informal settlements to earn a living, but the projects lack the capacity to generate enough food or money to sustain the increasing number of residents in the informal settlements.

¹ Informal settlements are; Mile six, Fishing Village, Nusu Baruku, and District.

² While it is difficult to figure out the exact levels of poverty in Gizo due to lack of data, the SIG/UNDP (2008:9) estimates that poverty in all provincial centres (including Gizo) represent about 13.6 percent of the total urban population (101,000) in Solomon Islands.

There are a number of internally displaced people still living in tents, despite the Solomon Island's Government allocation of SBD 5million to assist people who were affected in the April 2007 tsunami (Solomon Star, 20/04/11:3). Poor people in Gizo usually face growing daily hardship as they rely on limited cash and food for their survival. They must weigh expenditure choices on a daily basis often having to forego basic needs like food in order to pay school fees. There is need for the Western Provincial Authority to collaborate with national leaders, donors and NGOs to better respond to the needs of the urban poor in Gizo.

HOUSING

This is a critical issue for residents of Gizo and the Western Provincial Authority. The quality of housing in the informal settlements is poor. Houses are constructed from a combination of bush material and *Kapa* which is *pijin* English for corrugated iron roofing sheets cup-board, plywood, and under-size timber. Most houses occupy about 16 square metres of land and accommodate an average household of seven people.

The government houses in Gizo were built during the colonial period and have been poorly maintained for many years, resulting in a large number of houses being deemed uninhabitable. Most of these houses have now been sold to private developers. Further, the working environment in Gizo is not conducive for productivity as most office buildings have deteriorated and are old, poorly designed and lack space and furniture. There is urgent need for the Western Provincial Authority to improve the existing staff houses and provide decent staff houses as well as an office complex in order to attract and motivate staff.

INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- The power to undertake physical planning in Gizo is vested in the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board. The physical planning office is responsible for settlement planning and development control in Gizo, but it is under-resourced, ill-equipped and lacks the technical capacity to execute responsibilities effectively.
- A mechanism exists within the Town and Country Planning Act that allows for wider participation in the planning processes. But without a Local Planning Scheme (LPS), wider participation remains to be demonstrated.
- A lack of physical planning in Gizo, in spite of a sub-division plan.

- The power to allocate land rests with the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara. The Lands Unit in Gizo coordinates land matters and makes relevant recommendations to the Commissioner of Lands for decision on land allocation and registration.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Town and Country Planning Act guides the development of Crown Land. The power is delegated to the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board of each provincial town including the Honiara City Council (HCC).
- The Lands and Title Act (LTA) administrates the allocation and registration of land.
- An existing building ordinance to guide building constructions exists but it is not enforced due to lack of staff.
- There is no land policy or implementation plan specifically designed to assist residents of informal settlements to acquire decent housing.
- Gizo has no Local Planning Scheme to ensure orderly development of the town.
- Lack of a building inspector to carry out enforcement notices on illegal developers has led to an increase in illegal developments.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

- Gizo town has no budgetary support for development of new residential sites.
- The Ward Development Grant (WDG) is limited and often directed by personal decisions rather than by strategic plans.
- Politicians have access to a number of funds (Rural Constituency Development Fund, Micro-scheme and Livelihood) but such funds have not been used to improve the livelihoods of Gizo's residents.
- Lack of partnership arrangements to permit or encourage wider community participation in service delivery particularly in the informal settlements.

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Develop a base-line settlement survey to determine the level of informal settlements in Gizo town.
- Regularize informal settlements through subdivision plans so that settlers are given the opportunity to acquire Fixed Term Estates (FTE).
- Develop a comprehensive policy and plans for informal settlement upgrading.
- Establish community groups to coordinate activities such as garbage collection.
- Undertake awareness programmes in the informal settlements so that residents know and better understand their rights and obligations as squatters.
- Establish development partnerships with stakeholders to administer and coordinate NGO and donor assistance to the settlements.
- Upgrade the existing government staff houses and build additional houses and a new office complex for the Western Provincial Authority.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°1	Project proposal	Page 29
	Develop a base-line survey to determine the trends and socio-economic conditions of informal settlements	

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°2	Project proposal	Page 29
	Develop subdivision plans for the informal settlements in Gizo	

THE URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY



Western Province depends on three main sources of income for its budget. Internal revenue (business licenses, land rent, basic rates, property rates, return from investments, and transport levies) is expected to contribute 45 percent, central government grants 42 percent and Provincial Capacity Development Fund (PCDF) 13 percent towards it 2011/12 fiscal year (SBD 17,967,295). There is still lack of a major shopping centre in Gizo. More than 30 retail shops operate in Gizo, of which 85 percent are owned and managed by Chinese descendants. The business sector generates just above 38 percent of Gizo internal revenue. A small part of Western Provincial Authority's internal revenue comes from tourism¹, land rent, basic rates, and property rates. Internal revenue collection has improved from 37.5 percent in 2009 to 75 percent in 2010 fiscal year (Western Province 2009/10 budget).

Gizo serves as the main economic link between Honiara and the rural villages in the Western province. International NGOs such as World Vision, Red Cross, Save the Children, and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) have established their branches in Gizo to enhance service delivery to the urban and rural population. The commercial sector is increasing with major private firms such as Telekom, Australia and Zealand Banking (ANZ), Bank of the South Pacific (BSP) Dalgro, Bowmans Hardware, and South Pacific Oil (SPO) operating in Gizo alongside small tourism operators.

¹ Gizo has a hotel which provides more than 150 rooms and 15 motels providing around 300 rooms that are owned and managed by local residents. There is potential for tourism to grow in Gizo if the government assist tourism operators financially to grow their businesses.

Statutory firms like the Solomon Airlines, Solomon Islands National Provident Fund, and Solomon Islands Electricity Authority have also set up offices in Gizo and contribute to the local economy.

Gizo has benefited from three major multi-million dollar projects, making the town an attractive place for inter-island migration more so than other sub-stations in the province. The new hospital in Gizo was funded by the Japanese Government and has been officially handed over to the central government. The upgrading of the existing playing field to a new sport stadium funded by Solomon Islands Football Federation (SIFF) will further stimulate economic growth in Gizo once it is completed.

Economic activities in Gizo have created considerable employment opportunities for the local population. The public sector provides up to 60 percent of employment opportunities for the urban population in Gizo, followed by the service sector (30 percent) and donor projects (10 percent). Gizo also holds major sporting events and cultural shows annually, which contribute to the local economy.

THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Unregulated informal economic activities exist in Gizo and include the selling of betel nuts, cigarettes, green coconut, fish, and plastic bags next to the local market. Gizo market has limited places for market vendors to display their products and is often overcrowded with traders. People employed in the informal sector

work for longer hours in unhygienic and unsafe environments. Given the importance of the informal sector for the unskilled and unemployed rural and urban dwellers, it is of critical economic importance that the Western Provincial Authority and Gizo Town Committee improve the existing market conditions and avoid congestion.

LINKING RURAL-URBAN ECONOMIES

Western province consists of five main islands and many smaller ones. Therefore there is need to decentralise and deconcentrate certain services and functions from the central government to the provincial level in order to improve service delivery to the rural areas. As part of the implementation strategy, the central government has established beside Gizo town, four substations (Noro, Seghe, Munda, and Ringi) at the rural level to improve service delivery to the rural villages. At the rural level, not all rural areas are the same. Development issues vary from one region to another and from one village to another. Depending on where the village is located, the services and economic opportunities also differ. Economic opportunities for some rural villages depend on accessibility to markets in Gizo, Noro and Munda. Some politicians have recently promoted constituency development strategies as a means to improve services delivery to the rural villages.

At the national level, the central government sets the overall rural development framework and expects the Western Provincial Authority to devise its own strategies that are appropriate to local conditions. However, urbanization policies remain neglected in the physical planning process in Solomon Islands.

TRANSPORTATION LINKS

The provision of effective transport networks play a crucial role in enticing major investments to the rural areas and improves the economic capacity of existing businesses. Improved access enhances population mobility and creates opportunities for the rural people to travel to the urban areas to sell their produce and also access government and banking services.

Western province has four substations scattered throughout the province. Gizo is the main centre for the province but lacks efficient links between substations. There are disparities between these stations in terms of socio-economic opportunities and the spatial distribution of basic services. In Gizo, there is an existing road that connects settlements on the island to the town, but it has not been maintained for several years due to lack of funds and negligence by past local authorities. Provision of basic urban services in the substations is poor.

A number of roads that connect rural villages to the coast have not been maintained for several years making travel between sub-stations difficult. Most people rely on out-board motorboats to travel to Gizo, Noro, Ringi, Seghe, and Munda. Bad weather and rising costs of fuel have negatively affected this transportation system. Air transport between the main islands is well established and helps to promote tourism to the province. The Western province lacks a coherent and integrated transport and communication system. Efficient transport and communication networks are needed in order to accelerate socio-economic development and service delivery in the province.

The Bank of the South Pacific and Australia and Zealand Banking provide banking services in Noro, Munda, Ringi, and Gizo. This has improved access to banking services for government workers and the rural population. Provision of telecommunications through mobile phones also improved significantly in the rural areas as Telekom and B-mobile continue to spread into the rural areas throughout the country. The major challenge for these two companies is to maintain quality services at an affordable rate, given the remoteness of the islands and rural villages.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- The central government is responsible for the provision of all rural and urban infrastructure and the Western Provincial Authority relies on the central government for budgetary support to meet infrastructure development needs and operational matters.
- Most government activities are sectorally-based with little coordination between agencies, leading to duplication of projects and inefficient use of resources.
- The Western Provincial Authority is under-resourced and poorly equipped. As a result, the authority is not able to effectively implement its policies and to improve on service delivery in Gizo and surrounding areas.
- The Western Provincial Authority needs to provide a conducive business environment with incentives for the private sector to greater engage in economic activities in the rural areas.
- A number of local and international NGOs and church based groups are actively involved in service delivery in Gizo and the surrounding areas, but there is no formal mechanism to harness this potential partnership.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Provincial Government Act empowers the Western Provincial Authority to pass ordinance and regulations that are seen as appropriate to enhance economic growth in both rural and urban settings.
- The Provincial Government Act also gives power to the Minister of the Provincial Government to suspend any provincial government officials for malpractices and irregularities in the administration of the town.
- Rural and urban people elect representatives to the National Parliament and Provincial Assembly to represent their interests.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- The provision of quality services for both rural and urban areas remain a key challenge for Gizo authorities.
- Poor internal revenue collection and limited financial help from the central government hinders effective delivery of services and rural development.
- Lack of skilled human resources and weak administrative capacity contributes to poor service delivery.
- Civil society organizations and churches are active development partners in the rural development process, but lack government support.
- Each provincial member is expected to ensure that there is fair distribution of economic benefits in their region.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Western Provincial Authority depends on central government annual grants to enable them provide services to the people of Gizo and surrounding areas.
- Internal revenue collected is weak and inadequate to meet quality service delivery.
- Donors provide financial support for a number of urban and rural service projects and create an opportunity to stimulate the local economy.

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Improve existing basic urban services and housing in Gizo and other sub-stations to entice public servants to work in the province.
- Upgrade the existing road infrastructure and communication links in order to enhance effective delivery of basic urban services, especially to the rural areas.
- Upgrade the existing market facilities to improve environmental, security and health issues faced by market vendors.
- Build better infrastructure which is critical for promoting investment in the rural areas.
- Decentralize more government functions and power to the area level of government.

LOCAL ECONOMY N°1	Project proposal	Page 31
	Upgrade the existing Gizo market	

LOCAL ECONOMY N°2	Project proposal	Page 31
	Upgrade the existing water supply in Gizo	

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE



Law and order is provided by the Central Government through the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF). Gizo is considered to be peaceful with no major incidences of crime or insecurity except for minor incidences related to drinking beer and homemade alcohol (kwaso) in public places. Juvenile delinquency, personal assault, domestic violence, and house-break-ins are common in Gizo. The rise in crime is partly as a result of a high rate of rural-urban migration, increase in unemployment rates among the youth, high rates of alcohol consumption, and erosion of cultural values. Most of the crimes are committed by unemployed youths in the informal settlements.

Poor street lighting in the town's commercial and residential areas has contributed to rising crime, decline in public safety and frequent shop and household break-ins in Gizo. The situation threatens personal safety and has wider repercussions on the local economy, investment and tourism industry.

The delay in the construction of a new Correctional Service Centre¹ (CSC) in Gizo was as a result of a land dispute with squatters contesting a court order instructing them to move from the site. A new site has now been identified for the project. This incident indicates that squatters are seen as a 'threat' to new investment and pose a security threat for Gizo residents as the population in the informal settlements continue to increase.

¹ The Gizo Correctional Service Centre is funded by the Australian Agency for International Development through RAMSI strengthening programmes in the Ministry of Police, National Security and Legal Affairs.

While the police have performed well in response to crisis situations, public perception that they are undisciplined and corrupt persists (Solomon Star, 14/5/11:2). This lack of public confidence has led to private firms, NGOs and government bodies hiring private security firms to protect their premises. This makes private security a thriving business in Gizo. The judicial system is also ineffective as cases are not dealt with in a reasonable time frame. The situation is worsened by the fact that there is no Principal Magistrate Officer in Gizo to hear court cases that are beyond the power of the current Magistrate Officer. This makes it harder for the police and at times may discourage them from executing their mandatory duties effectively.

The police officers in Gizo police station work with insufficient logistical support from the central government, in a poor working environment and with limited cooperation from the communities to fight against crime. The police also live in poor housing conditions. Given the rise in crime in Gizo in the recent years, it is crucial that the number of policemen and women is increased and that they are provided with adequate resources to enable them to fight crime and provide adequate security.

URBAN RESILIENCE

The Solomon Islands and in particular those villages and towns located along the coast and near the swampy areas are susceptible to climate change and natural disasters. In Gizo, vulnerability to climate change and

natural disasters is becoming a major concern as many people continue to build their houses on steep gradients and along the coastal and swampy areas which are prone to natural disasters like earthquakes, landslides and storm surges. After the April 2007 tsunami, many victims refused to return to their original homes due to fear of future disasters. However, due to land disputes and lack of clarity over the land tenure, areas for re-settlements were not identified. This resulted in residents continuing to rebuild their damaged homes in vulnerable areas (UNHCR, 2011). Some people in the informal settlements have returned to their original settlements close to the sea as the Western Provincial Authority failed to secure land for them to relocate to. The key challenge for the Western Provincial Authority is to ensure that land for relocation is made available and to look to the Ministry of Environment for possible financial support.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force of the central government is responsible for providing law and order throughout the country. The police station in Gizo is urgently in need of upgrading as the building is old, deteriorating and lacks space. A better working environment is likely to improve policing.
- The Correctional Service Centre (CSC) provides rehabilitation programmes for prisoners as well as engaging churches to visit prisoners. These programmes need to be strengthened to involve participation of community leaders and civil society as well.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force depends entirely on the central government for funds to carry out policing throughout the country. Lack of sufficient funds and logistics have often constrained the police from executing effective policing throughout the province, especially in the informal settlements of Gizo.
- Local courts are under-resourced and poorly equipped, leading to court cases piling up and taking up to several years to be heard. There is need to strengthen and provide sufficient resources to local courts so that they can operate effectively and enhance public confidence and trust.
- The Western Provincial Authority needs to work alongside the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force in terms of planning for security and safety in Gizo.
- Private security firms are actively involved in the provision of security in several private premises in Gizo.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- There is lack of coordination between the law enforcement and the justice systems.
- Family disintegration and erosion of cultural values has led to lawlessness and decline in public safety.
- There is need to improve community policing in and around Gizo by providing training and logistical support to communities to enable them to better respond to crime and insecurity.

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Strengthening the coordination between law enforcement agencies, the Western Provincial Authority and communities.
- Improve the working environment and capacity needs for the police.
- Improve logistics and resources for community policing.
- Empower the youth through capacity building programmes to engage in legitimate income earning activities.
- Relocation of settlements and houses that are most vulnerable to sea storms and landslides.
- Public awareness programmes about the effects of climate change.
- Provide recreational facilities in Gizo.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE N°1	Project proposal	Page 33
	Develop a detailed plan for a multi-purpose hall for youth in Gizo	
SECURITY AND RESILIENCE N°2	Project proposal	Page 33
	Develop local climate change and resilience plans	

LAND AND PLANNING



Gizo Island is small and covers approximately 37 square kilometres of land (UNHCR, 2011:10). It is also a Crown land. Gizo town however occupies a small part of this island (141.5 hectares of land).

The process of acquiring land in Gizo is lengthy (see table 1) and the power to allocate land rests with the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara. The long process of acquiring land is partly responsible for increased illegal occupation of land. This problem was addressed by the Lands Strengthening Project (SIISLAP) by opening up a Land Centre in Gizo. The Lands Centre in Gizo¹ however lacks adequate and skilled human resources, and is poorly equipped, which often results in ineffective land management and administration.

PLANNING

Gizo town suffers from ineffective planning in spite of the existence of a Provincial Town and Country Planning Board². There is no local planning scheme in Gizo, although a subdivision plan at the area level is carried on a piece meal basis and lacks proper coordination resulting in a disorderly subdivision plan.

Effective planning in Gizo town is hampered by shortage of skilled personnel (to devise proper building codes and site planning regulations to guide planning approval), lack of funds and lack of building inspectors to carry out inspections and enforcement of notices on illegal developers.

Gizo town needs a proper drainage system, well planned parking areas, landscaping, installation of more street lights, and an improved road network. Physical planning and decisions making in Gizo seems to be internally focused and there is little effort to allow for wider public participation.

¹ The Lands Centre in Gizo is staffed with two officers who handle filing and recording of fixed term estate holders and land applications. They also provide recommendations to the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara for Land Allocation.

² The Gizo Authority recommends to the Minister of Lands, Housing and Survey candidates (then formally appoints them) to be members of the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board. They represent the Solomon Islands Water Authority, Telekom, Business Group, Environment, Works, and the Minister for Lands (Chariman) for a period of two years. A Physical Planner normally is the Secretary of the Board.

While there is still enough registered land available in Gizo town, lack of effective town planning has resulted in increased land use conflict. This may affect the future development growth of Gizo and effective physical planning is seen as a critical issue that needs to be given top priority. The challenge for the Gizo authority and physical planners is to improve urban planning and provide good quality and affordable housing for the poor.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- The power to undertake physical planning in Gizo rests with the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board. The physical planning office is responsible for settlement planning and development control in Gizo and other government substations.
- The physical planning office in Gizo is under-resourced and is currently without an urban planner.
- The Town and Country Planning Act allows for stakeholders to take part in the development of a local planning scheme.
- The power to allocate land rests with the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara. Gizo Lands Officers coordinate land matters and forward recommendations to the Commissioner of Lands for decision making on land allocation and registration.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Town and Country Planning Act is the only existing legislation that determines the way Crown land is to be used and managed. Power is delegated to the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board of 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 decisions made by the Provincial Town and Country Planning Board and grant final decisions.
- The Lands and Title Act administers the allocation and registration of land.
- There are no building by-laws to guide building designs.
- There is no land policy specifically designed to assist the urban poor and squatters.
- There are no building inspectors to carry out enforcement notices on illegal developers and to carry out building inspections.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

- Gizo town has no budgetary support for development of new residential sites.
- The Ward Development Grant is limited and there is lack of transparency in the allocation of funds.
- There is no partnership arrangement in place to allow community participation in service delivery such as garbage collection.

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Improve the logistic and human resource capacity of the Physical Planning and the Lands Centre to effectively carry out their duties.
- Develop a local planning scheme for Gizo town including plans to upgrade informal settlements in Gizo.
- Improve coordination between developers, the Town and Country Planning Board and the Physical Planning Office in Gizo to avoid squatting and illegal developments on state land.
- Improve land administration and planning processes.
- Enforce planning regulations and Western province building ordinance.

LAND AND PLANNING N°1	Project proposal	Page 35
	Develop a Local Planning Scheme for Gizo	

LAND AND PLANNING N°2	Project proposal	Page 35
	Design ways to improve land administration and planning processes	

TABLE 1:

PROCESS OF ACQUIRING LAND	
Step 1	Commissioner of Lands to identify an area of land and direct the Physical Planning Office to prepare a subdivision plan for the site.
Step 2	Physical Planners prepare a subdivision plan for the site, seek approval from the Gizo Town and Country Planning Board and Country Planning Board, and forward the plan to the Surveyor General Office.
Step 3	Surveyor General prepares survey instructions. Upon approval of a subdivision plan by the Surveyor General, parcel and lot numbers are prepared and the subdivision plan submitted to the Commissioner of Lands for approval.
Step 4	Lot and parcel numbers are submitted to the registrar's office for registration.
Step 5	The Commissioner of Lands advertises vacant land for the public to apply for.
Step 6	Screening of applications and allocation of land to successful applicants by the Commissioner of Lands.

Note: The Commissioner of Lands has the power under the Land and Title Act to decide on what sort of measures to be used when allocating state land. Currently, direct allocation is commonly used which is susceptible to corruption.

GOVERNANCE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	PRIORITIES
<p>Provincial Government Strengthening Project capacity building and training initiative.</p> <p>Existing activities of NGOs, churches and donors in service delivery in Gizo.</p> <p>Political support from the current Western Provincial Authority.</p> <p>The Western Provincial Authority has appointed a Town Clerk and new members of the Gizo Town Council.</p> <p>Annual subvention of SBD150,000 for Gizo Town Council from the Western Provincial budget.</p> <p>Existing by-laws for controlling littering.</p>	<p>Lack of a legal advisor, office, skilled staff, and resources.</p> <p>Lack of adequate financial support from the Western Provincial Authority.</p> <p>Continued diversion of funds to other development areas and weak links between the civil society groups, donors and the Western Provincial Authority.</p> <p>Lack of formal training for workers.</p> <p>Corruption and wantok bisnis still exists.</p> <p>Existing Western Province by-laws are not enforced effectively.</p> <p>The Gizo Town Council lacks financial autonomy to spend its budget.</p>	<p>Donor support is likely for identified priority interventions.</p> <p>The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey 's corporate plans to support urban programmes.</p> <p>Improving the status of Gizo Town Council to effectively discharge its mandated roles.</p> <p>Fighting corruption leads to improved accountability and transparency.</p> <p>There is room for wider civil society participation in the urban planning and management of Gizo.</p> <p>Internal revenue is likely to rise due to increased compliance from the tax payers.</p>	<p>Political uncertainty and political interference in planning and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Lack of adequate financial support.</p> <p>Need for improved incorporation of Gizo urban profile as part of work plans and policies.</p> <p>Weak technical and administrative capacity.</p> <p>Corruption and lack of forward planning.</p>	<p>Review the Western Province Town Council Ordinance (1995) to give more administrative and financial power to Gizo Town Council.</p> <p>Design new strategies to improve internal revenue collection and diversify revenue base.</p>

	Project proposal
GOVERNANCE N°1	Review the current Western Provincial Town Council 1995 Ordinance

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 6 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council and civil society in Gizo

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council and civil society members with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: The Western Provincial Town Council (1995) Ordinance mandates the Gizo Town Council to be responsible for garbage management in the town. The Gizo Town Council however, is poorly equipped and resourced due to lack of sufficient funds. The Council receives limited revenue from market fees, property rates and septic disposals. It lacks the power and technical capacity to effectively control funds as all its revenue has to be deposited in one basket and managed by the Western Provincial Authority. In most cases, the budgetary allocation for the Gizo Town Council is often diverted by the Western Provincial Authority to meet other expenses.

OBJECTIVE: To improve the financial and administrative powers of the Gizo Town Council.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a consultant to carry out a review of the existing Western Provincial Town Council (1995) Ordinance. (2) Assess the areas that need to be amended. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders in Gizo. (4) Develop a revised report.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A revised Western Provincial Town Council Ordinance is completed, which gives more financial and administrative autonomy to the Gizo Town Council.

STAFF REQUIRED: One experienced consultant (with planning and legal qualifications) with assigned focal points in Gizo Town Council and Western Provincial Authority.

	Project proposal
GOVERNANCE N°2	Devise new mechanisms to improve internal revenue collection and diversify revenue base

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 8 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council Business Sectors, tax payers, the informal sector, and civil society members

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Western Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, and business people with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: The Western Provincial Authority urgently needs an improved revenue collection system and to diversify its revenue base. Inadequate funds constrain the ability of the Western Provincial Authority to effectively deliver better services to the people and to pay for ongoing operation costs. There is 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 in turn provide the basis for recommendations to improve and strengthen the overall revenue collection system of the Western Provincial Authority and in particular the proposed restructure and strengthening of the Gizo Town Council.

OBJECTIVE: To improve revenue collection in the Western Provincial Authority, compliance, transparency and efficient financial management, monitoring and reporting.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Undertake an institutional needs assessment of the Western Provincial Authority's financial management systems through review of revenue collection and financial management with stakeholders. (2) Conduct consultations with key departments within the Western Provincial Authority to agree upon revenue collections priorities. (3) Assess alternative revenue sources. (4) Conduct public debates with stakeholders and other ratepayers to determine ways of achieving compliance and improving financial management.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: (1) A report highlighting the areas for improvement. (2) A computerised revenue collection system. (3) Alternative revenue sources identified.

STAFF REQUIRED: Two qualified staff members with backgrounds in finance.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	PRIORITIES
<p>Existing activities of NGOs, churches and donors in service delivery in the informal settlements.</p> <p>A source of readily available workers.</p> <p>Provision of housing for lower income earners.</p> <p>Local socio-political institutions in the informal settlements.</p>	<p>Lack of a physical planner and housing upgrading plans.</p> <p>Lack of financial support from the Western Provincial Authority and the central government for informal settlements upgrading.</p> <p>Poor service delivery in the informal settlements and weak links between the civil society groups, donors and the Western Provincial Authority.</p> <p>Gizo Town Council is poorly-equipped and under-resourced to provide quality garbage collection in the informal settlements.</p> <p>Lack of an enforcement officer to enforce the Town and Country Planning Act and to control illegal developments.</p> <p>Weak enforcement of the Lands and Title Act which prohibits non-title holders encroaching on state land.</p>	<p>Donor support in informal settlements upgrading.</p> <p>Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey has put in place plans to support informal settlements upgrading.</p> <p>Improve the status of Gizo Town Council to effectively discharge its roles.</p> <p>Improve the social and physical environment in the informal settlements.</p> <p>There is room for wider community participation in the planning and management of informal settlements.</p> <p>Internal revenue is likely to increase through increased land rents.</p> <p>More land availability and increase in the number of housing developments.</p>	<p>Political uncertainty and lack of political support.</p> <p>Inadequate financial support.</p> <p>Some informal settlement residents may be displaced in the course of settlement upgrading.</p> <p>Social disruption of family linkages.</p> <p>Loss of economic livelihoods through destruction of farming land.</p> <p>Corruption and lack of forward planning.</p>	<p>Develop a base-line settlement survey for informal settlements in Gizo.</p> <p>Regularize informal settlements through subdivision plans so that squatters are given the opportunity to acquire Fixed Term Estates to improve tenure security.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive policy and plans for informal settlement upgrading.</p> <p>Establish community groups to coordinate settlement activities such as garbage collection.</p> <p>Undertake awareness programmes in the informal settlements so that the residents know and better understand their rights and obligations as squatters.</p>

	Project proposal
INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°1	Develop a base-line survey to determine the trends and socio-economic conditions of informal settlements in Gizo

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 6 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Physical Planners and residents of informal settlements

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Physical Planners, and civil society with support from UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: Approximately 51 percent of Gizo's population (Census Report, 2009) live in the informal settlements with poor access to water, sanitation, roads, housing, and garbage collection. The Gizo Provincial Authority does not have reliable data available to determine the trends of informal settlements and the challenges that residents of informal settlements face.

OBJECTIVE: Document the scope of the socio-economic conditions and trends of informal settlements in Gizo so that they can be used for future planning and policy formulation.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a consultant to carry out a socio-economic household survey in existing informal settlements. (2) Identify and assess the standard of existing infrastructure. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders and informal settlements residents. (4) Develop an assessment report and database. (5) Digitise the information into a comprehensive database.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A computerized database and a report on the socio-economic situation in the informal settlements.

STAFF REQUIRED: Two local consultants (Geographic Information Systems and Social Scientist) and four fieldworkers.

	Project proposal
INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING N°2	Prepare sub-division plans for the informal settlements

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 12 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Physical Planners and informal settlements in Gizo

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Physical Planners, civil society members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 100,000

BACKGROUND: In 2009, more than 50 percent of Gizo's population lived in informal settlements with poor access to water supply, sanitation, roads, housing, and garbage collection. The Gizo Provincial Authority has not put in place any plans or policies to upgrade informal settlements or to assist residents of informal settlements to obtain security of tenure.

OBJECTIVE: Develop subdivision plans that are readily available to guide land allocation and include input from beneficiaries.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a planning consultant to design subdivision plans for informal settlements. (2) Undertake consultations with relevant stakeholders and informal settlements. (3) Identify and assess informal settlements and residents that are likely to be affected. (4) Digitise the plans and ensure that they are approved by the Western Provincial Town and Country Planning Board. (5) Supervise field survey.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: (1) Subdivision plans are computerized and surveyed. (2) A report on informal settlements and residents that are affected will be completed.

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

THE URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	PRIORITIES
<p>The local market is under the management of Gizo Town Council.</p> <p>Plans are underway to upgrade the existing market.</p> <p>The Western Provincial Authority has appointed new members to the Gizo Town Council.</p> <p>The Private Sector is willing to provide maintenance of the existing market buildings.</p> <p>Donors (Asian Development Bank and Australian Development Aid Programme) funded the existing water reticulation in Gizo.</p> <p>Asian Development Bank is currently funding drainage clearance in Gizo town.</p>	<p>Limited space and market facilities to cater for the large number of traders.</p> <p>Lack of storage and landing facilities for market vendors.</p> <p>Lack of adequate parking space for vehicles and lack of land for future expansion.</p> <p>Lack of sufficient budgetary support from the Western Provincial Authority towards the development of basic urban services in Gizo town.</p> <p>Continuous diversion of limited funds allocated to the Works Unit to other use.</p> <p>The Works Unit of the Western Provincial Authority lacks proper equipment and machines to effectively discharge its duties.</p> <p>Lack of coordination between donors and the Works Unit with regard to drainage improvement.</p>	<p>Upgrading the existing market facilities will stimulate economic development.</p> <p>An Improved socio-economic environment for market vendors and the general public.</p> <p>Establish partnership networks between donors, community groups and the Western Provincial Authority with regard to service delivery in Gizo.</p>	<p>Storm surges and sea level rise (climate change) leading to destruction of property.</p> <p>Social insecurity for the vendors.</p> <p>Unhygienic conditions in the market which puts vendors and buyers at risk.</p> <p>Change of provincial government who may not support the upgrading of the market.</p> <p>The present market site is limited and may not be an ideal area for the market.</p>	<p>Upgrade the existing market facilities to improve the environment, security, and health issues faced by market vendors.</p> <p>Improve delivery of basic urban services.</p> <p>Upgrade the existing road and communication links to enhance effective delivery of services to the rural areas, such as education and health.</p>

URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY N°1	Project proposal
	Upgrade the existing Gizo market

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 5 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council and residents of Gizo

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, civil society members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: Gizo has a population of 7,177 (Census Report, 2009) who depend on the local market as their main source of food supply. Local markets link the rural and urban economies as rural-based goods are sold at the Gizo market. Informal economic activities in Gizo provide job opportunities for residents of the town and nearby rural areas. Gizo market lacks adequate space which results in overcrowding. The market also lacks basic services such as storage facilities for market vendors, sanitation and parking space. Market vendors continue to face daily hardships as they often work in unhygienic and unsafe environments.

OBJECTIVE: Improve the existing conditions in Gizo market to cater for the increasing number of market vendors.

ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Hire an architect to design a new market.
- (2) Assess the existing site or identify an alternative site for the market.
- (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders.
- (4) Develop a proposed plan for the construction and expansion of the market.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A detail design plan for the proposed Gizo market is completed.

STAFF REQUIRED: An architect.

URBAN-RURAL ECONOMY N°2	Project proposal
	Upgrade the existing water supply in Gizo

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 4 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority and Greater Gizo area residents (including informal settlements residents)

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, civil society, members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COSTS: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: Water supply in Gizo is inconsistent and unreliable. The existing water reticulation was designed in the 1950s for a population of 1,000 and cannot cope with the present demand. Approximately, 60 percent of households in Gizo which have access to the existing water supply (including shared communal stand pipes in three informal settlements) are not metered. This makes it difficult for the Gizo Town Council to charge households adequately for their water usage. The Gizo Town Council through the Western Provincial Authority has submitted a proposal to Japan International Cooperation Agency to upgrade the water system in Gizo, which is pending approval.

OBJECTIVE: To ensure that water supply is reliable and that water is accessible to all residents of Gizo.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a consultant to improve the existing water supply reticulation. (2) Identify new routes to link the old water line to the newly built water tanks. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders. (4) Design a detail proposal for the Gizo water supply upgrading.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A detailed design plan for the proposed Gizo water supply system is completed with associated costs.

STAFF REQUIRED: A number of qualified technical staff are required.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	PRIORITIES
<p>Capacity building exercises for the police and improved housing conditions.</p> <p>Regular police surveillance in the town.</p> <p>The Western Provincial Authority has an Environmental Unit to deal with environmental issues and climate resilience.</p> <p>The National Government through its Ministry of Environment and Conservation has set aside some funds to support relocation of the most vulnerable settlements in the country.</p> <p>Awareness programmes on climate change undertaken by NGOs.</p> <p>National Policy and Plans for climate change programmes.</p> <p>Planning regulations to restricts development on swampy land and on steep slopes.</p>	<p>Lack of funds.</p> <p>Lack of staff to enforce Town and Country Planning Act regulations that prohibit development in swampy areas and on steep slopes.</p>	<p>Large number of tourist attractions.</p> <p>Improvement of the image of Gizo town.</p> <p>Increase in economic activities such as tourism and wholesale and retail trade.</p>	<p>Lack of funds to implement security improvement programmes.</p> <p>Resistance to resettlements schemes by residents of informal settlements.</p> <p>People continue to build on areas that are prone to natural disasters.</p> <p>Some politicians do not support relocation plans for fear of losing votes.</p>	<p>Relocation of residents of informal settlements situated in places that are vulnerable to natural disasters.</p> <p>Provide a multi-purpose hall for youths in Gizo.</p> <p>Public awareness programmes about the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Provide recreational facilities and parks in Gizo for youths and the general public.</p>

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE N°1	Project proposal
	Develop a detailed plan for a multi-purpose hall for youth in Gizo

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 6 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, youth, and residents of Gizo.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, Gizo Physical Planners, civil society members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 25,000

BACKGROUND: Rising juvenile delinquency in Gizo has been partly as a result of the high rate of rural-urban movement, increase in unemployment rates amongst youths and the decline of cultural values in the society. One of the ways to address the unemployment problem among the youth is to create more social and economic opportunities for them to participate in a range of sports activities. The Western Provincial Authority continues to do little to improve youth's participation in sports, resulting in the lack of adequate public recreational areas and a multipurpose hall for the youth.

OBJECTIVE: To improve youth development in sports and create more socio-economic opportunities for youths in order to reduce the crime rate in Gizo.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a consultant to design the multipurpose hall. (2) Identify a site for the multipurpose hall. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders. (4) Develop a plan for the construction of the proposed multipurpose hall.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A detailed design plan for the proposed Gizo multipurpose hall is completed.

STAFF REQUIRED: A qualified architect is required.

SECURITY AND RESILIENCE N°2	Project proposal
	Develop local climate change and resilience plans

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 6 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, informal settlements residents and Gizo Physical Planners

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, Gizo Physical Planners, Ministry of Environment, civil society members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: Vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters is a major concern in Gizo as people continue to build their houses on steep gradients, along the coast and in swampy areas that are prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides and storm surges. Many people were affected during the April 2007 tsunami and refused to return to their original homes due to fear of a similar disaster occurring in the future. However due to land disputes and lack of clarity over the land tenure, areas for re-settlement were not identified causing some residents to rebuild their damaged homes along the coast. There is need to work together to better address climate change which often has negative effects on people's socio-economic livelihood.

OBJECTIVE: To improve the safety of the communities by ensuring that a risk assessment checklist is developed and compiled in all development proposals.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a consultant to design a risk assessment checklist. (2) Assess and identify areas that are vulnerable to urban disasters so that they are restricted. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders and communities on how to ensure these sites are not encroached on by developers or squatters. (4) Relocate communities that are located in areas that are most vulnerable to natural disasters.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: (1) A risk assessment checklist is completed. (2) Vulnerable sites are identified and restricted.

LAND AND PLANNING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	PRIORITIES
<p>Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project (SIISLAP) has made some improvements to the current land administration processes.</p> <p>Australian Aid Development Programme support to land administration and management within the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey.</p> <p>The Commissioner of Lands is willing to transfer Perpetual Estate land titles to the Western Provincial Authority.</p> <p>Gizo has a large land area for future expansion that can be utilized to increase its interval revenue.</p> <p>Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey has in place a work plan to provide for sub-division plans in the informal settlements for residents to acquire Fixed Term Estates.</p>	<p>Current land administration processes are lengthy and often not followed by the respective officers,</p> <p>Corrupt dealings exist within the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey with regards to land administration.</p> <p>Lack of adequate staff and resources at Gizo Lands Centre.</p> <p>Lack of subdivision plans for vacant land in Gizo.</p> <p>Poor internal revenue collection from land rents.</p> <p>The Western Provincial Authority has no budget allocation for planning and land administration.</p> <p>Lack of a human resources development policy.</p>	<p>Improved revenue collection.</p> <p>Provision of planned areas for new residential developments and quick allocation of land to developers.</p> <p>Reduced squatting on state land.</p>	<p>Political uncertainty and lack of budgetary support.</p> <p>Corruption still exists within the system.</p> <p>The link between the Town and Country Planning Act and the Lands and Title Act is tenuous, leading to the Commissioner of Lands granting areas of land to developers that are yet to be properly planned and areas reserved for future road expansion.</p>	<p>Improved land administration and planning processes.</p> <p>Develop a local planning scheme for Gizo including plans to upgrade informal settlements in Gizo.</p> <p>Improve the human resources capacity of the physical planning and the Lands Centre to effectively carry out their duties.</p>

LAND AND PLANNING N°1	Project proposal
	Develop a local planning scheme for Gizo town

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 12 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, Gizo Physical Planners, and informal settlements residents

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, Gizo Physical Planners, civil society members, and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 60,000

BACKGROUND: Gizo town lacks a local planning scheme to oversee different development activities through regulations and policy guidelines, leading to ineffective planning in spite of the existence of a Planning Board. Subdivision plans are done on an ad hoc basis and lack proper coordination, resulting in disorderly subdivision plans. While there is still enough registered land available in Gizo town, lack of effective town planning has resulted in increased land use conflict at the centre of the town. This may affect the future development growth of Gizo and effective physical planning is seen as a critical issue that needs to be given top priority. Such planning issues are likely to be better addressed by having a local planning scheme.

OBJECTIVE: To improve physical planning and orderly developments in Gizo town.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage two local consultants to prepare a local planning scheme for Gizo town. (2) Undertake wider consultations with the public and relevant key stakeholders. (3) Conduct workshops with key stakeholders and civil society. (4) Prepare submissions to the Gizo Provincial Planning Board and the Minister for Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A local planning scheme which is approved by the Minister.

STAFF REQUIRED: Two qualified physical planners.

LAND AND PLANNING N°2	Project proposal
	Design ways to improve land administration and planning processes

LOCATION: Gizo Town

DURATION: 6 months

BENEFICIARIES: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo residents and Gizo Physical Planners

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Gizo Provincial Authority, Gizo Town Council, Gizo Physical Planners, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, the civil society and UN-Habitat

ESTIMATED COST: USD 30,000

BACKGROUND: The process of acquiring state land in Gizo is lengthy and often subject to corrupt practices as the power to allocate state land rests with the Commissioner of Lands in Honiara. The long process has resulted in for increased illegal occupation of state land in Gizo. This problem was addressed by the Solomon Islands Institutional Strengthening Lands and Administration Project by establishing a Lands Centre in Gizo, but has not met expectations in the improvement of land management and administration due to lack of skilled staff and resources.

OBJECTIVE: To improve land administration so that it reduces the period taken to process land applications.

ACTIVITIES: (1) Engage a local consultant to review the current land processes as stipulated in the Lands and Title Act. (2) Assess and identify areas that need to be changed in the land processes. (3) Undertake consultations with relevant key stakeholders on how these changes can be implemented. (4) Review staffing needs at the Lands Centre in Gizo.

OUTPUT INDICATORS: A report of areas that need urgent attention and ways to implement better land processes is completed.

STAFF REQUIRED: A qualified land administration consultant.

CONCLUSION

The prolific growth of urban challenges such as poverty, socio-economic disparities, lack of public amenities, poor housing, environmental degradation, and increasing informal settlements that are poorly served with basic services, exist in Gizo. As an attempt to systematically document these challenges and to identify relevant policy interventions, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey has requested UN-Habitat for financial support to undertake the 'urban profiling' in Gizo town.

Gizo Urban Profile examined five key areas (governance, informal settlements and housing, the rural-urban economy, urban safety and resilience, and land and planning) and has highlighted that the ineffective town administration and poor urban planning and management of Gizo town is attributed to inadequate

and lack of technical and experienced human resources, limited financial support from the central government, poor internal revenue, and bad governance. However, there are avenues that exist to better respond to these challenges such as the current Provincial Government Strengthening Project's capacity strengthening programme, the recent establishment of Gizo Town Council and a Local Business Group in Gizo and the ongoing active participation of local and international NGOs, donors and national politicians in service delivery in both urban and rural areas in the province. There is need for the Gizo Provincial Authority to build and maintain an active development partnership framework with these stakeholders as such an arrangement would lead to effective local governance and a strategic move to improve service delivery throughout the province.

ANNEX 1: PERSONS CONSULTED FOR THIS REPORT

Bana Jonathan, Deputy Provincial Secretary, Gizo provincial government, Gizo, Western Province.

Buka Peter, Director of Lands, Land Centre, Gizo, Western Province.

Isaiah Pitakaka, Engineer, Solomon Islands Electricity Authority, Gizo, Western Province.

Kiko Ogia, Branch Manager, Red Cross, Gizo, Western Province.

Lebo Robert, Senior Tourism Officer, Provincial Government, Gizo, Western Province.

Maeke Alvin, Chairperson for Gizo Business Group and owner of Rekona Motel, Gizo, Western Province.

Mala Ismael, Senior Police Officer, Gizo Police Station, Western Province.

Manele Bruno, Environmental Officer, World Wildlife Fund, Gizo, Western Province.

Ms. Debitara Benice, Senior Police Officer, Gizo Police Station, Western Province.

Ms. Unusu Barbara, Provincial Women's Council, Gizo, Western Province.

Naphtau Fred, Chief Health Officer, Gizo Hospital, Western Province.

Rodi Silas, National Planning Advisor for Western, Provincial Government Strengthening Project, Gizo, Western Province.

Rove John, Provincial Police Commander (Ag), Department of Police, Gizo, Western Province.

Simbe Joshua, Senior Finance Officer, Gizo Provincial Government, Gizo, Western Province.

Sito Dalcy, Chief Education Officer, Provincial Government, Gizo, Western Province.

Steve, Local Tourism Operator, Gizo, Western Province.

Viuru Abel, Senior Lands Officer, Department of Lands, Gizo, Western Province.

Wickham Laure, Chairman of Gizo Town Committee, Gizo, Western Province.

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GIZO URBAN PROFILE

The Gizo 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.

HS Number: HS/079/12E

ISBN Number (Series): 978-92-1-132023-7

ISBN Number (Volume): 978-92-1-132493-8



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