

Rennell and Bellona Province Profile

1. Profile Summary

Rennell and Bellona Province is made up of two uplifted coral atolls, Mugava (Rennell) and Mungiki (Bellona) islands, including Gotoakau (the Indispensable Reef). This province lays directly South of Guadalcanal with substantial economic potentials in the Tourism and Cultural Industries, and Fisheries industry, whilst it is currently involved in Logging activities and at the initial stages of Bauxite Mining with much controversy.

To date Rennell and Bellona Province has come through 9th Provincial Assemblies with 11th Provincial Executives reflecting high political instability. Two Provincial Assemblies were suspended by the Ministry of Provincial Government in the 2nd and 5th Assemblies. The Provincial Assemblies and their Executives were suspended of their duties, allowing the Ministry of Provincial Government to administer and reorganize the functioning of the provincial government. The Suspension Orders were the result of weak leadership and political instability, non-compliance with Financial Instructions, and lack of proper reporting and accountability.

The current Executive is endeavouring to properly align all provincial administration with the Central Government to improve government services and focus on infrastructure development. This can be achieved through proper planning with strong and capable administration. The 3-year Rolling Plan is to instigate the reorganizing and strengthening of the provincial government administration based on the Rennell and Bellona Province Policy Statement 2015-2019. Effective coordination of service delivery and socio-economic development depends on the combined efforts of all administration staff and the implementing team.

Rennell and Bellona Province despite its small size and with a small population, the province has contributed in big proportion to Solomon Islands, and have participated in the country development in various sectors.

1.1 Topography and Livelihood

As earlier stated, both Rennell and Bellona islands are raised coral atolls, geologically pushed upward from coral atolls and lagoons, so that the outer layers of these islands are rims of hardened lime rock forming cliffs around the islands with height of about 70 meters to 200 metres.

At the centre of the uplifted plateaus are depressions, where the original atoll lagoons were, where most of the villages are found. Around the coast on both islands, at the bottom of the cliff faces that surround these islands, are thin and flat strips of limestone bed-rock which was the outer reef-bed of the original atolls. This strip around the coast of both islands is useable for settlement and generally protected by a layer of a shallow sea of 20 to 30 metres from the coast against direct storm wave damage. This shallow sea layer is bordered by a buffer of protruding lime rocks as breakers against heavy storms. The reef systems extending out after the breakers around both islands range between 30 to 60 metres before the drop into the deep-seabed.

The central depression on Rennell Island has two particular features for settlement and developmental purposes. The Freshwater Lake (Tegano) at the eastern part of the island and a number of soil pocket sand swamps within the limestone karsts plateau of the western part. Bellona Island is a single soil pocket the largest and most fertile of the soil pockets in these two islands said to be due to the presence of phosphate

in the island. The basin-like character and limestone karst rock and coastal cliff structures of these two islands are such that there are no natural means of soil erosion from the inland area to the coast with only the weathering of rock faces at the coast but there is evidence of continuous coral beach erosion.

The Indispensable Reef south of Rennell Island is a reef system of three separate submerged atolls which are geologically a formation similar to Rennell and Bellona islands. Representing a particular geological phenomenon and island-formation stage, this reef system has the marine biodiversity for research.

With an average temperature of 23 to 28 degrees Celsius and an overall annual rainfall of 4,000 mm, Rennell and Bellona islands have high humidity with prevailing South-East winds from April to November. The atmospheric block covering Bellona, Rennell, and the Indispensable Reef are subject to annual cycle of tropical cyclones (depressions and hurricanes) generally from January to March. With Climate Change, the occurrence of tropical cyclones are now changing and over 15 years, the province has not experienced major cyclones. There is a need to carry out scientific researches to provide the correct information to the communities who are vulnerable to these natural disasters.

The combined land area of the province is 1,154 square kilometres with a total population of more than 6,000 the population giving a density of 5 persons per square kilometre which is still below the national average of 14.8 persons per square kilometre. Due to emigrant and the mobile character of the population, Rennell and Bellona population density in average 2.2 persons per square kilometre.

Livelihood is generally rural subsistence, a traditional livelihood based mainly on farming, fishing, hunting and collecting, now complemented with the use of new tools and equipment. The island is still in its raw form and very little development taking place. Diet have change in the past few years with the introduction of logging and mining activities especially in Rennell island.

The main villages have a church building which are the centres for community programs and community togetherness. These churches are SDA, SSEC, Baptist, and Anglican. The Provincial government development plans and programs must be inclusiveness of village elders (chiefs, women leaders, youth leaders, and church leaders) who must accept ownership who will merge with the values that underpin village community living, and these are predominantly Christian-based beliefs and practices.

Rennell and Bellona people are very conscious of their traditions and cultures. The churches have change these traditional and cultural practices and many of these activities have disappeared.

(i) East Rennell Lake Tegano, World Heritage Site

Tegano is the freshwater lake at the eastern end of Rennell Island. When this island was geologically pushed upward from its atoll setting, the original sea of the lagoon was lifted with it and this was a large volume of salt water within the basin that became the lake. The lake is brackish water in most parts mainly in the interior and fresh water around the lake.

At 15,500 hectors Tegano is the largest lake in all the islands of the Pacific. With many rugged limestone islets, the lake is habitat to numerous endemic species, including the endemic 'sea snake krait' (*laticauda crockery sp*). Around the lake is a limestone karst terrain filled with a dense indigenous (native) hardwood forest, which is still in its natural (virgin) state and containing rich biodiversity with many endemic species. This include 4 species of land birds and 9 sub-species of water birds, 1 endemic bat species, and 7 endemic

land snails. The 3 main vegetation types around the lake are: low scrub forest along the limestone karst ridge that forms the coastal cliff face around the island; dense forest at the limestone karst interior of the terrain, with a canopy averaging 20 metres; and beach flora along the edge of the lake. The flora within the lake is dominated by 312 species of diatoms and algae, a small number of which are endemic.

The East Rennell total population is about 1,200 living in four villages at the south-western edge of the lake namely; Hutuna, Tegano, Niupani and Tevaitahe. The people live a subsistence live style, gardening, fishing, hunting and gathering. There are two primary schools, one theological vocational school, now closed, one clinic, a provincial government sub-station, and a number of simple tourist lodges.

With Climate Change, rising lake water levels adversely affect the farming of staple food crops, especially taro, yam, pana, and sweet potato. A newly introduced 'black ship rat' specie (*rattusrattus sp.*) brought in through logging and mining machineries landed in West Rennell since 2012. It is currently causing severe damages to garden crops and fruit trees including coconut.

East Rennell demonstrates significant on-going ecological and biological processes that mark an important island bio-geography site. It is an important stepping stone in the continued migration and evolution of species in the Western Pacific. Combined with the strong climatic effects, East Rennell is a true natural laboratory for scientific studies.

There are a number of other locations in the Pacific that better display some of the Marine, Coastal, and Forest values found in East Rennell Lake Tegano. East Rennell combines all these values in a single location and in a relatively undisturbed state to make East Rennell a significant and unique bio-geographic site, hence the interests in developing and strengthening Lake Tegano as a World Heritage Site.

(ii) Soil Pockets, Swamps, Forest, and Limestone Karst Plateau in West Rennell

The landform on Rennell Island is a jagged and eroded limestone karst rising to about 200 metres to form the outer ridge that drops into the coastal cliff face around the whole island. Within the inner basin of West Rennell is a terrain predominantly of limestone karst, with Soil Pockets that contain the mineral Bauxite. There are fifteen major Soil Pockets in West Rennell, with a greater number of medium and smaller ones. While the major Soil Pockets are made up exclusively of soil, a lot of the medium and smaller ones are made up of mixed soil and eroded limestone and the Bauxite make-up content is found only in the soil within the Soil Pockets, not within the rest of the jagged limestone karst terrain.

The Soil Pockets of West Rennell have been the agricultural bases of the communities, predominantly for yam, pana and banana farming. But there is also a huge number of swamps spread throughout West Rennell which are used mainly for taro farming. The current rise of the swamp water level and temperature have increased damages to taro farming and various explanations include the increase of water temperature and the existing of certain damaging insects that need to be addressed. The newly introduced 'black ship rat' specie (*rattusrattus sp.*) has also been causing serious damages on food crops and coconut plantations.

Forest hardwood, mainly of the Pencil Ceder tree, fills the whole Limestone Karst Terrain and the Soil Pockets of West Rennell. Being virgin forest with canopy average of 20 Metres, West Rennell has drawn interests from logging companies.

West Rennell has a Population of more than 2,000 people, a lot of whom reside in Honiara and abroad to study or work, and return only at Christmas and New Year periods for holiday and rest. West Rennell hosts the island only Tigoa airstrip and the provincial government headquarter namely Tupu'aki, a residue settlement from Mitsui Mining Company trial mining development in the 1970s that was left untouched after the company's withdrawal of their mining interests. The Solomon islands government retained this Tupu'aki area as a government station after returning the rest of West Rennell to the customary Landowners which was compulsorily acquired for Mitsui Company trial mining activities. At the inception of the Rennell and Bellona Province in 1993, Tupu'aki station then become the provincial headquarter.

(iii) Single Soil Pocket in Bellona Island

Similar to Rennell, Bellona Island is also surrounded by a jagged and eroded limestone karst rising to about 70 metres at the eastern end and sloping to 5 metres at the western end. These form the outer ridge that drops into the coastal cliff face around the whole island. Within the inner basin of the original atoll lagoon is a terrain of limestone karst that depresses from the ridge to surround the whole interior which is a single and the most fertile Soil Pocket in these islands containing the mineral Phosphate. At 8 kilometres long and 3 kilometres wide at the centre of the island, this single soil pocket hosts all 11 major villages (communities with Church building) of Bellona island along the single road that cuts through the island from east to west, with its total population of more than 3,000. This population, however, is very mobile throughout the year and has also developed into an emigrant population, mainly in Honiara. But national instances like the ethnic crisis at the turn of the century demonstrated the population pressure on the land when the majority of the Bellona population was forced to return from Honiara and other parts of the country. Also, the main villages are entrenched in church regulations and programs so that any development of infrastructures and services for tourism and cultural industries and hospitality services are not totally encouraged.

The need to create road access around the limestone ridge and outer terrain of the island has become more imminent for individuals and families to create breathing spaces for themselves and the main villages, and also to open up the possibilities of fully developing tourism and cultural industries and hospitality services away from the community and church regulations and restrictions of the village settings.

With El Nino-driven draughts in this province few years ago, Bellona Island was affected more because the Island is smaller and has no natural spring waters for gardening, drinking, washing etc. Major work need to improve water on the island.

1.2 History and Development of Government Services

Rennell and Bellona Islands lay at the southern part of Solomon Islands and are part of the group of islands and atolls called the Polynesian Outliers that form an arch around the main Solomon Islands archipelago. The inhabitants of Rennell and Bellona islands have a 26-generation traditional oral history to date of a westward return migration from Central Polynesia (between 1100 and 1400 AD) to island groups that were previously settled by Proto-Polynesians (2000 to 1600 BC) and Lapita Culture Polynesians (1000 BC) during the earlier eastward migration of Austronesia into the Pacific.

Oral history has it that people trace their origin from a single ancestor Kaitu'u, who came searching for two islands seen in a dream. They travelled from Uvea (Wallis and Futuna) and arrived in the province with eight families who came on eight canoes. While the archaeological remains of the original settlers on

Rennell and Bellona indicate they were of earlier Polynesian stock from the early Eastward Migration of Austronesia into the Pacific. On the two islands there were short black people of the pigmy stock they call 'hiti', hence the local term of 'tongahiti' for foreigner.

During the European Exploration era, these islands were on record, first sighted by Captain Wilkinson on board the British vessel 'Indispensable'. The first contact with the outside world for these islands however, was in 1890 when Bishop Selwyn and John Patterson went ashore on Bellona and Rennell. In 1933 when Dr. Lambert of the McGregor yacht expedition went inland on both Rennell and Bellona islands for anthropological recordings and vaccination exercises.

The inclusion of Rennell and Bellona islands into the formal Solomon Islands history was in 1897 with government official visitations took place every two to four years.

By 1970 the Legislative Council and Executive Council in Honiara were replaced by the single body Governing Council, as legislature, which was supported by five Subject Committees (Finance, Natural Resources, Social Services, Works and Communication, and Internal Affairs) that carried out Executive functions. Rennell and Bellona islands were included into the South Guadalcanal (Weather Coast) Constituency for the Governing Council, and continued with their Mugava Mugiki Council (MMC) administration as the government body at the community level. In 1976 Rennell and Bellona islands along with the Florida and Russell islands, became the Central Islands Council (later Province), separate from Guadalcanal. By this time too the Governing Council had been replaced by the Solomon Islands National Parliament, and Rennell and Bellona islands became a Parliamentary Constituency, with 3 Area Councils (Bellona, West Rennell, and East Rennell) developed from the MMC to govern at the community level.

In 1992 Rennell & Bellona islands were separated from the Central Islands Province to become a Province of its own, working within a single National Parliament Constituency but without the 3 Area Councils as these had been abolished from the national government structure. Set out in accordance with the Provincial Government Act 1981 (& 1997 amendment), the Rennell and Bellona Province for the past 24 years has been slowly developing as an administration with various developmental, structural and political challenges.

The need for a strengthened provincial administration is to ensure effective government service delivery to the communities and demand for a strong and functional administration with political will. The recruitment of experts with the local staff looks promising for the province. The province is yet to recruit a legal advisor with other specialised posts to be filled.

1.3 Demography

Currently with a Voter Population of more than 2,800, Rennell and Bellona total population is more than 6,000 (>3,000 in Bellona and >3,000 in Rennell). 41% of this population is made up of children at age 0-14 years and 28% are young people at age 15-34 years, a 69% children and youths. Most of this population lives in Honiara, or spend a large part of the year in Honiara than in the village communities of Rennell and Bellona islands seeking for better schools and employment but maintain electoral interests and voting roles during the national and provincial government elections.

1.4 Customary Landownership

Land Tenure system on Rennell and Bellona islands is individual ownership. The customs is land is passed from father to son, the first born son. There instances where land is passed to grandson or daughter or nephew depending on the family circumstances when the father does not have a son. All land plots on both islands have been demarcated throughout history and passed on to specific individuals and families that continue to demarcate and pass them on.

Existing legal proceedings over arrangements for industrial activities of logging and mining on customary land and the acquiring of land for government and investments is signed by members of the families decided by the traditional owner. Royalties and fees received are shared by the head of the family who is the first son who owns the land.

1.5 Analysis by Sector

(i) Education Sector

The focus is on the human resource development. The Provincial Education Authority manages office administration, recruit and oversee provincial teachers and link the province to the mother Ministry. The Education Authority administered a total of 76 teachers (52 male teachers & 24 female teachers) both in the Secondary & Primary Schools. Within the province are 4 Secondary or Community High Schools, 11 Primary schools, 1 RTC/Bible School and 3 Early Childhood Education (ECE) schools attached to primary schools and 2 Phoenix school privately owned.

Identified issues

- Lack resources for training opportunities specifically for female teachers
- People with special needs are not recognised in the formal education
- Lack resources to support education/school programs/activities
- Lack school awareness on women related issues either by Police or responsible Bodies
- Poor facilities for boarding females students
- Discrepancies in the recruitment of teachers and school enrolment (male/female)
- Lack school counselling or special attention especially to female students
- Lack sports equipment or Physical Education classes to boost self-built aspiration

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Special scholarship for female teachers/students (local/abroad)
- Ministry and province to provide resources (including sports equipment) to support school programs/activities
- Ministry/Province to set priority in providing better facilities for boarding female students
- Authority/School Principals to request responsible bodies to address women/youth/children related issues (via training/awareness)
- Engage school Chaplain/Counsellor to provide the needed services (inclusive)
- Education Authority to recruit Physical Education Teacher to focus on students physical fitness and sports development (inclusive)

(ii) Health and Medical Sector

Primary role is to provide health care promotion/awareness to the wider communities & schools. Treatment & management of patients (male, female, children) and control sickness breakouts.

Identified Issues:

- Lack resources to provide emergency services to remote villages (wireless radio/vehicle)
- Limited resources to mobilize Health Officers to provide mobile clinic & mass awareness
- Limited drugs/medicine to distribute to Tegano Clinic at East Rennell & Nuku Clinic at Bellona
- Lack staff houses (marriage and single quarters)
- Hospital installed facilities yet to fully utilized (dental and maternity facilities)
- No daily schedule program to allow for special programs like counselling etc

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Ministry/Province to provide resources for emergency services, mobile clinic and awareness
- Officer responsible to ensure the two clinics are supplied with drugs
- The need to build more staff houses and single quarters (inclusive)
- Director responsible to ensure officers are available to utilize hospital installed facilities for the needed services
- Special counselling to be made available to the public (inclusive)
- Resource officers to mobilize and carry out mobile clinic and services in the communities

(iii) Health & Environments Inspection & RWASH Sector

Focused on environmental health and providing clean and safe drinking water and proper sanitation for the Provincial Head Quarter, communities and schools. Regular inspection on Café/mini-restaurant, guest houses, schools, Mining & Logging camp to ensure maintain health standard. 'In Rennell and Bellona province would be regarded as the province with proper sanitation nearly for every household and it should be assumed that each household should have more than 5 tanks to sustain the households especially to go beyond the dry seasons' (ward profile data).

Identified Issues:

- Lack resources to mobilize officers to carry out regular health inspection
- Lack capacity for technical designs (inclusive).

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Ministry/Province to provide resources/logistic support to mobilize officers to effectively deliver services
- Provide funding for community safe drinking water & proper sanitation
- Engaged provincial Engineer to provide technical designs especially proper sanitation at certain villages

(iv) Agriculture and Livestock Sector

Provides farming tools and small income generating projects like poultry, piggery, vegetables etc to all local farmers (men & women). Also provides training to local farmers with demonstration skills (special/separate training for women groups). Responsible officer reporting to the Ministry on threat to agriculture product due to pests or other causes for better solution to improve family nutritional diet and good root crops harvest.

From observation, most gardening activities in Rennell and Bellona is carried out by women/girls. In the past, gardening activities barely done by women however, there has been a turnaround due to the daily revolve commercial activities and involvement.

Identified Issues:

- Lack resources/allocation to support women local farmers (Ministry/Province)
- Lack distribution of seeds/tools to improve farmers (women inclusive)
- Lack pesticides to control pests and ensure good harvest
- Lack training (demonstration) to equip local farmers (particularly women)
- Local farmers unable to access funds from Ministry/province (unclear channel of finance distribution)
- Lack market houses to encourage selling of local root crops/products
- Lack organised group to represent local farmers in addressing agriculture/farming issues

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Ministry/Province to resource activities that support & improve local farmers (particularly women)
- Division to carry out a wider distribution of seeds/tools and pesticides to local farmers to reduce pests and improve root crop harvest
- Division responsible to organise demonstration training to local farmers (separate training for women)
- Provincial officers to ensure the available funding is easily accessed by local farmers (special funding for women)
- Province as a priority to build a market house to encourage local farmers involved in commercial activities (other provinces are doing)
- Support local farmers well established a local Farmers Organisation inclusive (recognized by Institution/organisation)

(v) Women, Youth & Children Sector

Currently, sector looks after women, youth and children affairs and organising events (national/international). The office linked to MWYCFA and provincial women clubs to achieve objectives and encourage women involvement in activities and development.

Identified issues:

- Lack women policies (gender inclusive)

- Lack gender mainstreaming in provincial structure
- Limited resources/logistic support to carry out annual activities
- Children & those with special need not reflected in the provincial annual work plan/appropriation bill
- No clear/direct linkages between the province and existing women groups

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Develop a Provincial Women's Policy (gender inclusive) with wider consultation (women groups/schools)
- Include gender responsibility in JDs or recruit a personnel (focal point) to link sector to existing organisation/women groups(internally/externally)
- Province to allocate more resources for women/youth & children development and activities.
- Responsible officers to seek assistance from available donors/funders
- Strengthen linkages between Province & MWYCFA (decentralize resources)
- Specific allocation to support children and those with special needs (established centre/organised special events)
- Recognition and adoption of buildings and architectural design of public buildings such as schools, clinics. Administration buildings to have ramps for wheel chairs or for special need people to use.

(vi) Sport Sector

Generally, men, women and youths of Rennell and Bellona province are very keen in various sport activities. Some athletes represented the country in International events . The province missed out to host Solomon games due to slow progress in improving sports facilities however are annual events that can be captured in years to come. A number of sports events organised by individuals with attractive prizes which boost competition and sports improvement and development.

Identified issues:

- Lack/weak affiliation/registration of sports club/association to province and respective National sport bodies
- Limited resources/logistic support to carry out annual activities/sports events
- Lack sport facilities to improve participation and development (gender inclusive)
- Weak emphasis on physical education (PE) in school
- Lack Constitution (gender inclusive)

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Responsible officers to ensure sports club/association affiliated to the provincial sector (inclusive)
- Resource sector to improve sports facilities for sports event (inclusive)
- Education Authority to recruit Physical Education Teacher to improve students mentality, physical fitness and development
- Responsible officer work closely with sports club/association to develop Constitutions (inclusive)
 - Officer responsible to seek assistance from donors/companies

(vii) Fisheries Sector

Rennell and Bellona seas are rich with marine resources which people relied on for food security and livelihood. Fishing activities mainly done by men/youths except shell collection and simple fishing technique by women/girls.

Identified Issues:

- No female officers to carry out monitoring/tally/observer duties
- Limited knowledge on seaweed farming and other aquaculture farming
- Weak linkages between community and sector/officer
- Lack awareness on how to sustain marine resources (inclusive)
- Little commercial activities

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Recruit female officer to handle office administration duties, monitoring, tally etc
- Special training on seaweed and aquaculture farming techniques that can be easily managed by women
- Improve community based resource management and link community with MFMR (focal point of entry)
- Responsible officer to support individuals applied to the Ministry to obtain Fisheries Licence (inclusive)
- Engage Ministry for extension services & technical assistance
- Improve provincial planning to improve linkages
- Communicate with bodies like MSSIF – Mekem Strong SI Fisheries (NZ funded start 2008 in Phase II) for special consideration(inclusive)
- The fisheries sector should positively contribute to the income generating activities which was highly ranked at the third position as important to be addressed and compared to other major development (ward profile data).

(viii) Disaster and Meteorology Sector

The provincial geographical setting is vulnerable to natural disaster throughout the year and with climate change as a threat. There are officers on the ground that actively carries out their duties in relation to disaster and meteorology activities. In the Meteorology sector, monitored and provided regular reporting/updates on weather pattern in the province.

Identified Issues:

- Lack female officer especially in Meteorology due to the working environment, worked at odd & long hours suitable for male officers only.
- Lack support from communities due to internal issues

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Involve women in committees dealing with Disaster and Meteorology activities
- Responsible officers to organise community awareness (inclusive)

(ix) Commerce and Investment Sector

This particular sector is very important contributing and building economic development of the entire province. A good number of businesses operating in the province from observation mostly managed by women (family owned). It is a new chapter in the province where women are keen in operating and managing businesses not only benefitting own family but providing the needed services in the communities.

Identified Issues:

- Lack officer to manage sector and to implement annual activities
- Lack support/assistance to existing businesses
- Lack training on business management and basic book keeping (separate training for women)

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Ministry/Province to quickly recruit officer who will be responsible for this sector and implement annual plans (inclusive)
- Province to utilize on IPAM/Commerce/SISBEC training (personnel/materials) and have separate training for women
- Support businesses to get business licences from the provincial government
- Province to build commercial blocks (utilizing PCDF funds) to encourage more businesses within the Head Quarter area

(x) Police & Security Sector

This sector helped to keep maintain Law & Order in the Province. Deals with Civil cases (settle issues) and Criminal cases (handle minor, serious refer to Honiara). Ensure communities lived peacefully and people are law abiding. Conduct community/school awareness on new enforced National Laws/Acts. Community Officers were also recruited to stabilize communities and link communities to the province. Traditionally, the Polynesian governance system in managing Rennell& Bellona people is quite powerful and relevant in keeping communities and other social issues stable. According to the Tigoa Police records, most offenders are male with NO/rarely female cases dealt with, a good reflection of the moral standard of women within Rennell and Bellona society.

Identified Issues:

- Lack focal personnel for women social issues
- Employment male dominant
- Lack resources to equip police officers (inclusive)

Recommendation/Strategies:

- Provide focal personal to handle violent cases against women/girls
- Employ more female officers for gender balance
- Provide resources to mobilize police officers to provide security services/awareness (inclusive)

(xi) Forestry and Mining Sector

Rennell island potential for Agro-Forestry Farming and Reforestation of logged areas. The environmental effect and impact on the people and in particular women and children should be considered and mainstreamed into all mining and development activities

Identified Issues:

- Lack women involvement in decision making (not landowners)
- Young girls victimized/harassed due to outside people working with logging and mining companies

Recommendation/Strategies:

- women and children should be mainstreamed into development activities (logging and mining)
- Tough regulations enforcement on logging and mining officers who might involve in such offences.

(xii) Culture & Tourism Sector

The two islands Rennell and Bellona do have attractive sceneries that would be ideal for tourist visits the people with their Polynesian cultural way of life known as the Avaiki way to impressed and warmth visitors.

Identified Issues:

- lack quality services for tourist (inclusive)
- traditional arts and craft skills slowly dies out with no strong emphasis for preservation (inclusive)

Recommendation/Strategies:

- responsible officers to support/resource/trained existing businesses to provide quality services (inclusive)
- support to keep traditional arts and craft skills alive, might include in school curriculum (schools within Renbel province)

1.7 Divisional Employment by sector

Within the various sectors/divisions in the Province, employment is male dominant shown in the bar chart below (all core posts in the Administration are filled with male officers). However, there is provision in other sectors like agriculture, RWASH, Education, Health & Medical, SIWSAP etc where there has to be a female staff at post, to freely serve women. Division like Meteorology due to the working environment, worked at odd & long hours suitable for male officers only.

In forming provincial/community committees under each Division, composition requires that women & youths are inclusive like RWASH is doing, emphasizing the one plus membership (if a committee has 6 members 3 males & 3 females, has to be another female member – 1 plus). In the education sector, the second chance policy which is yet to fully appreciate where pregnant girls can allow to continue with education (after delivery).

2. SWOT Analysis

2.1 Strengths

1. Geology: The only complete setting in the world of Raised Atoll geological development stages, from Submerged Atolls of Gotoakau (Indispensable Reef) to old Raised Atoll of Mugava (Rennell) and Mungiki (Bellona island); - Largest Fresh Water lake (Tegano) in the South Pacific, and only lake on a Raised Atoll;- Largest Raised Atoll (Rennell Island) and largest Submerged Atoll (Indispensable Reef).
3. Marine Biodiversity: Reef System biodiversity (Indispensable Reef, Rennell and Bellona coasts); Pelagic fish (Tuna) migratory channel and route; Tegano lake for Aqua-Marine Farming;
4. Minerals: Bauxite mineral on Rennell and Phosphate mineral on Bellona;
5. Forestry: Rennell island Virgin Hardwood Forest and logging interests; Rennell island potential for Agro-Forestry Farming and Reforestation of logged areas;
6. Agriculture: Taro on Rennell island;
Cattle Farming possibilities for Rennell Island;
Animal Husbandry (Piggery, Poultry, etc.) for both Rennell and Bellona;
Crop, Vegetable and Horticultural Farming for Bellona;
7. Health: Malaria-free;
Not too prone to epidemics;
Clean environment;
Functioning Clinics – 2 in Rennell (Tigoa and Tegano) and 1 in Bellona (Nuku);
8. Education: Functioning schools – 1 Vocational School, 1 Community High School, 1 Provincial High School, and 5 Primary Schools in Rennell; 1 Community High and 2 Primary Schools in Bellona;
9. Societal/Cultural: Rich Culture and Inherently 'Open' (Adaptable) to change and growth;
Cultural base of Hospitality and Empathy toward 'Traveller'/Stranger;
Active involvement of local churches in promoting Community Cohesiveness;
Strong chiefly system for local organizing;
Cultural base of strong youthful leadership;
10. Service/Institutions: Increasing Flight Schedules - Daily for Rennell and 3 times per week for

Bellona;
Functioning Airports - Tigoa (Rennell), Anua (Bellona);
Sizeable Air Space;
Functioning Breeze mobile signal at Tigoa (Rennell) and Ngongona (Bellona);
Internet Access in Henua/Niupani School (East Rennell);
Host to World Heritage Site (Tegano);
Usable Road systems around Rennell and right through Bellona;
Vehicles availability in both Rennell and Bellona;
Usable Log Ponds in Rennell as wharves;
Increasing shipping from Honiara into Rennell;
Functioning Sporting Pitches (3) and Courts (5) in Bellona;
Functioning shops and café at Tigoa (Rennell) and canteens throughout Rennell and Bellona;
Functioning Accommodations development in both Rennell (8) and Bellona (3);

11. Province: Existing Headquarter Station with some infrastructures for office and residence use;
Functioning Executive and Administration;
Existing Standing Orders, Financial Instructions Ordinance, Business License Ordinance;

2.2 Weaknesses

1. Mining: Much Customary Land-Owners discrepancies with acquisition and land representative processes;
No concerted Land-Owners efforts at securing company honouring of Agreements and Social Responsibilities;
No existing and coordinated Advisory Framework and Network over Legal and Agreements Processes, Environment, Finances, Social and Societal Implications, and Finances for Customary Land-Owners;
2. Forestry: No obvious Agro-Forestry or Reforestation programs;
No concerted Land-Owners efforts at securing company honouring of Technology Agreements and Social Responsibilities;
No existing and coordinated Advisory Framework and Network over Legal and Agreements Processes, Environment, Finances, Social and Societal Implications, and Finances for Customary Land-Owners;
3. Agriculture: Disease-ridden Taro farming on Rennell island without organized Agricultural attention;
No Cattle Farming efforts for Rennell Island;
Soil infertile quality on Rennell Island;
No Animal Husbandry (Piggery, Poultry, etc.) for both Rennell and Bellona;
No organized and supported Crop, Vegetable and Horticultural Farming for Bellona;

- Invasive species (plants, diseases, animals, etc.) brought in without quarantine support;
4. Health: Functioning Clinics – 2 in Rennell (Tigoa and Tegano) and 1 in Bellona (Nuku) – but not managed on full capacity and constantly without good medications;
Lack Health Aid Posts – Lavagu (Central Rennell) and Matangi (East Bellona);
 5. Education: All Functioning schools – 1 Vocational School, 1 Community High School, 1 Provincial High School, and 5 Primary Schools in Rennell; 1 Community High and 2 Primary Schools in Bellona – do not have complete teams of fully qualified teaching and administrative staff;
 6. Societal/Cultural: Cultural base of strong youthful leadership – with a current youth population that have not had the relevant Cultural Inculcation as base for their leadership roles;
Wantok system of remittance and support being utilized (and expected) with a Dole Handout Mentality;
 7. Service/Institutions: Functioning Airports - Tigoa (Rennell), Anua (Bellona) – but without the extended works and services to increase carrier capacity use and to establish airport customer services;
Functioning Breeze mobile signal at Tigoa (Rennell) and Ngongona (Bellona) – but without the extended networks to guarantee extensive and internet usage;
World Heritage Site (Tegano) – that has not been well organized to date (local organizing committees, linkages with relevant national and international management and funding bodies);
Usable Road systems around Rennell and right through Bellona – that need proper re-working and sealing;
Vehicles availability in both Rennell and Bellona – but without a proper mechanical workshop;
Usable Log Ponds in Rennell as wharves – but without proper wharves, especially one for Major Port Development;
Lack of basic services and infrastructure support services – power, water supply, etc.
 8. Province: Lack of Leadership and Ownership of Provincial Governance at the Executive and Administrative levels,
Lack of Accountability and Transparency,
Small government, small grant and internal revenue for governance;
Poor Revenue Collection exacerbates small budget setting;
Poor Executive and Administrative Financial Responsibility and Transparency practices;
Small Administrative setting and Lack of Capacity and implications on staff responsibilities and Accountability processes;

Lack Provincial Administrative Centres (Sub-Stations) – Tegano (East Rennell) and Bellona;

9. Land: Land is 99.9% customary

2.3 Opportunities

1. Investments:
 - Mining, Forestry, Fisheries, and Tourism;
 - World Heritage Site;
 - Agricultural eg Coconut, Livestock, and Horticultural Developments;
2. Government:
 - Solomon Islands National Infrastructure Investment Plan
 - PCDF;
 - RDP (MRD)
 - Various Ministerial Plans, Programs, and Projects
3. Donor Partners:
 - Various Donor Partners Programs and Projects
4. NGOs:
 - Various International NGOs Plans, Programs, and Projects
 - Solomon islands National infrastructure investment plan

2.4 Threats

1. Natural Disasters:
 - Annual Cyclone cycle (January to April);
 - Annual Famine period (February to April);
 - Periodic Draughts (once in 5 to 7 years);
 - Climate Change,
 - El Nino and La Nina cycles,
2. Government:
 - Policies, Plans, Programs, and Projects Mainstreaming and Streamlining character – Honiara-based vis-à-vis Provincial focus,
 - Non-devolved functions and Responsibilities vis-à-vis Provincial Capacitating and Development Programs,
 - Ministerial Investments arrangements (Forestry, Mining, etc.) vis-à-vis Customary Land-Ownership Rights/Roles and Compensations,
 - No structured Legal, Financial, Environmental, and Socio-Cultural Advisory Framework for Province and Customary Land-Owners over Investment/Industry processes and implications,
3. Donor Partners:
 - Inaccessibility and Undisclosed details and dynamics into Province,
 - Distanced and lacking consultative quality with province over development programs requirements and regulations,
 - Irrelevant programmatic purposes and interests to those of province,
 - Honiara-biased consultations and reports.
4. NGOs:
 - Inaccessibility and Undisclosed details and dynamics into Province,

- Distanced and lacking consultative quality with province over programs and projects requirements and regulations,
- Irrelevant programmatic purposes and interests,
- Honiara-biased consultations and reports.

Provincial Vision and Goals

3.1 Vision

Sustainable Development, enshrining Meaningful Quality of Life and Livelihood Prospective, is Advanced and Valued within the Governing Institutions and among the People and Communities of Rennell and Bellona Province.

This vision sets out to ensure provincial government is directed on a Sustainable Development path towards:

- Progressive, Peaceful, and Ecologically-Balanced communities that must thrive with both Social and Economic Opportunities;
- Empowering a Self-Reliant, Prosperous, Healthy, and Morally Cohesive population; and
- Dynamic, Responsive, and Accountable Leadership at the Family, Community, and Government levels.

3.2 Mission

To ascertain Sustainable Development such that Meaningful Quality of Life and Livelihood Prospective are Enhanced through Institutional Rehabilitation and Restructuring – towards Securing Good Governance, underpinned by the Rule of Law and Disaster Management in alignment with Climate Change; towards Guaranteeing efficient and effective Service Delivery with Capacitated Government Administration; and towards Enhancing Socio-Economic Growth through strengthened Infrastructures, Finances, and Investment Development.

This Mission ensures the Provincial Vision is borne as rationale for administrative, program, and project steps toward:

- A governance trajectory leading the people, communities, and institutions to ensure positioning of the province with the Social Relating and Societal Setting that enshrine Peaceful Co-Existence and Valuing the Rule of Law, to Empower a Self-Reliant, Prosperous, Healthy, and Morally Upright population;
- Strengthening Institutional Arrangements to enable administrative Smooth and Productive Governance, and Effective Alignment with Central Government, to affirm the Guaranteeing of Dynamic, Responsive, and Accountable Leadership at the Family, Community, and Government levels;
- Capacitating Provincial Administration to secure fulfilment of PGSP requirements over Key Administrative Positions, and administrative recruitment toward efficient and effective production with identified and developed Key Result Areas;

- Ascertaining Disaster Management, in alignment with Climate Change, Conservation, and Meteorological Services, to underpin socio-economic and infrastructural development that must create Thriving and Ecologically-Balanced Communities;
- Rehabilitating Provincial Headquarter offices and residences as Fundamental to production, delivery and sustaining of Government Services;
- Ensuring Infrastructural and Technical development for Education and Health & Medical Services;
- Securing and Strengthening Financial Services, Enterprises, and Investments as Fundamental institutional base for Socio-Economic Development.

4.3 Goals

The Provincial Vision and Mission underpin the developmental hopes and pursuits advanced for Rennell and Bellona Province through the following goals:

- (a) Acknowledge and Maintain Christian Principles while Enhancing and Sustaining Traditional Culture and Belief System;
- (b) Uphold Democratic Principles of Universal Suffrage, the Responsibility of Executive Government to Elected Bodies, and the Agency Relationship between Central Government and Provincial Government;
- (c) Espouse Transparency, Accountability, Responsibility, and Respect for the Rule of Law and Traditional Cultural Values as Foundations for Good Governance within an Administrative Structure that inherently adheres to Ethical, Principled and Honest Leadership in its processes and applications;
- (d) Respect for Human Dignity through Specific Support for the Most Vulnerable and those with Special Needs, and through Protection of Women and Children, in Sustaining the Principles of Equality, Social Justice, and Equity;
- (e) Promote active Participation and Ownership of Provincial Governance by People and Communities of Rennell and Bellona islands;
- (f) Share the costs and benefits of the development of Natural and Human Resources with all people of Rennell and Bellona Province, and with all other Provincial Governments and the Honiara City Council through the National Government;
- (g) Ensure Resource-Owners are accorded their indelible rights over all forms of Natural Resources within their Customary-Owned Land, fostering Just Rewards and Compensations to Land-Owners for the utilization of these Natural Resources;
- (h) Advance Government Investment into Institutions, Infrastructures and Services fundamental to Government Service Delivery and the Activating and Incubating of Economic Productivities;
- (i) Ascertain the establishment of basic Financial Services in Rennell and Bellona islands;
- (j) Facilitate Public Private Partnership in the Development and Incubation of Enterprises and Industries toward Employment, Self-Reliance, and Formalized Economic Productivity; and
- (k) Underpin Provincial Government Infrastructure and Socio-Economic Development Focus with Climate Change Considerations and Disaster Management Pre-requisites.

4.4 Objectives

The Objectives to ascertain the promulgation of the Underpinning Desires of the Rennell and Bellona Province Vision, Mission, and Goals are:

- (a) Engage in meaningful Reconciliation among the Leaders and Ordinary people of the communities of Rennell and Bellona islands, utilizing traditional means and in linkage with traditional values and culture, as the necessary Social Rehabilitation toward Peaceful Co-existence, that must underpin high spirit-filled Social Relating and secured Socio-Economic Development;
- (b) Promote Peace Processes and the Rule of Law, and reinforce the presence and effectiveness of Police and the Judiciary within the province toward ascertaining Sustainable Peace and thereby guaranteeing Sustainable Development;
- (c) Foster a greater sense of Unity and Respect among the people and communities of Rennell and Bellona islands through heightened Cultural Identity Consciousness and sustained Community Dynamics of Chiefs, Elders, Women Leaders, Youth Leaders, Church Leaders, Traditional Culture, and Sports toward Community Cohesiveness, as a fundamental provincial government contribution to the strengthening and sustaining of National Peace and Unity;
- (d) Focus the Capacity Development of the Provincial Administration to ascertain the Recruitment and Secondment of well-qualified and well-experienced officers relevant to the tasks of advancing a pro-active and hands-on government role in infrastructural and socio-economic development, and strengthening Institutional Linkages and Collaborations with Central Government;
- (e) Mainstream and Streamline the implementation of Provincial Development Plans and Programs into relevant Ministries and Organizations – Rehabilitation (Reorganize and Strengthen) of Linkages, Collaborations, Mainstreaming, and Streamlining relationships specifically between MPGIS, the Public Service, MEHRD, MHMS, and the provincial administration; and
- (f) Restructure (Support and Strengthen) Linkages and Working Relationships with relevant Ministries in the implementation of their programs and projects into Rennell and Bellona Province – MCILI (with specific attention on the MSMEs Policy), MMERE (with specific attention on Prospecting and Mining License Processes, Environmental Implications and Compensations, and Resource-Owners Rights and Royalties), MFMR and MCT (with specific attention on provincial administrative capacitating in order to attract and process Fisheries, Tourism, and Cultural Industries investments);
- (g) Advance Government Investments into – Fundamental Institutions; Infrastructures and Shipping Service establishment and development; basic Finance Savings and Lending Services; and Entrepreneurship and Industry Development, with an emphasis on Micro and Small businesses to be predominantly locally-owned, and utilizing an Incubation Strategy to allow for eventual entrepreneurial graduation into level-playing-field operations and competitiveness;
- (h) Align Fundamental Infrastructures directly with National Government Production Sector Reform Program for the Groundwork into a Growth-Centre Port, with required Land Reform arrangements; preparatory work on Energy, Water, Tele-Communication, and Wharf Infrastructures and Services; and concomitant preparations in this Groundwork for a Fisheries Investment into a Tuna Canning Plant; and

- (i) Mainstream Climate Change and Disaster Management to underpin all sectors and levels of governance and socio-economic development, to ascertain Climate-Proofing and Disaster Management requirements into all Infrastructure Development and Physical Planning; with Climatology and implications of Climate Change on Tropical Cyclone Dynamics to be the underpinning focus for international research; and Marine Bio-Diversity of Coastal Areas and Reef Systems to be utilized for researches into further implications of Climate Change and Cyclonic Damages.