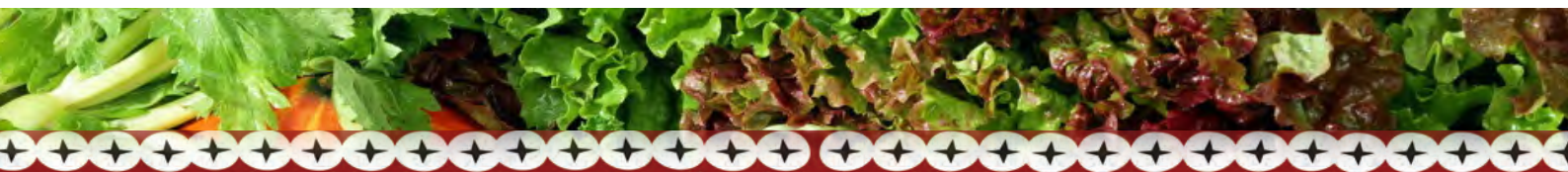


Solomon Islands Markets Profiles



Partners to Improve Markets (PIM)

2009

Uploaded by UN Women, July 2013.

National Context

Markets are a traditional component of Solomon Islands society, providing a forum for exchange of goods as well as a meeting place between different tribal groups. Shell money provided a vehicle for exchange with some standardization of prices as a framework for trade, but direct bartering remained an option. (10 porpoise teeth equating to the value of 10 coconuts, 19 stacks of tomatoes, 1-2 large fish, 5 small fish, or 100 taro (Bathgate, 1978 quoting the situation in Malaita from the 1920's to the 1930's). Some islander groups did not have access to land for food production and relied on being able to trade other goods (eg shell money and artefacts) to meet their food needs.

The introduction of the cash economy created a need for people to raise money to meet other demands, such as paying government fees and charges. Selling goods at the market is the main way that Solomon Islanders can convert their primary produce to cash. Much of the transport of goods to the larger markets relies on boat transportation, as there is little road infrastructure outside

the Honiara catchment. Many islanders are left out of the cash economy because they cannot get their goods to the market, or they are restricted to small village markets where there is limited cash to fund trade. The result has been significant migration from remote villages into urban centres, and from the provinces into Honiara.

A main driver to earn cash has been the need to raise school fees. The vast majority of women interviewed for this project indicated that this was the main reason for them bringing goods to the market. School fees are around \$400/yr primary, \$500- \$1,000 secondary yrs. 1-2, and \$2-\$4,000 secondary yrs. 4-5. On top of this there is money for uniforms (can cost \$300 for a single set). Some children don't go to school as a result. Some girls work to raise cash so their brothers can go to school. The Taiwanese Government is providing funding that will enable school fees to be waived in 2009, though there will still be substantial school related expenses. Community information about this significant change is limited, and has yet to be seen what impact it will have.

Transport infrastructure is a major factor in the functioning of markets. Comments made during the consultations for this project suggest that there is more limited access to cargo boats now than there was some 20 years ago, when the government operated a boat transport system. Some trade networks that previously operated (eg pigs from southern Guadalcanal reaching the Honiara markets) are no longer functional.

A Farm Fresh program has operated for some time in the Solomon Islands and is similar to initiatives seen in other Melanesian countries. This involves collection of fresh fruit and vegetables from producers and delivering produce directly to customers. At present this has shrunk to a small program limited to a 30km radius around Honiara, delivering mainly to expatriate consumers. It is intended to rebuild this up to a national program. It currently receives funding from the Netherlands Government.

Several micro-finance or group savings schemes have been initiated to help women traders and others raise venture capital for their businesses. A \$50 membership fee typically gives access to loans. Many of these have failed, but a few remain operational in particular areas, some managed at the village level. Some traders have opened bank accounts, with the ANZ Rural Bank operating a service which collects money from villagers on a fortnightly basis, in areas where there is good transport access. The aspirations for investment can be seen from the popularity of a current pyramid selling scam originating

outside of the Solomon Islands which involves purchasing a “biodisc” which is put in water, and then the healing water is sold. Those involved pay \$5,000 to join the group and must then sign up at least three others to get a return from this fee.

Much of the marketing network for the whole country is centred on Honiara. People from all provinces seek to supply goods to the Honiara market, and to buy goods in Honiara that they cannot purchase elsewhere. Developing a framework which can benefit women participating in markets requires recognition of these national networks of trade.

Life in the the Solomon Islands has been profoundly affected by the inter-ethnic “tensions” of 1998-2003. This was the bursting of a bubble of frustration that has been developing because of the scale of migration from Malaita to Honiara, and competition for resources with the local Isatabus people. Fighting started in the Central Market and quickly spread, also affecting local Chinese traders. Much property was destroyed and there was widespread damage to markets. Thousands of Malaitans fled the capital and returned home, as did people from other provinces. As well as foreign intervention, there were women's community based initiatives brokering peace between the warring factions, and some of these continue today. Women took a lead in calming the situation and finding ways of building positive relationships between Malaitans and the local Isatabus people.

Markets in Honiara

Governance framework

There are only two local governments in the Solomon Islands: Honiara City Council (which sits outside the Provincial Government structure) and Noro Municipal Council (the second largest settlement, in the Western Province). Honiara City council is the only government which has market by-laws gazetted, and it is governed by its own legislative framework. The population of Honiara is about 75,000 with 25,000 visitors at any one time.

The Council has a Division of Youth, Women and Sport, with the functions relating to women being relatively new. In 2006 there were some activities aimed at getting the community together, and in 2007 started with youth, up to the age of 30, including many young women. These women have expressed interest in marketing, and there are some women's groups also interested. Marketing is seen as the only way women can raise cash to pay for school fees. Current initiatives include overseeing a student survey of the sex trade, which involves market women and young girls from the Central Market.

Distribution of markets in Honiara

The Central Market was established in the 1950's (Bathgate, 1977). It quickly grew to dominate internal trade throughout the country, and retains this position today. It is around ten times larger than any of the markets in provincial centres. It occupies a prime site in the centre of the city, and has water frontage so that the boats can pull in. The level of use has outgrown the capacity for the present site but the Council wished to retain it. The strategy is to create additional markets to serve different parts of the city to relieve congestion at the Central Market.

A 1996 study of markets in Honiara identified two additional main markets, at Kukum and Rove (Pollard, 1996). None of these markets were covered, so that the women traders and their produce were at the mercy of the elements. In 1996 the Japanese government funded the construction of a large market house at the central market, which has much

improved the amenity for traders and customers alike. Other markets have also seen construction of some permanent shelter.

Rove market served the western part of the city, but this closed around ten years ago, but there is a residual group of around 20 betel nut and cigarette stalls, with people sleeping there overnight. The Council wants to close this down and open a canteen on the site. It is Council land but the market was illegal. The location is unsuitable for the market as the site is very confined and there is no parking space. White River Market has now taken the place of Rove market in serving the western part of the city, and is now the country's second largest market. It is located just inside the western city boundary, and it was formed during the tensions as an initiative of local women, bringing producers from the nearby villages together to trade with urban vendors. It operated for several years as a women's market, and secure tenure of the land was promised to them by the national government. However the market was closed down suddenly and bulldozed in 2007 and the land expropriated for private use. Since then a new market has grown in the same location with a mix of produce, but dominated by the betel nut and home brew sales. The Council has plans to close this illegal market.

In previous years the eastern part of the city has been served by Kukum market. However the main market at Kukum has also been transformed from a fresh produce market into a betel nut and home brew market. It is currently being closed down after it was leased to a private operator who has allowed people to live on site without sanitation services. It has become a space dominated by men in which women feel unsafe, so the produce vendors have moved out. The rent hasn't been paid and the market presents a significant environmental health hazard (feces in rubbish bins, and on the adjacent school sport field, rubbish accumulating and rotting, stalls built over a drain)/ The lease is being revoked and the Council intends to clear the site, build a new market hall, reinstate toilets and water supply and re-open it as a general produce market. It may be extended into part of the adjacent sports field before being fenced. The political climate in the context of the current eviction notices is such that field assessment for the present project has not been possible.

There is another market at Kukum which used to be a village fish market but which now sells a wider range of produce. This was formed by villagers belonging to the adjacent Seventh Day Adventist Church. The market is only open on Sundays (SDA members celebrating Saturday as the Sabbath), and it offers a unique opportunity for Sunday food shopping. The congestion of the Central Market and the erosion for trading opportunities at the main Kukum market has led to a rapid growth of the Kukum fish market, and it now spills onto the adjacent road reserve. Many of the traders are the same vendors seen at the Central Market during the week, and SDA traders may no longer be the majority.

There was another legal market in the eastern part of the city, which operated until a few years ago, near the site of the King George VI School. Known as King George VI Market this appears to have been a successful fresh produce market, but it was closed down when the land was allocated by the Council for private use. The market shelters and toilet block still remain on the site, which is as yet undeveloped.

Council has land at Naha in the western part of the city which it intends to develop into a fresh produce market, to be opened in 2009. There is an existing shed on the site, and the Council will install toilets and water supply, as well as fencing on the site. The site is around 3,500m² and there is a police station next door. The new market would serve a

local catchment including the hills around Borderline. To entice vendors in the market fees might be waived for the first three months.

There are around six small illegal markets located on road reserves around the city. These include the small betel nut market left at Rove, but others are at East Kola Ridge, Adaliua, Langa Langa(?), Skyline and Borderline, mainly betel nut and cigarette sellers but with some other produce stalls creeping in. There is also a small group of women craft sellers in the city centre who are constantly being moved on and who need permanent site.

Market Issues

(i) Wholesaling

There is a local view that markets are for producers to sell their wares, and that any form of wholesaling is undesirable. Those who buy produce from farmers to sell in the market are branded as “black marketeers”, and there have been moves in the past to ban on-selling. The present Council administration appears willing to turn a blind eye to it. At present the fruit and vegetable selling areas are equally divided between producers (on the western side) and on-sellers (on the eastern side). There are accusations that the practice of on-selling has raised food prices, and the fact that producers and on-sellers are often from different ethnic groups adds to the volatility of relationships.

The situation is made more complex by the increasing presence of producers from within Honiara City, who are able to commute to the market on daily basis. They produce small quantities of goods and are not likely to engage in wholesale trade. However many are from immigrant ethnic groups, and they do not identify with the village farmers. As in other parts of Melanesia, production from urban garden plots is increasing, and offers competitive advantage in terms of transport costs and time costs for reaching the market.

It is likely that large and small producers as well as on-sellers would benefit from a more rational framework for wholesaling, and this could also reduce prices to the consumer. This would be best achieved by a collaborative approach also including building awareness of the options available. If women producers could sell their produce for a reasonable return without having to sleep over in the market for a few nights each week with their goods, they would welcome having more time to spend farming. At the same time if on-sellers could purchase bulk goods at a wholesaling depot with predictable prices and considerably less antagonism than is displayed at present, they might be inclined to a more customer-oriented pricing regime (eg 30% mark up instead of the current 100%). The lack of wholesaling would appear to be considerable impediment to the economy at present.

(ii) Salt fish trade

The sale of salt fish has periodically been stamped out at the market, and the City Council appears likely to reinforce a ban on its sale. This would displace around 40-50 traders, mainly women, and make protein considerably less affordable to consumers. However it would provide incentives for more production by local fishermen, who at present are undercut by the cheap supplies of salt fish.

Commercial fishing trawlers working off the Solomon Islands coastline supply their catch to fish canneries. However the by-catch and any apparently damaged or second grade fish are separated and put in a strong brine solution. These fish are not supposed to be sold but there is a tradition of trading them for fresh fruit and vegetables, which are taken out by

villagers in small boats. The bartering of fish for fresh produce has more recently expanded to bartering for sex (see below), and recently there has been a steady sale of bags of salt fish to potential traders.

There is some concern that the salt fish being sold is unsafe, and several reports of food poisoning have appeared in the press. Traders soak the fish to remove the salt and then sell it on stalls, often claiming it is fresh. While the handling practices of salt fish may be faulty, the same can be said of fresh fish as some fishermen keep fish in their boats for extended periods without ice. Some customers in fact believe that salt fish may present less of a health risk than fresh fish. There would appear to be scope for a collaborative approach to developing solutions for the present dilemma. This might require involvement of consumer representatives and health authorities as well as vendors of both salt and fresh fish.

(iii) Sex trade

The trading of salt fish for sex has received much publicity in the local press and is a cause of much concern. However, there is also reported to be an active exchange of sex for boat passage between Auki and Honiara involving sellers of craft and other women, some as young as 10 years old. The overnight boats have a small number of cabins which are reportedly reserved for the girls, and they may cater for crews of around 20 men. Some time ago a group of women attempted to raise the price to include a monetary payment, but this was boycotted, and the prevailing price is the cost of a boat fare, around \$120.

The Honiara City Council has engaged students to carry out a survey of the sex trade, and there is anecdotal information available from a number of different agencies, but no-one seems to be taking steps to address the situation. It may be possible to work with women's groups and health agencies on developing an appropriate diversionary strategy.

(iv) Market by-laws

The City Council is in the process of redrafting and updating all its by-laws. It may be possible to develop a collaborative process for this, and to apply best practice or learnings from other jurisdictions.

(v) Craft market

The amount of space available for craft sellers in the Central market is very limited, and there are complaints that the fee scale disadvantages these people. There are women craft producers located on the roadside outside the market who have been moved on from previous sites and who currently have no place. In addition, there are aspirations for a women's market where craft could be sold. Creation of a market for goods other than fresh produce, including craft and clothing, would relieve pressure on the central market and may be in the interest of all stakeholders. To be successful, this might need a central location. Collaboration between stakeholder groups to develop a solution is highly desirable.

(vi) Betel nut sales

The betel nut trade is largely controlled by women, and can be very lucrative. The traders are often feeding their families well and sending their children to school. However, the Government is trying to stamp out betel nut selling on the grounds that it spreads disease. Some people consider there might be better ways of curbing betel nut chewing in public (eg enforcing fines) rather than removing this valuable source of women's income. Betel

nut selling can legally take place from kiosk outside people's houses if the seller gets a small business licence.

(vii) Women's market

Since the closure of White Rive, many women have aspired to reclaim a market of their own. The plans by the City Council to open new markets at Kukum and Naha might present an opportunity for a new market under lease arrangements. There are also possibilities for establishing a women's market near to the original White River site but outside the city boundary, subject to an agreement with customary owners. AusAID is funding construction of a women;s resource centre near the airport to the east of the city for the Guadalcanal Provincial Women's Council, and this could provide a base for women's enterprise that could then be extended into market places.

Markets Outside Honiara

The largest markets outside Honiara are located in the Provincial capitals, and are managed by provincial government. However there are many other markets located in other towns and villages, some of these on customary land and some on company land associated with major industries (palm oil, logging, gold mining, etc). Case studies are provided for a village market and a palm oil workers camp market, both in Guadalcanal Province.

AusAID has provided funding for the constructions of the market shelters at many of the provincial capital markets, as well as some of the other smaller markets in the provinces.

Rural Training Centres are established in all Provinces, with a network of smaller neighbourhood centres. Many of these are run by church groups. They deliver vocational training aimed at encouraging villagers to stay in their home communities and add value to local rural production. These centres could be an important vehicle for delivery of training relevant to production for markets including development of transport options.

Malaita Province

Auki is a small market, with the number of traders varying each day. Produce includes pineapples, cabbages fish, fish and chips, crafts (baskets). It is difficult to transport goods to market due to poor road conditions and no road infrastructure connecting villages inland to the market. The is poor infrastructure, with no water or toilets, and the market is unfenced. There are stay dogs in the marketplace, and betel nut sellers stay on well after the closing time of 6pm. It appears that the Provincial Government is not enforcing regulations. The used to be rubbish tip located next to the market, but this has recently been relocated (to just a short distance further away). The market is located at the port, and is used by people sleeping overnight waiting for passage. Auki market is due to be replaced, and there is an approved design for a new market shelter on a different sire, to be constructed with Japanese funding. This has been held up for some years by a land dispute, but this is reported to be resolved so that construction may now go ahead.

Malu and Silolo are accessible from Auki by truck, and each has their own market. It take around 3 hours to reach Malu, and Silolo is a further 4km. The market at Malu is held 6 days per week and it used to be as bis as Auki but seems to have declined in importance.

The market at Silolo operates two days per week but now seems to be bigger than the one at Malu.

Langa Langa is 1 day per week market, and involves fruit, vegetables and fish. This is home to a lot of craft workers who take their shell products (including shell money) into Honiara to sell. Traditionally these people had to trade shell crafts for fruit and vegetables as they have no productive soils.

An example of a grassroots women's group is the West Areare Women's Association in South Malaita which has been operating for ten years, and which is involved in training and business development, including the operation of a savings club that has made substantial community as well as individual investments.

Isabel Province

Buala has a big market with a shelter, and it opens 6 days per week.

Kaivang and Betana have smaller markets open one day per week.

Tatamba has an evening market once a week when cruise ships come in, with goods being transported by boat or on foot. Marketed goods are fruit, vegetables, fish, crabs, shells, mats, umbrellas and string bags.

Western Province

Gizo is a tourist town and used to have a big market. There was much destruction in the tsunami so it is smaller now, but still has around 80 traders. There is a women's house at the market which was used for preparing and selling cooked food, but the tsunami's damage done to this building has not been repaired and its use is currently limited. However the women's resource centre being built near the market (funded by AusAID) will provide for food preparation as well as other enterprise facilities. AusAID is not inclined to put further resources into Gizo as it is seen as a relatively prosperous town because of its tourism base. The Western Provincial Government has taken steps to improve market management, despite the fact that this is largely a Town Council responsibility, and updating the market by-laws is seen as a high priority by both levels of government.

Noro and Munda are the other big markets, operating 6 days per week. Noro has a market shed. Noro is the only centre, apart from Honiara, which has its own local government.

Seghe, Gasini, Batuna, and Bunikalo have smaller markets. Seghe operates 6 days per week but the others are only one day per week. Other small markets are located near schools and operate on school days.

Kolombangara Island is home to the *Sansama Farmers Group* which is a women's producers association. The group has its own boat, has improved incomes to farmers and has made community investments eg purchase of sewing machines and construction of a kindergarten. The EU has provided funding support. The co-operative transport and marketing model is currently being replicated by other villagers on the same Island, and could be of benefit to other communities.

Central Province

Tulag (main market), Taroniara and Yandina operates 6 days per week and have market shelters.

Boromole is a night market which operates for about an hour when boats call in, selling fruit and cooked foods.

Temotu Province

Lata has a big market shelter and operates 6 days per week. People enjoy having breakfast in the market as a social event.

Smaller markets are located by schools operating on school days. Smaller village markets operate on Saturdays. People take goods to market by boat, canoe (padding) and outboard motor boats.

Makira Province

Kirakira market is the biggest operating 6 days per week. Villages have their own small markets. Villagers go to logging camps to sell cooked food, vegetables and fish.

Guadalcanal Province

Villagers from the south coast used to be able to travel to Honiara to sell their goods (including pigs) by government boat, but this no longer operates.

Key Stakeholders

Honiara City Council (Wayne Hart Council Clerk, John Leigh Finance Director, Audrey Baeanisia Women's Co-ordinator, George Leamanna Central Market Manager)

The City Council is a very willing stakeholder in improving its markets. It is developing a locational strategy for new markets, closing some illegal markets and developing new by-laws. It would be receptive for the development of collaborative processes with market women in resolving some of the issues facing market development.

Ministerial Division for Women's Development (Ethel Sikimanu, Janet Tuhaika and Ruth Maetala)

The Division has suffered from poor resourcing but has recently started a round of consultations with women's groups so that there can be more effective mobilisation of women throughout the country on strategic issues. The first of these was a workshop with 12 representatives of women's church groups throughout the country, all of whom were interested in supporting the UNIFEM project.

National Council for Women (Ella Kaukue)

The National Council is the umbrella group for the Provincial Women's Councils, and is able to disseminate information and mobilise resources through this network. The Council is most interested in supporting the UNIFEM initiative.

Guadalcanal Provincial Council for Women (Mary Bollen)

Some of the members were involved in operating the women's market at White River. AusAID is funding construction of a women's resource centre which is being built near the Honiara airport (in a location that is removed from transport or services) which offers the potential for an entrepreneurial and accommodation base. The Council may be interested in putting in a bid to manage the rehabilitated market at Kukum, provided UNIFEM could offer some business planning and governance support. This could provide a good model for other parts of the country region.

Solomon Islands Christian Women's Association Federation of Women (Ethel Suri)

This is a peak body for the many women's church groups that are highly influential throughout the country. It is working with the Ministerial Division for Women's Development on bringing these stakeholders together for development of common strategies.

Solomon Island Business Women's Association (Freda Delight Kasoa)

This organisation has a registered credit scheme for women, lending around \$1,000 at a time, which appears to be working well. Other schemes are too bureaucratic (eg forms to fill in) and inaccessible because of training requirements. The Association also runs training courses and could be a useful partner in the UNIFEM Phase II project.

Vois Blong Mere Solomon (Josephine Teakeni)

This is a media organisation which has previously received UNIFEM funding. It has been interviewing market women and others to alert the community to issues of concern. There is a weekly radio program as well as a newsletter, and it appears to have good credibility within the community.

West Side Women for Peace Association (Alice Baekalia)

This organisation was formed during the tensions, and developed the White River women's market as a peace making initiative. Since the closure of the market it has been lobbying for women to be given their own market space again.

Dr Alice Pollard, Pasifiki Solomons Ltd and RAMSI

Dr Pollard was the author of an earlier study of Solomon Island markets, and she retains a key interest in market development. She would be interested in participating in the UNIFEM project as a consultant or advisory group member.

AusAID Community Sector Program (Mike Lowe, Grant Vinnery, Andrew)

AusAID is the largest donor agency in the Solomon Islands. Two key initiatives have been the funding of market shelters in different parts of the country (in response to applications from countries) and funding women's resource centres in each province, through the Community Sector Program. The managers of this program are most interested in developing a partnership with UNIFEM for Phase II as they have identified significant areas of common concern over the ways that markets could be improved for women.

EU Micro-Projects Program (Ronald Ivuputu)

The EU has a very flexible funding program for assisting in business development, and it also provides funding for establishing community based savings schemes and revolving credit funds. The Program Manager is most interested in developing a partnership with UNIFEM in relation to the markets initiative.

A workshop of stakeholders was convened in Honiara and the participants indicated strong support for addressing all of the issues identified above. It was felt that a good starting point for reform would be the market by-laws, with Honiara City Council and Gizo Town Council/Western Provincial Government keen to be involved in such initiative. It was also felt that an appropriate coordination body for women's participation in any reform initiatives would be the relevant Women's Council. However the Honiara Women's Council had become inactive in recent times and would need to be revived with the support of the other stakeholder groups.

Additional Agencies Consulted

World Bank

The Justice Program of the IFC has expressed interest in supporting the land claim being made by the women who were displaced from the White Rives Market. However our assessment is that this claim is not worth pursuing, and that a different site would be preferable.

The World Bank also has a Sustainable Energy Program, and the managers may be interested in making this available for market projects such as water tanks, composting toilets, solar lighting and waste recycling. This can be pursued at an appropriate time. The Manager of the Program is Ms Ana Tuionuku.

UN Desk (Small Grants Program)

The Small Grants Program (SGP) is a cross-agency funding vehicle that is currently orientated to environmental projects. While some of the initiatives flowing from working with market women could fit into the program parameters (eg waste recycling, use of fish by-catch) there may be more appropriate programs that will be less restrictive in the way that funds are applied.

UNDP and a number of other agencies fund financial literacy programs, and the feedback from grassroots women is that these are valuable. UNDP partners with the ANS Rural Bank in delivery of its programs.

The UN Desk Co-ordinator, Christina Carlson, has been informed about the UNIFEM project, and she provided useful advice about what various donor agencies might have and interest. She also voiced a concern on the part of the UN Desk that aid agencies has tended to put resources into Gizo and Malaita over the past few years, and that the focus need to extend to other provinces.

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GIZO MARKET

Although Noro is the capital of the western province, Gizo is its largest town. Gizo market is located on the waterfront of the small island of Ghizo, and is the second largest urban centre in the Solomon Islands. The town of around 4,500 people was severely affected by an earthquake and

subsequent tsunami in 2007, and despite much foreign aid there were still impacts from this destruction. Some households are living in tents, and repair of the damage to public buildings and infrastructure is not yet complete.





Gizo is a popular tourist destination, with a small but steady trickle of tourists, and a couple of hotels and a few guest houses which cater for them. The islands and reefs in the surrounding areas are both scenic and ecologically important. Diving and snorkelling is a popular activity for tourists.

Management

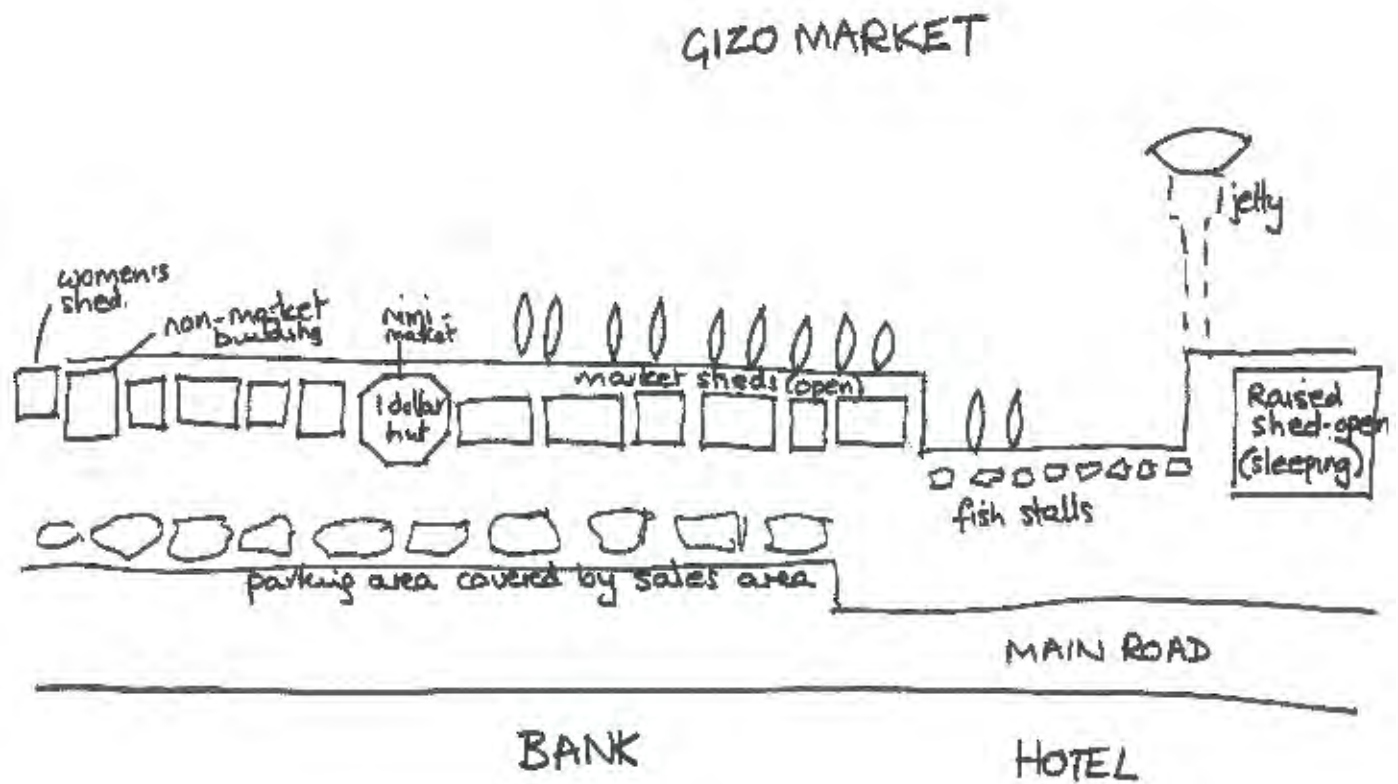
Gizo Town Council is responsible for the market, but its management is low key. It has by-laws but these are not enforced and have been virtually suspended by agreement with the Provincial Government. Opening hours are 6am to 6pm in theory but this depends on the inclination of the vendors. Stall fees have been frozen at \$1 per day per stall for some years, and rent is also paid for three lock-up shops - these are collected by the market collector. The Provincial Council collects additional licence fees from some operators. There

are five cleaners and a rubbish collection service but little else in terms of active management. There is no security despite the market being used at night.

The Provincial Government became concerned about the lack of management of the market, and established a market task force last year to oversee a clean up. This resulted in demolition of make-shift stalls and tarpaulins that had been erected by traders. There have been several attempts at securing funds for making improvements to the current infrastructure, but these have not yet been successful. The Provincial Government is undertaking recruitment of two enforcement officers who are likely to focus on food hygiene.

Physical Environment

The market consists of a row of fixed roofed structures, with tables and benches constructed on all four sides





of each structure. The design is not efficient as only the landward row of tables is used for display of goods, and the other tables and seats tend to be occupied by young or older male relatives of the vendors who pass the time playing cards or just hanging around. At the same time, the shortage of prime selling space means that produce is spread out on the ground over the designated parking area and pedestrian walkway, creating a second row of vendors parallel to the shelters. There are some trees providing shade to these selling areas.

There was originally some designation of shelters for different types of produce, with the shelter nearest to the jetty being designated for fish sales. However fish is actually sold from the pavement or vendors tables closer to the jetty, on hotel land. The Gizo Hotel appears to have made attempts to landscape this area by planting coconut palms but this has not so far deterred trader's. The fish hall is currently occupied by a few male stone craft vendors.

At the other end of the market is a lock-up shop that was originally intended as a women's business incubator, but it has been leased out as a trade store. Next to this is a building that has recently been erected contrary to area plans, used as a shop and computer store, with fuel sales occurring on the seaward side. This is a highly controversial development as it has been built on land earmarked for expansion of the women's building (see below).

The women's building is on the town side of the market, and was previously a commercial kitchen and restaurant. Much damage was done by the tsunami, and the ovens and fridges have been removed. It is still used on rotation by women serving cooked foods, but they have to prepare the food in their homes. There is no water supply so no possibility of washing plates and cutlery.

Betel nut sales have been moved out of the

market and funds are being sought for redevelopment of a secondary market in another location which could accommodate betel nut, as well as funds for the new main market.

None of the market has access to toilets or washing facilities. There is a large open sided building on the other side of the jetty which was built as a meeting place and performance area, and this is used by market traders for sleeping overnight. There has recently been much concern by the local hospital about the number of babies apparently being conceived in this shelter.

The market area is not fenced. As a result there is some scavenging by stray dogs. Two large information boards have been erected, but at the time of survey there were only a couple of small notices on display.

Boat transport is the main mode of carrying freight to and from the market, and small canoes regularly pull in and out of the waterfront along the market edge. Some of the traders own their own canoes, some women's groups have funded a co-operatively owned boat, and other traders pay for boat or land transport.





Social Environment

Traders

There are around 40 traders in all, with numbers peaking on Fridays. Most fresh produce vendors are also rural producers. A significant number of vendors sell cooked foods or processed foodstuffs. There may be only a few fish traders at the start of the day but there could be up to 30 traders by the afternoon, as fishermen bring in the catch. Many of the vendors come to Gizo by boat from villages on other islands, some staying for several days each week. On three communities on Kalambangara Island the local women have organised a co-operative marketing system, with women coming to the market in shifts, and pooling the transportation costs.

Customers

Many of the traders from outside Gizo spend much of their earnings on goods at the market that they take home. Other customers are local residents and international tourists.

Some agencies see the market as the prime means of communication throughout this part of the Western Province. Mail outs and brochures are distributed to traders and their customers in the knowledge that these will be taken back and distributed in their home villages. Dramatic performances have also been held at the market to promote particular issues, and are seen as notably effective when dealing with embarrassing issues such as personal hygiene and sexual health.

Crime and safety

No significant crime or safety issues are apparent during the daytime. At night there are up to 10 women sleeping overnight in the shelter near the market, and there seems to be a high incidence of harassment and possible sexual assault by men.

Use of Space

The number of market traders plus the inefficient design of the market shelters results in a considerable spillover of the sales area along land towards the jetty as well as landwards over the pedestrian and parking area.

Health and hygiene

Ironically cleaning and rubbish collection from the market area is currently better than in the rest of the town (though this situation may yet deteriorate as the rubbish collection vehicle is "on its last legs"). Fish sales present a potential health hazard as the fish is now being sold from an area without shade structures, and much of the seafood is fully exposed to the sun.





Participation by Women and Men

Around 80% of vendors are women. Men are involved in stone craft selling and some fish sales. Male fishermen tend to arrive in the fish selling area later in the day, after the catch has been made.

Economic Environment

There does not appear to be any trade in salt fish. It is reported that this is more of an issue at Noro, which is the capital of the Western Province, where there is a tuna cannery. Here the salt fish trade is linked with the sex trade, as in Honiara.

Flower selling is done on Fridays. Some sale of megapode eggs takes place but there is a decline in harvesting, and limits are being placed to allow species recovery. There is some concern about catching undersized fish

and illegal fishing in protected areas, so that sustainable fisheries is also an issue, despite little policing of this at the market.

There is no village banking service. The ANZ Rural Banking initiative is only available in Guadalcanal and Malaita. However the ANZ Bank branch just opposite the market appears to be well used by vendors from Gizo and outlying villages. The UNDP Financial Literacy training programs that have been rolled out in association with the ANZ Rural Banking initiative may be extended outside Guadalcanal and Malaita, and a UNDP officer has recently visited Gizo with this in mind.

Lack of cost effective transport from more distant villages is a major economic constraint, preventing goods from reaching the market and leading to wasted crops. Under the colonial administration each province had a cargo boat which made regular collections, but this no longer exists. One of these boats has been recommissioned as the ferry between Gizo and the island airport that services





this centre. If such a cargo service could be revived it would be desirable to include some refrigeration.

Case study: female fish seller

This woman is a widow who comes from Babanga, which is about 10 minutes away by boat. She makes trips to and from the market on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and she sits with two women from the same community. Her brother does the fishing on the previous evening and she brings the catch to the market, arriving around 8am. She returns when she has sold out, around 5-6pm, and her takings are around \$500-600 each day. She brings the fish by boat in a large esky, and stores the fish by her portable table in three small eskies. She sells in the open and doesn't have an umbrella, though she would like one. This vendor manages to put money aside each week, and saves with the ANZ bank at the market. The money she saves is for her children, eg school fees.

Case study: stone carver and seller

This man is from Ranoga Island where stone carving is a traditional craft. He travels to the market by boat for about one week each month, staying overnight till he has sold his stock. He expects to turnover \$1-2,000 worth of carvings in that time. Stone is collected from various places on the island, and some types of stone require payment to the customary owners (eg black stone collected from behind a certain waterfall). He tried to save \$150 from each visit, and puts it in the bank for his children. The rest of the money is spent on household goods such as food (in short supply since the tsunami).

Case study: female cooked food vendor

This woman comes from Titiana village near to Gizo. She starts cooking food around 5am, and then brings her curry puffs, coconut cakes and fish and chips to the market by truck around 7am, paying \$10 each way. She pays a \$1 stall fee and stays until around 6pm, after buying the ingredients for the next day at the market. Her turnover is around \$100 per day of which \$60 is profit. She does not save money, but rather spends her

earnings on food, rice and school fees. She has been trading at the market for a long time. This woman has 20 people living in her house involving three generations of her family, with the overcrowding being a result of the tsunami.

Case study: two young women selling coconut oil

These young women travel to the market by boat from Ranonga, and stay in Gizo for 3-4 days each week. Most of their sales are aromatic coconut oil which they make themselves. They also have some green coconuts, pineapples, pawpaws, lime (made from baked coral and used for chewing with betel nuts) and ngali nuts. They make around \$700 altogether from each trip. This is all spent on transport (\$150 return including cargo), food, kerosene and soap. These women occupy a covered area which was used by around 12 men from the same





village for socialising. The women see their highest priority as securing accommodation for overnight stays in Gizo, with access to a toilet and kitchen.

Case study: female seaweed seller

This woman comes to the market 1 day per week, traveling in from 6 Mile near Gizo. She collects seaweed the evening before and travels in by truck around 7am, which costs her \$10 each way. She finishes work around 6-7pm. She brings 2 baskets with her, and her takings are around \$110. This is all spent on food for her family. She does not save and she doesn't have a bank account, but her father has a passbook. She says the family has been very poor since the tsunami. She has 9 people living in her house: 7 of her 9 children plus her partner.

Case study: female fruit and vegetable vendor

This woman comes from the village of Sausama on Kalambangara Island. The women there have formed a co-operative for transporting and selling produce, and they travel to market in shifts using their own boat (owned by the women's association). This woman comes to market every Tuesday with 2 other women and 2 men to help with carrying the cargo. The journey takes 1.5 hours each way, and they leave the island at 6am to arrive at the market by 7.30, then leave the market at 5pm to get home by 6.30. There are 20 women in the association. The produce on sales at present includes tomatoes, slippery cabbage, corn, potatoes, pomelos, pawpaw, green coconut and lemons. The women might make \$1,500 from sales each day, of which \$100 is paid to the women's association for use of the boat. The association covers its costs and has also been able to make investments in community projects such as the local kindergarten. The vendor saves some of her earnings each week with the ANZ bank in Gizo, and she buys soap and rice. Her savings are used to pay for school fees and building materials. This vendor thinks the

priorities for market improvements should be provision of toilets and water, plus another row of market shelters parallel to the existing buildings.

The success of the women's association at Sausama has led to this co-operative model now being replicated in two other villages on the same island, Varu and Tanhuka. Some funding assistance has been received by the EU.

Existing Programs and Initiatives

The shelters were constructed some years ago, and JAICA recently funded construction of a cement walkway alongside the market. Funding for more improvements could be available from the Community Sector Programs but this would require a significant contribution from the Provincial or Town Council, so alternative unmatched funding is being sought from a US source.

The Provincial Government established its markets taskforce after media reported described Gizo as having the "one of the dirtiest market in the world" post tsunami, and this completed its objective of cleaning up the market





place over a three month period, but has not been able to follow on by replacing makeshift stalls with new shelters.

A new initiative of AusAID's Community Sector Program has been to construct women's resource centres within each province, and one of these is under construction in Gizo. It will provide toilets and overnight accommodation for women, as well as premises that can be used for business incubation. It is within easy reach of the market.

Challenges

- Accommodating the overflow of trading space within the physical confines of the site
- Provision of toilet and washing facilities
- Addressing the needs of women sleeping at the market overnight
- Reviewing the outdated by-laws

Opportunities

The new women's resource centres provides a potential source of support for women's initiatives at the market, including provision of overnight accommodation. This will

need development of an appropriate governance and business model.

Rural Training Centres are focusing on livelihood development in village areas, and this may include value adding to primary produce in locations that are currently too far to sell fresh produce at markets such as Gizo. Money saved for school fees (which will not be needed for this under the changed government policy) could be invested in equipment for these enterprises.

There may well be a demand for credit unions to serve remote villages, and the Women in Business Association could be a source of support for this. Some previous credit unions have failed because of the lack of external support.

Next Steps

The Provincial Council is keen to engage with UNIFEM in a collaborative process for review of the market by-laws. The Town Council is likely to give its support to such an initiative. Support is particularly strong on this issue as neither council has a legal advisor. This could be a first step in progressing a range of improvements.

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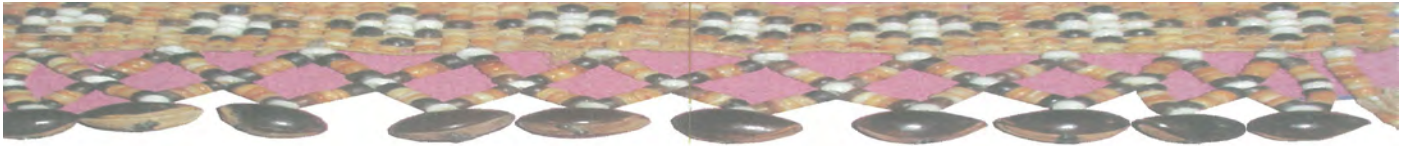


GPPOL 2

GPPOL 2 is the 2nd of two villages set up by Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd to house its workers. There is no market at GPPOL1. Nearby are a number of institutions: a correctional centre, a vocational training centre and a school complex (kindergarten, primary and high schools). The village has a population of around 2,000 and is around 35km from Honiara, along a good sealed road.

The market is held every day except Sunday. Villagers come from up to 60km away to sell fresh produce and cooked foods to the workers and their families. It is typical of markets set up in company towns throughout the Solomon Islands to serve workers camps involved in plantations, mining or the timber industry.





Management

The marketplace is owned by the company, which has constructed a covered market hall. Three women are paid \$200 per fortnight to clean the area, which they do every market day, finishing around 2pm. There are no market fees and no other services are provided.

Market hours are around 6am to 6pm, as dictated by the activities of the vendors and their customers. Some traders arrive late in the morning and leave by early afternoon.



Physical Environment

The market hall is a substantial building though it has a low roof which may make it hot when the weather is sunny. There are fixed market stalls and wooden benches to sit on.

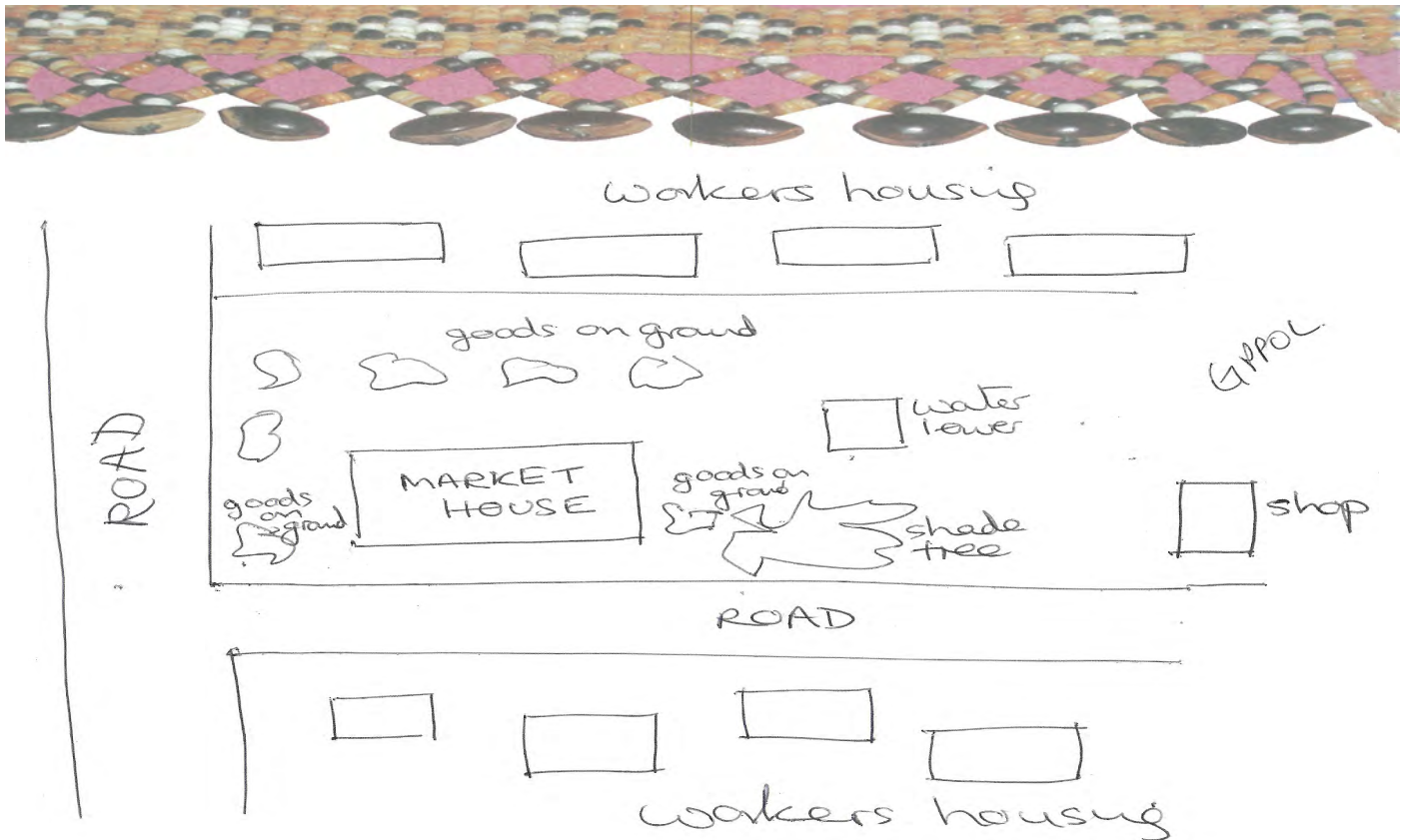
On most market days the market hall cannot accommodate all the traders wanting to sell at GPPOL 2, and a number of vendors spread their wares on tarpaulins over the adjacent open space. There is plenty of room, and some shade is provided by a large tree. The open area is gravel surfaced.

Rubbish is regularly swept up into small piles and removed by the cleaners in wheelbarrows. There is a small rubbish pile around 100m from the market which is burnt periodically.

As well as the market hall, the company has built a shop adjacent to the market area, and this is leased to one of the customary owner families from a nearby village. The shop sells a wide range of store goods.

There is no water or toilets at the market. However there is a large raised water tank in the market area which would appear to be capable of providing a cost effective water supply if the company was inclined to do so.





Social Environment

The market is clearly an important social space for women who are separated from their homes and families. Despite the newness of the company housing (it was built in 2005) the conditions are crowded, with only two to three rooms per family, and the women have no gardens for growing their own food.

Traders

At the time of survey the market was relatively empty, as many of the surrounding villages were affected by

flooding. Traders had stayed away because their road access was cut, or because they had to attend to repairs to houses and gardens. There were only around 12 vendors on site, compared with the usual 40-50. Many of the traders had brought produce from their own farms, but some had bought store goods, or cooked food to sell at the market.

Weather permitting, the biggest markets are held on the Friday after the fortnightly pay day for the workers.

Consumers

The consumers are the company employees and their families, who do not have land allocated for food production.

Crime and Safety

The size of the market and the fact that everyone knows one another makes for a safe environment. However there are a number of respected men who gather around the market and apparently intervene if there is any trouble.

Health and Hygiene

There is no ready supply of ice, but the market does not involve selling raw fish or meat. While it is not possible to comment on the standards of hygiene applied to preparing foodstuffs on sale, the market itself is kept scrupulously clean, and the cleaners wear rubber gloves. However the market area is not fenced, and dogs are able to scavenge around the market area.





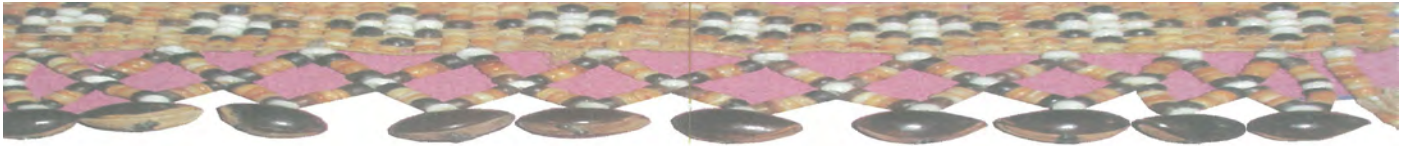
Participation by Men and Women

Almost all the vendors are women, the exception being two teenage boys selling soap. The cleaners are women.

Some of the women are very concerned about the wellbeing of their families because of the high level of chemical use by the company within the palm oil plantations. They claim that the heavy use of pesticides and herbicides and the lack of protective clothing for workers is making them sick, and several cases of illness were reported. The Provincial Women's Council recently held a summit at which these issues were aired. However the women said that when they raised these concerns with the men in the village they were told to shut up.

The cleaners are very concerned about their low pay, which makes it impossible to make ends meet.





Economic Environment

Wages for company employees are low for both men and women, with \$80-\$200 per fortnight being the reported range. While housing is free, the lack of disposable income limits the amount of trade carried out at the market. Some women think the children are poorly nourished as a result.

Because of the poor working conditions and salary levels, many workers have left the settlement to move to a nearby timber milling camp. This is a mill that was burnt down during the "tensions", but which has recently become operational again. The population of GPPOL is reported to have dropped from around 3,000 in previous years to the current 2,000 population level.

The traders from the surrounding villages do not make as much as vendors in Honiara, with \$80-\$100 per day being a typical level of earnings. Nevertheless some reported they were able to make regular savings. Women were putting money aside for either school fees or for investing in their houses and gardens.



Case study: young female seller of bread rolls

This woman sometimes sells cabbage, potatoes, fish cakes, dried coconuts or other cooked foods. She lives in the village of Numbu, about an hour's drive away by truck. Once a week she travels into Honiara to buy what she needs to support the next week's trade. This costs her \$50 for the return trip. She comes to the market on the other days, paying a truck \$20 each way for transport, and she travels with four or five other traders from the same village. Her daily turnover is \$100-150 depending on what she sells. The woman has three children who go to school in her home village, but she sometimes brings them to the market on Saturdays. She has an ANZ Rural Bank savings account and saves most of her earnings apart from \$20 she keeps for household needs. She is saving for investing in her house and for paying school fees.



Case study: elderly female seller of bananas and coconuts

This woman comes from the village of Soniuta/Bino, not far away. Her sons own a truck and transport her to and from the market. She only comes once a fortnight to sell produce from her farm. She usually manages the harvest on her own. She makes \$50-\$100 from the sale of her goods, and takes this home to spend in the village shop. Although she lives with a big family she keeps this money for herself. On the day of survey she had \$5 heaps of sweet potatoes, \$5 bunches of bananas and \$5 bunches of coconuts. She sets up her stall under an umbrella on open ground, some distance from the market hall.

Case study: three female betel nut sellers

These women travel around three hours each way by





truck from the village of Omokama. They sell in the market most days. They bring one bag of betel nut each from their own trees, and sometimes they sell other bags to traders who take them into Honiara. The nuts are on sale for 50 cents or \$1 each, depending on size, and the women expect to make more than \$100 each per day (but spend around half this on transport costs). They save a substantial portion (around \$200 per fortnight) with the ANZ Rural Bank and use this to pay for school fees. One of the women had four children and also had to support a sick husband.



Case study: three female market cleaners

These women work six days per week from when the market opens to 2pm, and get paid \$200 per fortnight. They are unable to save, and have to spend this money on meeting household needs. They go to the Central Market in Honiara occasionally after work, paying \$15 each way for transport, to buy food and other goods.

Case study: female seller of BBQ chicken

This woman is from a customary owner family in a nearby village. She raises chickens herself, 100 at a time. She pays \$13 per day old chick, and buys starter, grower and finisher bags of feed to bring them to maturity in six weeks. She parboils the chickens and cooks the rice and potatoes before coming to market, and then fries up the chickens on an open fire at the market. She also brings a pot of chicken stew to sell. She comes to the market once a fortnight and uses up around 20 chickens each time. The rice costs her \$26 but she uses her own potatoes. The food is popular and sells for \$15 per plate. She is able to take around \$800-\$1,000 each time she comes. She also uses some chickens to feed her own family. From her takings she keeps \$200 and saves the rest. She has been able to buy a car, which she uses to transport the food from her nearby village, and she is now saving up to make improvements to her house. She plans to build another house that she can rent out.





Existing Programs and Initiatives

There are no programs or initiatives targeting small markets such as those serving company towns.

Next Steps

To be considered in the context of UNIFEM priorities.

Challenges

The wellbeing of women in GPPOL 2 would be improved if the company provided access to land so they could grow their own food. However this would reduce the incomes of women in the surrounding villages who are currently selling their fruit and vegetables at the market.

Opportunities

There is a possibility of working with the Guadalcanal Women's Provincial Council on addressing the needs of women in company towns, particularly in relation to their health and nutrition.

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HONIARA CENTRAL MARKET

The Central Market is seen as a “melting pot” in terms of the mix of ethnic groups and the collection of produce from all over the country. It has developed as a market for fresh produce and fresh fish. It is located next to a boat ramp, so fishermen can bring their catches straight to the market – it is only around 50m from there to the market stalls. This is an important symbol of the value that Solomon Islanders place on the freshness of their fish.

Market hours are officially 8.00am to 5.00pm, but actually are more like 7.00am to 6.30 pm, Mondays to Saturdays. The Council is reluctant to extend trading hours because of the cost of additional overtime for staff (cleaners and security). However the need to provide for people shopping after work is recognised. Some rescheduling of shifts may help – the market manager works 6 days at the moment but could shed more of the load to the assistant market manager.

The market is a popular meeting place, and can be a barometer for the country as a whole. The inter-ethnic “tensions” of ten years ago first surfaced in the Central Market.



Management

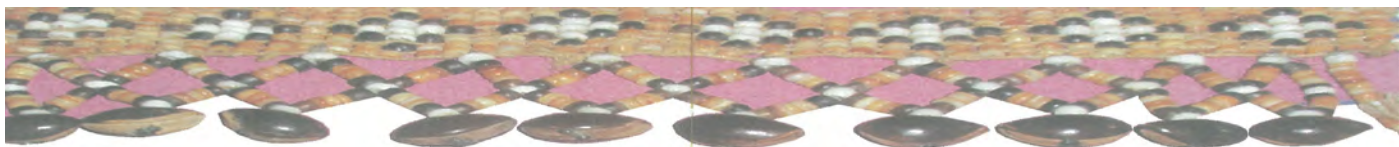
Management of the market is in the hands of the market manager, who is supervised by Council's Finance Director. Recent initiatives have increased the revenue produced by the collection of market fees, with more accountability for the money collected. In 2006 the total fees collected were \$782,000, while in 2008 this had risen to \$1,705,000. The Council is aiming for a revenue neutral position, with the takings reinvested in market improvements.

There are 6 full time cleaners, and the Council is currently sourcing skip trucks and a power spray. Security is provided 24 hours with employment of 8 security guards (previous contracts have been terminated as they weren't working). There are also 3 workers in charge of the ice house (ice maker and cold stores for fish). Currently the ice machine is leased, and blocks of ice are sold for \$40 each to cover costs.



Stalls are allocated on a first come first served basis, with some reserving their space the night before the market. It appears that some produce sellers prefer to sell outside the main covered area because their produce is more visible and they can reserve larger areas. Tickets are sold on the basis of 1m of stall space per trader, with prices relating to the value of goods on display.





This has created some concern amongst the craft traders, who have a high value of goods on display but low turnover. Ticket collectors collect from traders throughout the day and bank the proceeds daily. The Council revenue averages \$8,000 per day but can be as low as \$4,000 on a bad day. The income is more than balanced by expenditure under the new regime, especially when depreciation is taken into account. Council has taken over and rehabilitated an ice works (previously leased out), which runs at a loss for the benefit of fishermen and fish traders. The diesel generator has also been restored.

A police station has recently been established in the market, and this is seen as a successful move to eliminate crime.

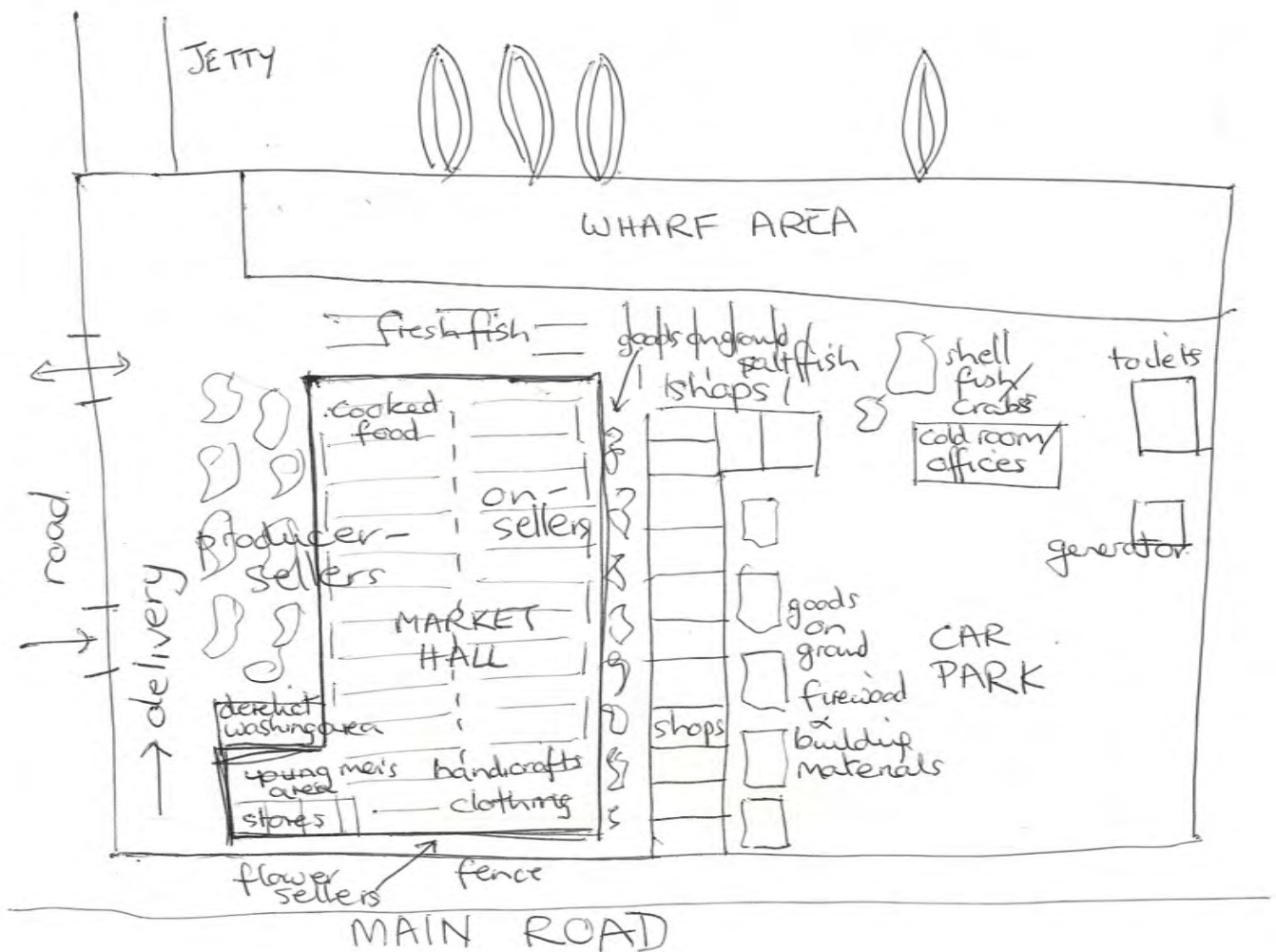
Vendors are allowed to stay after hours with their goods. They can start arriving around 2.00 am and some stay

overnight. The Council is proposing to provide lockable storage which could mean that women traders could find somewhere safer to sleep, but at the moment such accommodation is lacking.

There are 18 lock-up shops which were being monopolised by a few people but which are now open for tender to new businesses. It is intended that these will be business incubators for newly emerging businesses, and that at least some of the shops will be allocated to women.

No betel nut selling is allowed at the market. Also forbidden are card games and fund raising (eg raffles, lotto), and spruiking (eg churches). These bans were introduced in 2007 but only more recently enforced.





Physical Environment

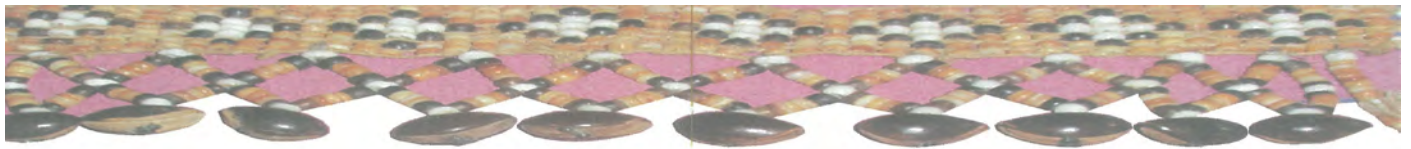
There has been a market at this central site since the 1950s. This operated without any permanent shade or facilities for several decades.

The total site area of the Central Market is 9,170 m². Most of the area is roofed by a large solid structure funded through Japanese Government aid in 1996. Some mistakes were made eg: installing underground power which has been destroyed by water and rats. The market has toilets and water supply. The market has just been fenced, with CLGF dollars, which is seen as essential to improve security. Up to this point the market had become a hang out for prostitutes, drug users and people selling or drinking home brew. The police, vendors and the Council collaborated on a major clean up.

Toilets are in a bad state of repair, but these will soon be fixed up. There is an ongoing problem of vandalism.

Vandal resistant fittings including a squat toilet will be installed. There is no charge for use of the toilets but paper can be bought from one of the cleaners (as a private business). Drains have been used as toilets in the past, particularly by those staying in the market overnight.





There is no water supply available to vendors as a result of vandalism of taps and hoses. The lighting system is not functional and the P/A system has been destroyed or removed. Much of the damage appears to have occurred during the tension of 1999-2000.

The power supply to the market, which relied on underground powerlines, has been destroyed by rats and water. An alternative power supply is currently being provided from a stand alone generator.

There are 17 lock-up shops on the eastern side of the market area, including three fast food shops. There is also a two story building which houses the market office, police post and other officers on the upper floor, and the ice maker/cold stores below.

Future plans including reinstating the lighting and P/A

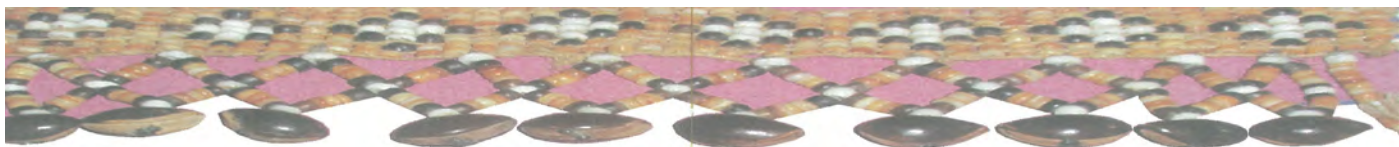
system, providing more roofed areas to the east and west of the main shelter, redirecting traffic to create a one way system through the market. One recent improvement has been to provide stools and chairs for vendors on a hire basis (\$3 per day) in response to demand,

The Burns Creek tip is being rehabilitated and will then be able to accept waste for another 10-15 years. However recycling banana leaves and coconut waste (= 50-60% of market waste) is likely with a private company showing interest.

Social Environment

The Central Market is seen as a melting pot for people from different ethnic groups, a meeting place and an important place to disseminate information.





Traders

The number of traders has grown from around 400 in 2003 to 650 in 2007 and up to around 800 on the busiest days (Saturdays) in 2009.

Around 90% of traders at the market are women, most of whom are also producers. The market accommodates around 600 traders. Malaitans are renowned as the most aggressive traders, and some of them buy produce off local people for “re-selling”. This is frowned upon by local people, but the Council is prepared to tolerate it. However the vast majority of traders are producers.

There is some ill feeling between the fruit and vegetable growers from Guadalcanal and the re sellers (sometimes termed “black market” sellers) who buy produce off the trucks for on-selling, often forcing down the prices. The on-

sellers are often people from other provinces, particularly Malaitans, and because they sometimes sleep over at the market they grab the best stalls under cover, so the village traders are often pushed outside. For producer-vendors, attendance at the market is often periodic. For this reason traders may be allocated different stalls each day).

A group of 30-40 flowers sellers (Kokabana Women's Group) has started selling on Saturday mornings only and this is proving very popular. An even larger group of craft sellers has just registered as a formal organisation: the Auki-Langa Langa Women's Association, with around 1,000 members. Most craft traders are from Langa Langa in Malaita, and these people recently organised a petition about their concerns to put to the City Council. There is some other craft from elsewhere in Malaita as well as Guadalcanal.





Consumers

There are estimated to be up to 1,500 customers present in the market at its busiest (ie: Fridays and Saturdays). A group of young women interviewed indicated that they came to the market once or twice a week, partly for social reasons.

Crime and Safety

The main problem appears to be fighting. Men who have drunk too much home brew may fight with knives, and there was a recent fatal stabbing. They also are disruptive to the market as a whole. Women argue and fight over men out of jealousy (affairs etc). Women who sleep with their goods at night have been very vulnerable to assault but the new arrangements for fencing and security should help. Petty crime is limited to pick pocketing, and this is sometimes targeted at foreigners, but presents a risk for all customers (men and women). Traders watch out for their customers. The crowding of produce onto the passageways creates an environment for this sort of petty crime. The Council is soon to paint the pathways and move people back. There does not appear to be much bag snatching or mugging.

The market appears to be regarded as reasonably safe by most customers, but there is one particularly dark area where young men tend to gather which feels unsafe for women. The young men often belong to gangs, and sometimes there are gang fights between enemy groups. Lighting this area is a priority for the Council. The recent fencing of the market is not always seen in a positive light, as some women feel entrapped. This probably stems from the eruption of violence in the tensions as well as their experience of ongoing fights.

Health and Hygiene

All vendors of cooked foods are required to have completed a course in food hygiene. There has been a particular concern about the practice of selling salted fish, this being the reject catch from commercial fishing boats offshore. This is likely to be banned in the near future. The situation is complex as the commercial fishing vessels supply canneries, and are allowed to give away but not sell the fish rejected for canning. The fish are put in brine, and were often given away or traded for fresh fruit and vegetables. Now the fish is being sold to small boats which re-sell on shore. Buyers soak the fish to remove the salt and then place the fish on sale. The Council is unsure about the level of risk this presents to health, but there are known hospitalisations as a result of eating fish that has deteriorated. The trade is seasonal, with the large commercial vessels (often foreign) being present for around six months per year. When available, the price of salt fish is a small fraction of the price of fresh fish (eg \$5 per kilo compared with \$40 per kilo), which has the benefit of making this food more affordable, but also undercuts a viable price for local fishermen. The sale of salt fish has been severely restricted by the Council in the past and is likely to be banned again in the near future.





Most of the cooked fish on sale (eg fish and chips) is salt fish. This is placed on sale in the morning and kept on display without any temperature control (hot or cold) until sold, sometimes all day. Fish smoking does not take place.

Toilets are in an appalling state, and the open storm water drains running through the market are sometimes used as urinals at night. There is no problem with stray dogs at this market place.

Participation by Women and Men

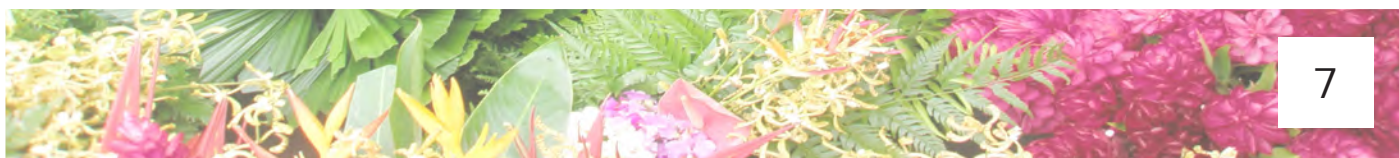
Women dominate the sale of fruit and vegetables, salt fish, crafts, dressed chickens and cooked foods. Men are dominant in the sale of fresh fish, building materials and firewood.

The lock up stores have in the past been monopolised by men, but a new tendering process is aiming for greater

gender and ethnic balance, with the stores being seen as business incubators to help people into business for the first time.

There is a substantial sex trade operating from the markets, with women trading with foreign commercial fishing boats. It is widely acknowledged that women travel out in boats at night, leaving from the main wharf. They trade both vegetables and sex for fish, including reject fish. Some prostitutes are as young as 11 years old, and some are married women (often operating with the consent of their husbands). A prime motivation for some young women is to raise cash to pay for school fees.

So far there are no women security guards. The Council is trying to promote women in other areas, eg: getting driving licences.





Economic Environment

The market is focused on fresh produce including fish. However other goods are on sale as well. The breakdown of traders present on a typical Saturday (ie: the busiest day) was as follows:

- 76 fish sellers (fresh and salt fish)
- 577 fruit and/or vegetable sellers
- 26 sellers of dressed chickens
- 8 sellers of green coconuts (for drinking)
- 21 handicraft sellers
- 22 clothing sellers
- 3 ice block sellers
- 50 cooked food sellers (mainly fish and chips, some scones and cakes)
- 10 sellers of local building materials (bamboo and thatch)
- 10 firewood sellers.

Flower sellers appear not to have been counted, and there are usually around 20 of these on Saturday mornings.

A total of 357 parking tickets were sold during this day. The number of traders on Mondays is around half that of Saturdays, and Tuesday to Thursday has 60-75% of the number of Saturday traders.

The areas allocated for sale of different goods is described in the market plan. The salt fish traders currently occupy an area initially intended for customer seating and dining. It is also used for sale of fresh fish in the afternoons when local catches of bonito are landed.

There is a clear demarcation between producer sellers, who occupy the western half of the market, and on-sellers who occupy the eastern half. Some people accuse the on-sellers of putting prices up, as they reduce the size of vegetable bundles and piles in order to gain a profit. The ethnic divide is evident, with immigrant Malaitans forming a large proportion of on-sellers.

Stall fees have been changed and related to the value of produce being sold, eg 1/20 of the value of goods displayed but then converted into a formula. Some vendors think they have been unfairly treated eg: doubling for craft sellers from \$5 to \$10, and some days they don't sell anything.





As fees have been based on the value of goods on display this may disadvantage sellers whose goods have slow turnover. It is reported that some traders have stopped going to the city market because of the increased fees.

Food prices have increased markedly over the past year or so, eg: with a bundle of greens increasing from \$3 to \$10. Increasing market fees may exacerbate this inflation. Young women who shop at the market indicated they usually spent \$20-50 twice a week, but women shopping for their families probably spend this amount every day.

There is no savings facility. There are no informal money lenders in the market. If money is borrowed it is usually from a wantok living in town. Some villagers give wantoks their savings to keep secure but then find they can't retrieve the money.

Case study: female craft seller

The craft sellers are mainly from Malaita and Auki, and they occupy a discreet area towards the street front of the market hall. They sell to tourists and to local people for ceremonial purposes. Most women work in their home villages for a couple of months and then bring their goods to Honiara to sell in the market over a period of one to two months. When in Honiara they buy bags of shells in different colours originating from Western Province for \$250 (10kg) and this makes enough for around 200 necklaces. The shell beads are made with a grindstone



(nowadays using electricity) and some are burnt to bring out the colour. They might make \$4,000 in sales, and it can be as much as \$150 per day on good days. However the cost of transport is \$150 each way for the boat to Auki and \$20 one way for the canoe home. A few traders have houses in Honiara but most stay with wantoks. This trader is angry about the increase in market fees, especially as the traders have to buy or rent their own chairs.

Case study: group of 4 sweet potato on-sellers

These women work as a group but each has her own produce to sell. They buy a bag each from villagers bringing goods into the market, for around \$150-200 per bag. They sell small piles of sweet potatoes and make around \$100-150 profit. They are charged \$12 per day in market fees for the shared area. The money they make is used to provide for household needs and a bit of pocket money. The traders come from Malaita but live in Honiara. One women has only just started selling, and has to support her husband and seven children.





Case study: female fruit and vegetable producer/vendor

This woman is from the village of Ruavalu, around 3-4 hours away by truck. She sets out at night to arrive in the market by opening time, and stays for 2-3 days at a time each week. The transport costs \$150 return. She grows and sells pumpkins, bananas, pawpaw, coconuts, pineapples, big leaves for motu, and other crops in season on her family's own land. She brings in five to six crates of produce at a time, pays around \$20 in market fees and makes \$700-\$1,000 per day. This is used to pay for rice, cleaning products, building materials and school fees. This woman has an account with the ANZ Rural Savings Bank which comes around to the village once every two weeks. She is usually able to save \$200-\$500 each fortnight.



Case study: female fish and chip seller

This young woman buys fish from the market sufficient for 2-3 days supply and keeps it in the fridge at home. She fries around \$100 worth of fish and \$130-\$150 worth of potatoes in the early morning and sells out by the end of the day. This makes 150-200 packets of fish and chips which are sold for \$5 each. She pays \$10 each way for a taxi and \$15 for market fees.

Case study: female chicken rearer and seller

This woman like others buys day old chicks from a Chinese trader for \$13 per chick, around 160 at a time. She pays \$270 per 40kg of feed (starter, grower and finisher feed) with 10 bags being enough to raise 100 chicks over a 6 week period. She may lose a few – five or more from each batch. She sells the chickens from an esky, plucked and dressed for \$70-\$80 each. She is not sure how much profit she makes but her husband understands this better. This trader only comes to the market on Saturdays and she pays \$6 in market fees, selling seven chickens on a typical day. This trader and other chicken sellers are unhappy that they have been

allocated space next to a very smelly drain, which is off-putting to customers as well as causing them to feel nauseous.

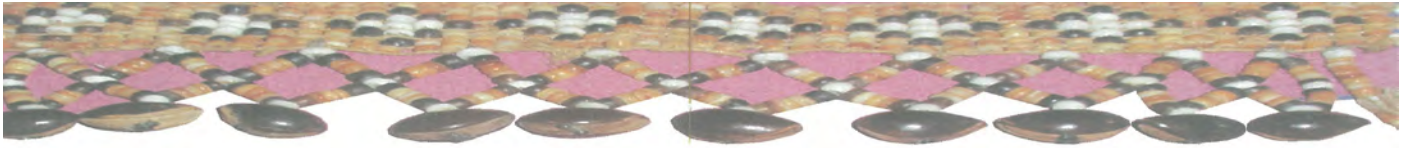
Case study: male fish seller (fresh fish)

This man travels to Ysabel by barge and brings an esky full of fish back twice a week (weather permitting). He pays \$1,600 for the fish, cleaned and gutted. He pays \$250 each way for his boat fare plus \$350 each way for the esky, plus a taxi fare of \$80 one way full, and \$50 one way with the empty esky. He sells fish for \$10 per kilo and makes around \$3,000 from his esky over a two day period. He buys ice from the icehouse (\$45) to keep the fish fresh, and stores the esky in a cold store overnight (\$12) plus he pays \$11 per day in market fees.

Case study: female seller of salt fish

This vendor lives in Honiara and she buys reject fish from the fishing boats, already salted through being soaked in brine. They pay \$100 for a bag of fish and can sell six bags per day, selling fish for \$15 each on average with 20 fish per bag. The fish are kept in two eskies and she pays market fees of \$11 per esky.





Existing Programs and Initiatives

There is a Task Force operating to improve the markets and squatter settlements, with the Council Clerk, Police, Attorney-General's Department and the Lands Commission meeting every week. Cleaning up betel nut selling and spitting from the main street is part of their agenda. There has been a focus on the Central Market but the work will move on to other legal and illegal markets in due course. Changing the traffic flow around the city market is a one recent initiative.

AP/A system is planned, which could broadcast messages or radio programs. Notice boards are also being put up to enable community awareness campaigns and other important information to be posted.

The lighting will soon be fixed up (this was wrecked during

the tensions) and there is a possibility of an evening market on Fridays.

Although the market is overcrowded and it can't be extended there is no intention to relocate it. Rather it is intended that other markets be opened up to relieve the pressure on this market. A once a month Sunday craft market is being considered. However the Council is keen to demonstrate to the Chamber of Commerce that it is not setting the market up to compete with the shops.

Challenges

Transport appears to be a significant problem for some traders, despite reasonable roads and a road freight system. Some villages have their own trucks, and most travel full. Villages regularly bring fresh fruit and





vegetables from within a 65km radius. However people coming from other islands often have complex and expensive travelling arrangements involving power boat, canoe, taxi and truck combinations. People from Auki might travel to the city market for a week at a time. Others come for one to two months, staying till all their goods have been sold. The cost of fuel has risen, impacting on road and sea transport.

Particular challenges for women in the future development of the market are summarised as follows. UNIFEM may be able to support a collaborative framework for addressing these issues.

(i) Wholesaleing

It is likely that both producers and on-sellers would benefit from a more rational framework for wholesaleing, and this could also reduce prices to the consumer. This would be best achieved by a collaborative approach also including building awareness of the options available. If women producers could sell their produce for a reasonable return without having to sleep over in the market for a few nights each week with their goods, they would welcome having more time to spend on farming. At the same time if on-

sellers could purchase bulk goods at a wholesale depot with predictable prices and considerably less antagonism than is displayed at present, they might be inclined to a more customer-oriented pricing regime.

(ii) Salt fish trade

The sale of salt fish has periodically been stamped out at the market, and the City Council appears likely to reinforce a ban on its sale. This would displace around 40-50 traders, mainly women, and make protein considerably less affordable to consumers. However it would provide incentives for more production by local fishermen, who at present are undercut by the cheap supplies of salt fish.

(iii) Sex trade

The trading of salt fish for sex has received much publicity in the local press and is a cause of much concern. However there is also reported to be an active exchange of sex for boat passage between Auki and Honiara involving sellers of craft and other women, some as young as ten years old. The overnight boats have a small number of cabins which are reportedly reserved for the girls, and they may cater for crews of around 20 men. Some time ago a group of women attempted to raise the price to include a





monetary payment, but this was boycotted, and the prevailing price is the cost of a boat fare, around \$120.

(iv) Market by-laws

The City Council is in the process of redrafting and updating all its by-laws. It may be possible to develop a collaborative process for this, and to apply best practice or learnings from other jurisdictions.

(v) Women's craft market

The amount of space available for craft sellers in the Central market is very limited, and there are complaints that the fee scale disadvantages these people. Creation of a market for goods other than fresh produce, including craft and clothing, would relieve pressure on the central market and may be in the interest of all stakeholders.

Opportunities

The National Women's Council would like to establish a women's centre in Honiara with accommodation and a space for marketing. AusAID has funded women's resource centres in all the Provinces (ie not including Honiara City) and one is being built to the east of the city, near the airport. This could provide overnight information for women visiting the city to market their goods, and there may be possibilities for manufacture of goods for market and for a small scale on site market.



The Market Manager in the Central Market is working on formation of a reference group of women traders. UNIFEM might be able to support this process and build a participatory governance system. The review of market





by-laws planned by the Council could be a participatory process with market vendors, and could make use of a reference group structure.

The Western Women for Peace Association is taking legal action to re-establish a women's market. The Auki-Langa Langa Women's Association has recently formed to represent the interest of Malaitan craft workers, and the Kalala Women's Association represents the interests of the Western Province craft workers selling on the road reserve in the city centre.

AusAID (Community Sector Program) and the EU (Micro-Projects Program) want to partner with UNIFEM in developing initiatives that will benefit women in markets. When the possible need for a savings facility was raised with the Council Clerk, he undertook to raise this with the local bank managers and see if one of the lock-up stores could be converted for this use. The National Women's Council was supportive of such an initiative and thought it would only work if the banks agreed to manage it. There have been many failed microfinance and investment schemes in the past.





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Formation of a National Advisory Group could be combined with establishment of shared priorities to be addressed by key stakeholders.







KAKABONA FLOWER MARKET

Kakabona is a group of villages with a total of around 3,000 people which lies around 30km west of Honiara. It is traditionally a farming and fishing community, though some residents commute to jobs in the city. The villagers are customary landowners but there has been some intermarriage with people from other localities including other provinces.

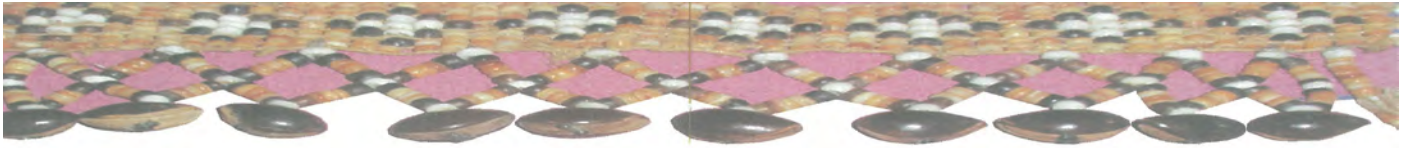
Over the past three years the women of the villages have developed specialist skills in flower and pot plant production, and they have established a presence within Honiara Central Market on Saturday mornings, involving around 20 local women. In the meantime they are building up their own market so they can attract customers to travel out from Honiara, so they no longer need to travel into town to make their money.

There is a string of small village markets located along the highway and beachfront, selling fruit, vegetables,

cooked food (BBQ) and fish. Pigs and live chickens can be bought from villagers on request. There are additional stalls selling pot plants and horticultural materials (coconut husks, mulch and compost etc) by the roadside.

The women from this area were originally involved in the White River Women's Market, which was closed down two years ago. That market had operated during the "tensions" as a forum for bringing together the village women with their produce and the city women trading store goods and other items. The Kakabona Women's Association is working with the West Side Women for Peace Association, and the Guadalcanal Provincial Women's Council to seek a resolution of the current land issue, so that a women's market can be re-opened in this vicinity. They would like a women's resource centre to be associated with this development.





Management

Kakabona ((Matna-ara) Women's Association has over 100 members drawn from eight villages. Members pay a subscription of \$50 per year. Three times a year there is a major flower festival for networking and training, building the profile of the local area. Each year the association prepares a strategic plan to take it forward. There are plans to go to Port Vila in future to see what women in Vanuatu are doing.

The market sites are on customary land and the Provincial Government has no role in management. There are no market fees, and cleaning services are provided by the villagers. The villages are governed by a traditional system involving a local chief and a council of elders which has specific representation from women and youth. This is said by the women to be effective in resolving management issues.

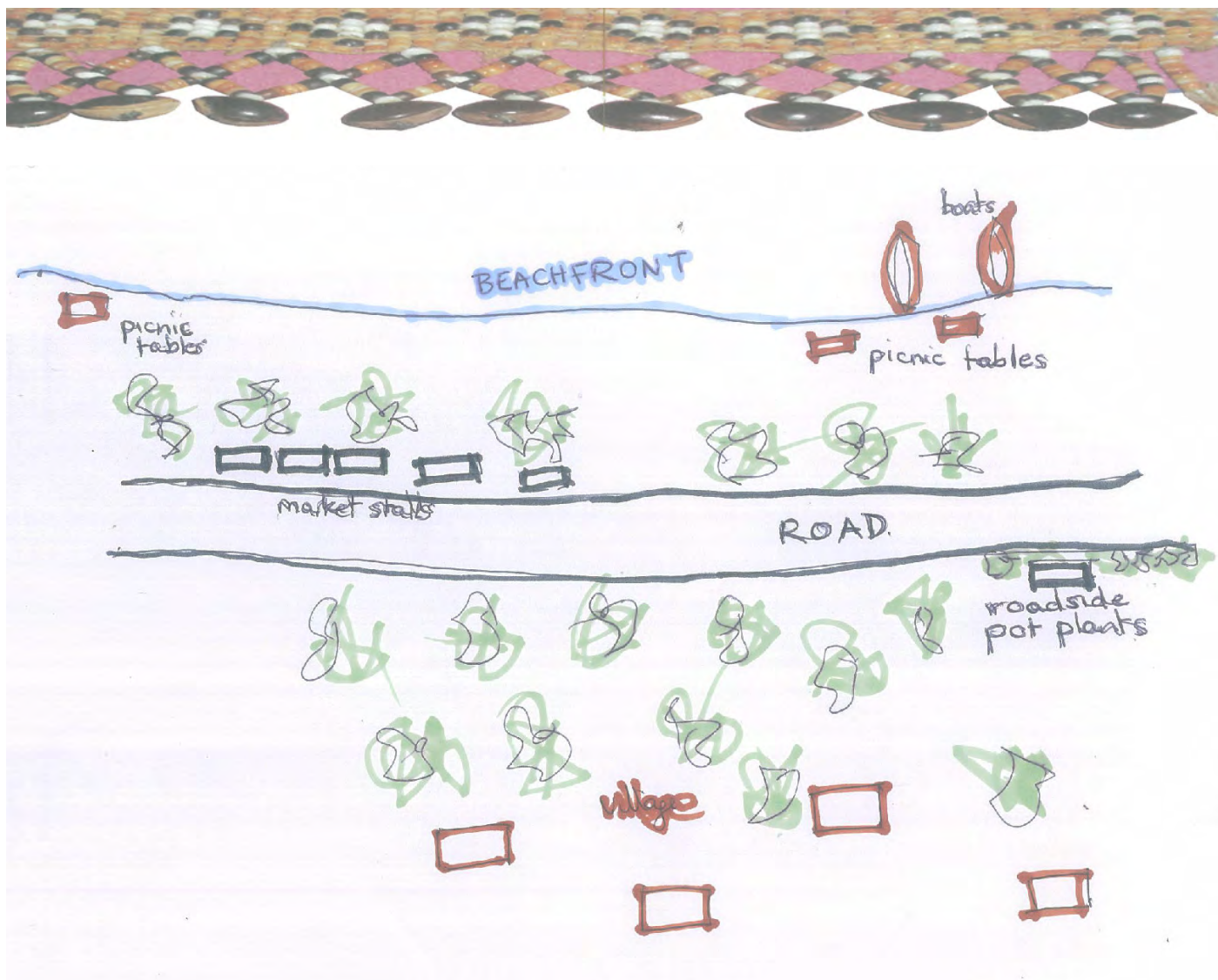
Physical Environment

Village beautification has been an important component of building the attractiveness of the local villages and their markets. Many of the women have nurseries and pot plants, and they trade species between themselves to build their stocks. There is an annual garden competition with prizes for winners as well as consolation prizes to give encouragement. The women have had training in horticulture and have a very professional approach to their production.

Some women are happy to show visitors around the village, including the landscape beautification, shade houses and flower gardens. There are visitors most days of the week.

The market stalls that are not associated with flower and plant sales are located along the beach side of the road, with some small clusters of stalls. These are rustic





timber and thatch huts with wooden stalls. There are also picnic tables along the beach. The market is a popular destination for people from Honiara wanting to buy some BBQ chicken or fish, and picnic by the beach.

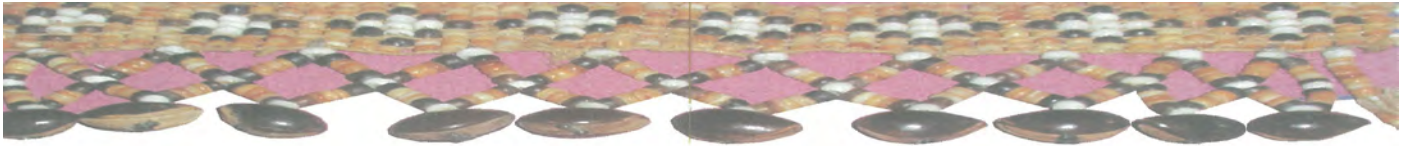
There are no set hours, with people setting their stalls up in the early morning and leaving when they have sold out. On Saturdays the market starts late, with most activity around lunchtime. There are no water supply or toilet facilities associated with the markets. However some of the villages are seeing major improvements to these facilities as part of the work of RAMSI.

The village environment is very attractive and comfortable, with gardens and houses shaded by a complex of palms (coconut, sago and oil palms), fruit trees and banana plants. The gardens are a dense mix of ornamental and food plants, and many households have established their own shade houses and nurseries. The village beautification project involved ornamental plantings of public areas and construction of some decorative stone paths.



Village Water Supply





Social Environment

Traders

There are 10-20 traders on any day, most on Saturdays. At the time of survey the number was far smaller because of the flooding, with some people being stranded by road damage and others repairing their houses or gardens. Most of the traders are women from the villages, and they sell goods produced from their own land. A few are involved in cooking foodstuffs they buy from the Central Market.

Customers

Buyers are largely people travelling out from Honiara, many of whom make a special trip to this market.

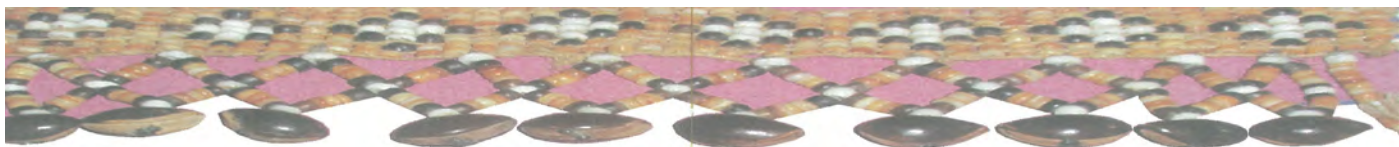
Crime and Safety

There is no problem with criminal activity. There is a potential problem of road safety if the market is busy as the villagers cross to and fro over the main highway. However for the most part this is not a busy road.

Health and Hygiene

The market area is kept clean. The fish being cooked at the time of survey was fresh, and both the meat and fish appeared to be handled in a hygienic manner.





Participation by Women and Men

The flower business is exclusively a women's domain, though the local men appear to be very supportive. One man makes a living from carving ornamental wooden canoes in which pot plants are placed for sale. The village beautification project has increased community pride shared by both men and women.

The market stalls are mainly in the hands of women though a few men sometimes take part. They have a role in handling heavier produce such as bunches of coconuts.



to travel in by truck, and they generally receive takings of around \$400 each for their flowers. Bunches are sold in \$5 or \$10 units, and include flowers and decorative foliage. They have been allocated a space at the front of the market which gives good visibility, but they are very exposed to rain.

Case study: female seller of local produce at Kakabona Market

This woman sells green coconuts for \$3 each and betel nuts for 50 cents. They are produced from her own garden, and she has other produce at different times of year. The value of produce sold is around \$100 per day, and she usually sells out by mid-afternoon

Case study: male coconut seller

This man sells green coconuts and bunches of coconuts from his garden. The value of produce on sale is around \$150 and he expects to sell this each day.



Case study: female BBQ seller

This woman buys chickens and fresh fish from the Central Market very early in the morning, and cooks food to serve for lunch or during the afternoon. She cooks two to four chickens each day and around six kilos of fish. Her takings are \$500-\$1,000 per day. This represents around double the cost of the raw meat and fish, with transport costs of \$9 per day (bus).

Case study: two young female betel nut sellers

These are schoolgirls who sell from trees in their own gardens on Saturdays only. The value of their produce is around \$40 each, and they are able to keep this for their personal use. Sometimes they sell fruit or vegetables, depending on availability.

Economic Environment

Many of the women have savings accounts with the ANZ Rural Bank, which collects money every fortnight. Money is made from trading flowers and other products on the roadside or in the Central Market, as well as supplying flowers and pot plants on a sale or hire basis to the major hotels and resorts.

Case study: flower traders at the Central Market

Around 20 women from the villages take flowers into the Central Market on Saturday mornings. They pay \$20 each





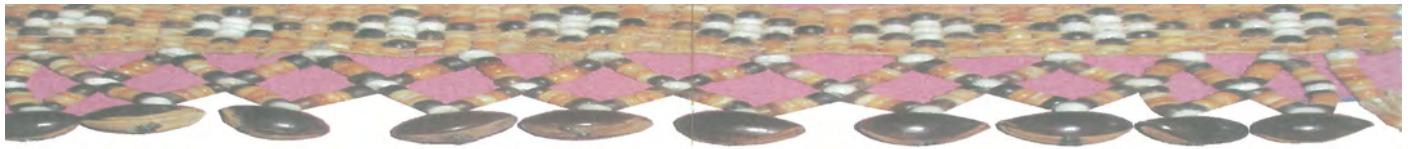
Existing Programs and Initiatives

The European Union (EU) has provided funding to the Association for town beautification and livelihood development (around \$100,00). The EU views this as one of their most successful micro-projects because of the strength of the women, and the broad base of support for the Association's governance.

Challenges

There is some potential for conflict between the objectives of the Kakabona Women's Association (with a focus on rural production) and those of the West Side Women for Peace Association (focused on urban livelihoods). At present, given the impasse over the land at White River, the Kakabona Women's Association is inclined to pursue its own objectives, which could result in some missed opportunities.





Opportunities

Some women would like to become more involved in tourism and hospitality, developing guest houses on the beachfront.

The impasse over the land at White River does present an opportunity for the Kakabona Women's Association, acting with the support of the village chiefs, to re-establish the previous women's market just outside the Honiara City boundary. It is likely that a parcel of land could be found which would be more suited to market development, ie with more space for off-street trading and parking. Moving outside the urban boundary would appear to offer additional protection from land expropriation by developers at a later date.

Next Steps

The Kakabona Women's Association, West Side Women for Peace Association and the Guadalcanal Provincial Women's Council are actively discussing how to progress the land issue. Once a strategy has been developed there may be scope for assistance in planning a new market, developing appropriate formal agreements with landholders and local government, and establishing an appropriate commercial framework for market development.

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Coconut husks used as mulch



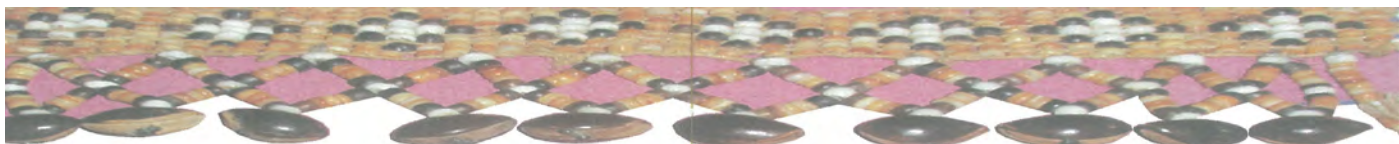


KUKUM FISH MARKET

There are two markets at Kukum. One is a general produce market which operates on Council land, but which has been leased to a private contractor for some years. This is a densely packed area of small wooden market huts, which through poor management has become a virtual shanty town. The lack of toilets led to the adjacent school sports field being used for defecation, which caused much concern. Sanitation is very poor, and the Council is intending to close it for this and other reasons. The area will be refurbished and re-opened under Council management. However the area available is quite small at around 1,435m², and it has yet to be seen how the market will evolve. The situation at this market was judged by the Council to be volatile, and not conducive to research at this time. The following documentation therefore focuses on the other Kukum market.

The other Kukum market started as a beachfront fish market, located opposite the main Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church. This is a Sunday market, largely catering for vendors who subscribe to the SDA beliefs, and who celebrate Saturdays as the Sabbath. However the market has grown rapidly in recent times, because of the congestion at the city market, and the lack of marketing opportunities elsewhere. SDA members have been joined by others, and fish stalls are outnumbered by fresh produce marketing areas. The market extends well beyond the original site along the pavement to the east and west of the designated site.



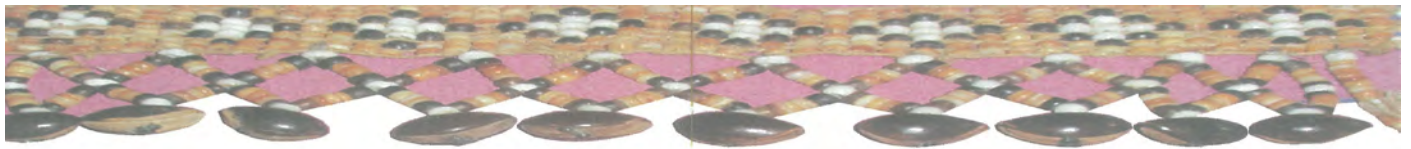


ABOVE: KUKUM MAIN MARKET (NOW BEING CLOSED)



ABOVE: FISH MARKET ON WATERFRONT - NOW SELLING FRUIT AND VEGETABLES





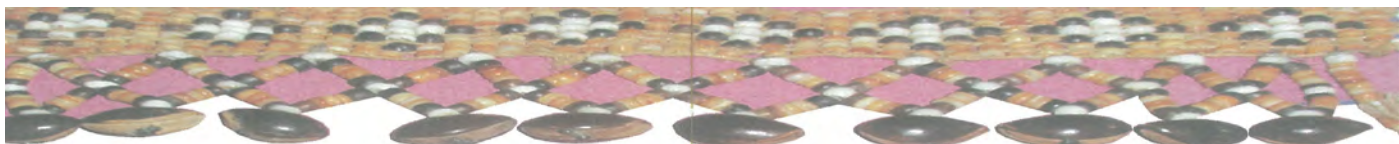
Management

Management is carried out by the private landowner, who collects fees of \$10-\$15 per trader (depending on the value of produce), and who employs two cleaners to clear up the site after the weekly market. No other services are provided.

It was reported by traders that pavement sellers are charged \$4 per stall, but the market owner denied that fees were collected from these people. Some fees are collected by the market cleaners. There is no security staff but the market owner deals with any trouble.

The market does not have any set opening hours, and traders start to set up their stalls and claim their space the evening before market day. Generally traders pick their own spots on a first come first served basis, but there is some separation of fish traders from fresh produce traders. The fish traders bring wooden tables for their wares, whereas only a minority of the fruit and vegetable vendors have stalls.





Physical Environment

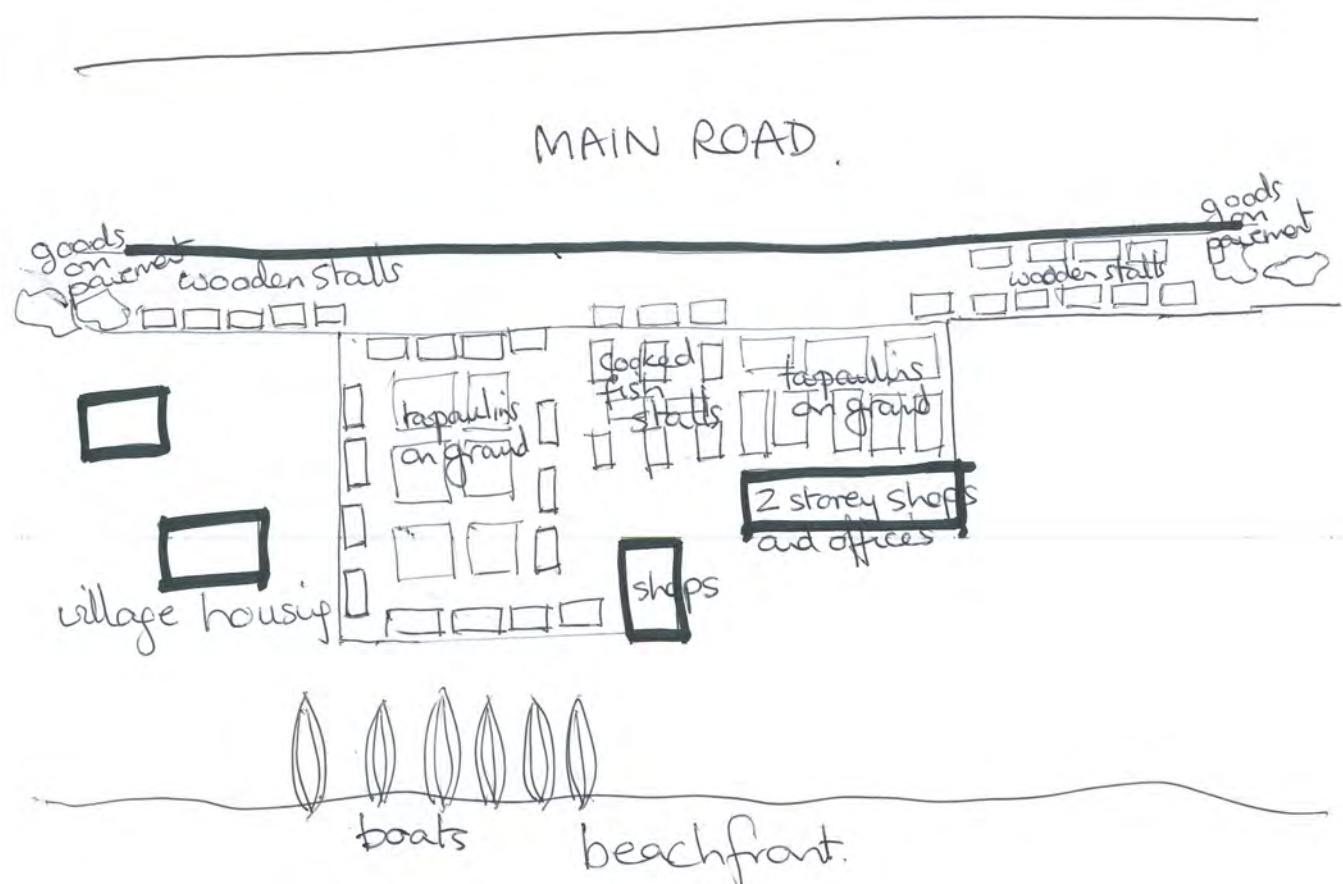
The market does not have any water supply or toilets. Green waste is burnt on site and the rest is removed to the Council rubbish tip. Generally the site appears to be reasonably well kept.

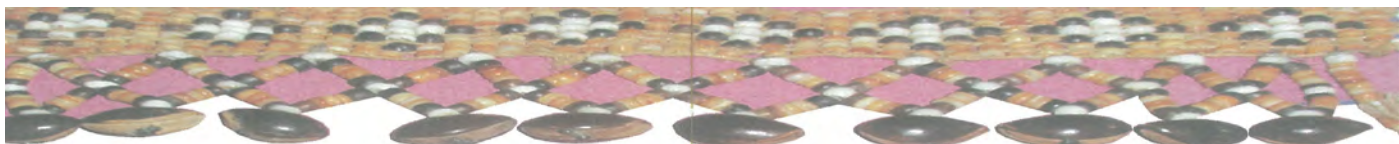
Some traders have set up their own stalls, but the majority sell their goods on tarpaulins spread on the ground, and use small umbrellas for shade and shelter.

The market spreads around several buildings which house a general store, fish and chip shop, and upper level businesses as well as the market owner's office. The parking areas for these buildings are taken up by the market on Sundays, with the result that parking is confined to the main road. There is considerable congestion with trucks, buses and taxis pulling up in the centre lane of the three-lane road to let out people or deliver goods.

Vendors all expressed the view that they should be provided with a market shelter as well as tables and

stools to sell from. The market owner reported that Council representative had indicated that they would try to source funds to erect a market shelter, possibly from the Ministry for Fisheries, and that they saw Kukum as Honiara's second market, but this does not align with the plans outlined by Council in consultations.





Social Environment

Traders

Many of the traders can be seen selling during the week at the city market, while others are only involved in trading once a week at Kukum. There are no goods being sold other than fruit, vegetables, fish and (occasionally) dressed chickens. The market owner considers that SDA members have recently been outnumbered by traders from other denominations. There is no formal organisation amongst the vendors, but the SDA does have a women's association which could provide a useful network.



Health and Hygiene

The Council is concerned about the selling of salt fish over extended periods. It appears that some of this fish may be sold over a period of more than a week.

Participation by Women and Men

There is a higher proportion of male traders at Kukum Fish market than at the central market, with around 70% of vendors being women. Some men are involved in selling fresh produce as well as fish.

Consumers

This is the only produce market in Honiara that operates on Sundays, so it attracts a crowd. This includes regular shoppers as well as families.

Crime and Safety

The main safety issue arises from the congested pavements and roadside traffic chaos, which created unsafe conditions for pedestrians and vehicular traffic. The market owner has been asked by the Council to draw a line restricting trading to the property, but he feels it is beyond his power to police what happens on the pavement.

There is also occasional disturbance from drunks stealing, but the market manager takes ownership of this problem (as they are often his wantoks) and he claims the vendors are often reimbursed by him.





Economic Environment

Case study: female fruit and vegetable producer and trader

This trader is from a village near GPPOL1, around one hour's drive away. She travels to this market every Sunday as well as the city market two to three days per week, returning home every night. She is a member of the SDA Church. She pays \$15 for the area of ground on which she spreads her tarpaulin, and she sells sweet potatoes, bananas and pawpaw. Her takings can be around \$150 net per day. Her transport costs \$100 for the return trip. She manages to save between \$50 and \$150 every fortnight, and this is collected from her at the village by the ANZ Rural Bank.

Case study: female seller of baked fish and vegetables

This trader only sells at this market on Sundays. She has no other occupation. She lives in the adjacent fishing village and she belongs to the SDA Church. Local small boats go out to buy salt fish off the fishing boats, and they on-sell to local traders. She buys around \$50 worth of fish on Saturday and soaks it in the evening to remove the salt, and bakes it overnight. She buys about \$20 worth of corn, cassava and potatoes from the city market and bakes these at the same time. She then sets up her stall around 7am and can sell out by 2pm, though sometimes it takes longer. The market closes around 5-6.00 pm. Her market fees are \$10. She gets between \$200 and \$500, which she then spends on household needs. If she saves anything this is put away in her house.



Case study: female salt fish seller

This woman only trades at Kukum market. She buys around five bags of salt fish from local sellers for about \$100 per bag. If she hasn't sold it all by the end of the day she takes it home and keeps it in the fridge until the next week. She can make over \$1,000 per day. Her market fees are \$10.

Case study: female seller of popcorn, capsicums, avocados and bananas

This woman sells fruit and vegetables on behalf of a neighbour, but makes most of her money from popcorn. She buys bags of corn from a "hot bread" store, and packs the popped corn in small sealed plastic bags, to sell for \$3 each. She buys 24 kilos of corn at a time for \$20 per kilo. One kilo can make 30 bags of popcorn which is what she expects to sell in a day.



Case study: female customer

This woman is a college lecturer who is busy in the week, so she finds a Sunday market to be very convenient. She buys fruit and vegetables sufficient to last most of the week, and does a top up on Fridays after work in the Central Market. She budgets \$100 per week for shopping in the two markets, but prefers shopping at Kukum. The market is a pleasant social experience, and she spends 2-3 hours at Kukum, compared with less than an hour in the Central Market. Some of her shopping is by trade, so she brings iced bottles of water for some of her friends who are traders and receives free produce in return.

Case study: three female bean sellers

These women arrive at Kukum market mid-morning and start to count and bundle the beans for sale, with an active trade occurring immediately. They live near the airport.





In the week they take goods to the Central Market, using whatever produce is ready to harvest from their own garden plots. When interviewed their stock of beans was worth around \$200 (40 bundles at \$5 per bundle) and they expected to sell out.

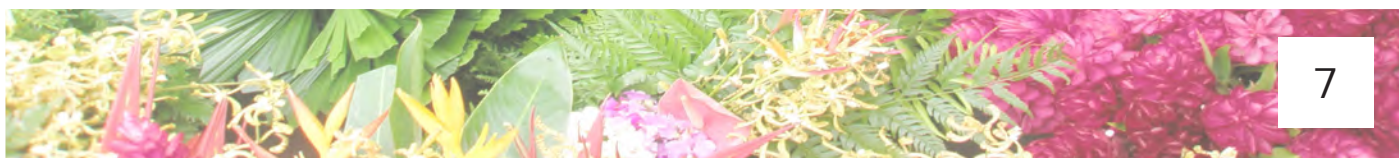
Existing Programs and Initiatives

Dorcas is an SDA women's organisation with a focus of charity work but also a keen interest in developing income opportunities for grassroots women. The Church has not to date had a formal involvement in the market, notwithstanding that initially most of the traders were SDA members living in the adjacent fishing village. However there is increasing interest being encouraged through the combined women's church groups facilitated by the Ministerial Division for Women's Development.



Challenges

The market has grown too large for its site as a result of the influx of non-SDA traders from the central market. This is creating significant traffic congestion. However rehabilitating the previous main market at Kukum may reduce demand.





Opportunities

The common bond between the SDA villagers and the potential support of the group may pave the way for community enterprise relating to recycling of organic wastes including vegetables and fish. This would be a potential source of pig food, for example.

Next Steps

Dorcas co-ordinator Beverley Maega is prepared to organise a meeting of traders after the market on a Sunday to discuss ways of recycling waste as a possible livelihood project.

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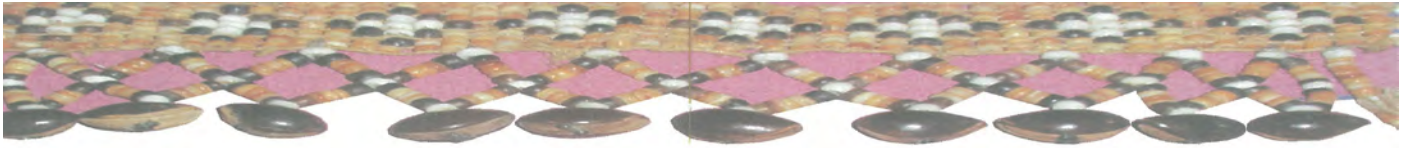


WHITE RIVER MARKET

White River is a relatively small private and illegal market situated on a road reserve near the western boundary of Honiara City, on the main highway. The police are concerned about the impact on traffic, and are pressing for it to be closed. However a group of women that was displaced from the market in 2007 with only two weeks' notice is seeking to have the land handed back from the current owner to the customary land owners. The legal case is widely expected to reach the courts in 2009, and it will involve rationalising a very complex ownership dispute involving several purported leases, traditional ownership and public land.

The other main market for the west side of Honiara used to be at Rove. This has been closed, though the site is still occupied by a few stalls selling betel nuts. The land area is very confined and any substantial market activity here would lead to considerable traffic congestion. The White River market consists of closely packed rows of small market huts on either side of the main road north of Honiara. There are a few cooked food stalls tucked behind the roadside stalls, together with an office used by the wife of the man claiming private ownership of the adjacent land.





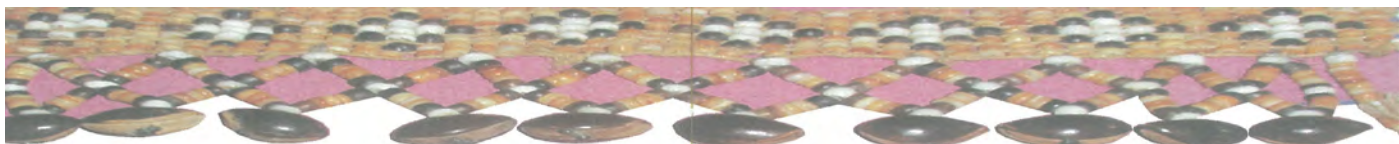
Management

Management of the market is divided between a caretaker family (south-western section, involving vendor-built stalls) who claim authorisation from one of the private land claimants, a lessee authorized by both sets of land claimants who has built a permanent structure in the south eastern section, and villagers who have built huts for lease on the northern side of the road. There are no services such as water supply or toilets. Fees are reportedly \$15 per day per stall on the southern side, and the money raised facilitates employment of cleaners by

the various managing agents. The lessee in the south-eastern section is using some of the proceeds to seal the market area. Villagers on the northern side of the road do a communal clean up each Thursday. There is no set opening and closing hours, and the market is notorious as a place for partying well into the early hours of the morning.

There are no security guards but the police are called if there is trouble. The customary land owners are also able to exert their authority if there are things to sort out.

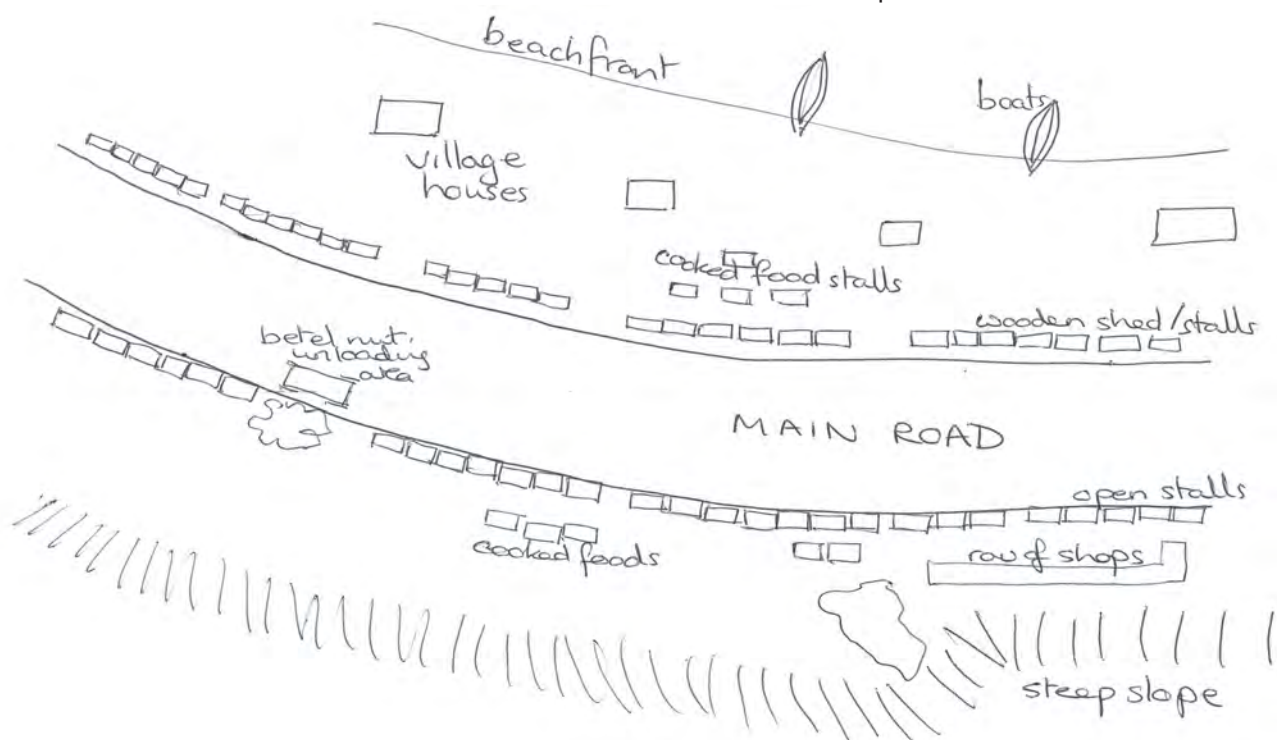


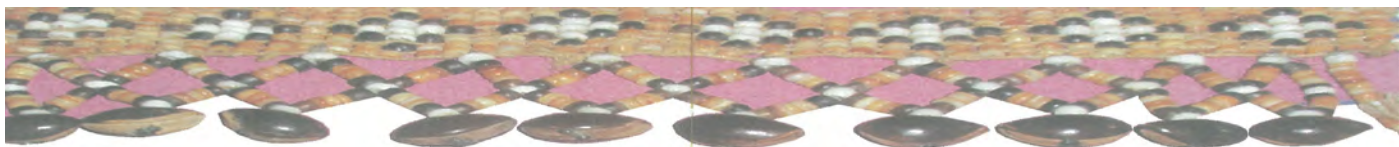


Physical Environment

The market is a linear arrangement, with traffic safety impaired as customers and traders regularly cross from one side of the road to the other. There are some accumulating piles of largely green waste on the southern side of the road, which are periodically burnt or buried.

Behind the stalls in the south-western section is an area of relatively flat land which was originally the site of the women's market. There are some mounds of earth piled up as a reminder of when the market was bulldozed. Many of the women traders at the current market feel very sad about what was lost, and would like their market back. The land claimant has apparently indicated that he will eventually build a permanent market shelter, but the vendors are skeptical.





Social Environment

The market is a vibrant social space. Villagers on the northern side of the road play loud music which adds to the atmosphere.

Traders

There are around 100 traders, around half of them being women. Men are far more evident than in the previous market. Many of the women traders were previously involved in the women's market.

Consumers

Consumers are a mix of men and women. There are some card games involving men, and women tend to group together to socialise. Most identify with the western side of Honiara, and some live within walking distance of the market.

Crime and Safety

The market is not a particularly safe space for women, particularly after dark. This is largely because many of the men drink the local home brew, and there is often aggressive behaviour as a result. This is not only directed towards women, and some taxi and bus drivers express reluctance to go into the White River market at night.

Health and Hygiene

There is no systematic cleaning regime, and piles of rubbish accumulate near to the food stalls. The lack of water supply and toilets combined with the large numbers of people using the market make for an unhealthy environment.



Participation by Women and Men

Around 50% of the traders are women, and some couples (or pairs of male and female relatives) share stalls. The cooked food vendors are all women and they appear to work in groups of four to six. Stalls selling greens are mainly run by women, while stalls selling packaged goods and soft drinks are mainly run by men. Men dominate the betel nut trade, which is now the main activity within the market.





Economic Environment

Around 80% of the stalls sell betel nut. Trucks pull in regularly with 20kg bags of betel nut, and there is frenzied negotiation by the vendors to obtain these bags. Most of the betel nut comes from villages in Guadalcanal, but some boats bring betel nut from Malaita. It is likely that around \$50,000 worth of nuts are sold (at retail prices) every day, with the profits being shared between two to three traders per stall.



\$400 per month for the stalls, depending on size. He is happy that there are market stalls the other side of the road, as it brings people into the local area. He uses one of the stalls to sell goods himself, buying these from other stores in town. He is not a producer himself.

Case study: caretakers of south-western sector

This is a brother and sister couple who employ other relatives as cleaners. The man was apparently asked to caretake the market for the land claimant, but because he is illiterate he asked his sister to collect the fees and do the book-keeping. It is not clear to what extent this is now their own business rather than one managed on behalf of the land claimant. They pay \$50 each to several young men who clear up after the market every evening.

Case study: previous market manager (male)

This man managed the previous women's market and mediated when trouble arose in the tensions. He comes to the current market to socialise. He usually comes once a week, meets friends, hangs around, and buys a few betel nuts for his own use. He doesn't trade or on-sell.

Case study: owner of beachside huts (male)

This man is one of the customary land owners who has built seven stalls that he lets to various traders, selling betel nut, cigarettes, cakes, fish and chips and bottled diesel. There are no market fees but he charges \$300-

Case study: on site lessee (male)

This man has been dealing with the customary land owners as well as the private land claimant and believes he has permission to occupy the land from both parties. He has built 12 permanent shops on the site and charges \$1,500 per month for each of these. Vendors have set up a row of stalls along the roadside in front of these shops and he charges them a market fee of \$15 per stall. He spends the proceeds on cleaning and adding to the concrete sealed area. He can't make long term plans until the land dispute is sorted out.

Case study: related man and woman betel nut sellers

A middle aged man and his elderly aunt share a stall to sell betel nuts, korokoa and lime. They buy a 20kg bag of betel nuts from the trucks that pull into the market, with costs varying from \$100-500 per bag depending on supply. There are around 4-500 nuts per bag, and they are sold for \$1-\$1.50 per nut. Turnover is around one bag per day or a bit less. The vendors live nearby so White River market in a convenient location for them. They are concerned about the lack of shelter and poor cleaning services.





Case study: group of women frying salt fish and cassava

A group of six women take turns to look after this stall, rotating with 3 days per week each. They buy salt fish from the city market in the evening, soak it overnight to remove the salt, and start cooking in the morning. If trade is good they return to the market for another load of fish. They spend around \$150 per day on buying the fish, cassava, firewood and cooking oil. This makes around 30 plates sold for \$10-\$15 each. The women pay \$15 per day to the market manager. They are concerned about the lack of permanent shelter and would prefer to work in a market house like the one at the city market.



Case study: group of women roasting root vegetables

These women come to the market 6 days per week (ie not on Sundays) and roast plantain, yam, taro and corn. They build two fires (shared between the four women) early in the morning and then go to buy produce from the market, each spending around \$100 on vegetables. By the time they return the stones are hot enough to cook on. The pieces of root vegetable take around 1 hour to cook this way, and they are sold for \$5-\$15 per piece. They make around \$300 per day. These women live in the adjacent beach front houses, and do not pay market fees.

Case study: female betel nut vendor

This vendor comes from Malaita. She used to trade at the women's market and is very sad that it closed. She used to sell fish and chips as well as vegetables, but now she sells betel nut. This is usually sourced from the wholesalers who bring bags to the market. However every year she goes home to her family farm in Malaita and clears up the farm for a couple of weeks and then

harvests betel nut over a weekend to bring back to Honiara. She set up her own wooden tables and leaves these overnight, but they tend to get damaged. She has a big umbrella for shade which she bought two years ago for \$300, and she takes this home every night. This involves a 15 minute walk. She trades at the market seven days per week, buying five or six bags every day for around \$350 per bag (currently) and selling the nuts for a profit of \$350 per bag. She is worried over security of her cash and betel nuts eg if she has to leave the stall to go to the toilet or attend to other things.



Case study: vegetable seller

This woman comes from Isobel, and she used to trade at the women's market, which she misses very much. She is currently selling sweet potatoes, slippery cabbage, coconuts, fish and chips. She goes to the Central market every evening to buy produce and salt fish, and she cooks in the early morning. She expects to sell everything





each day. At the time of interview (9am) she had sold \$200 worth of goods and her remaining stock was: nine piles of sweet potatoes priced at \$10 each, six bunches of cabbage priced at \$5 each, 12 packets of fish and chips priced at \$10 each, and seven coconuts priced at \$1 each (total \$270). She spends her takings on household goods but also manages to save \$100 per day towards school fees, in a bank account. She trades 7 days per week, and spends \$35 per day on transport (bus and taxi) as well as \$15 on market fees.

Case study: woman betel nut purchaser

This woman buys just 30-40 betel nuts per day and on-sells them on a stall outside her house, with 100% mark up. She comes to the market partly to socialize with the other women there, travelling by bus (\$2 each way). She comes to the market 6 days per week, Monday to Saturday. She misses the women's market that was on the site previously.

Case study: female customer

This woman is a housewife who lives within walking distance of the market, and she comes to buy goods and socialize with other women. She buys a couple of betel nuts for her own use as well as store goods and vegetables. She spend a couple of hours at the market each day. However she feels it is not a good place for women because of the traffic congestion, men drinking and fighting and lack of facilities. She thinks the women should have their own market.



Existing Programs and Initiatives

The World Bank/International Finance Corporation has documented the displacement of women from White River, and indicated possible support for the land claim through its Justice Program. The West Side Women for Peace Association operated a successful market for several years after "the tension", as a way of brokering peace between village women and women traders from the city. Village women brought their produce and urban women bought store goods and other items to exchange. The land was promised to the West Side Women for Peace Association, but it was suddenly and without explanation expropriated for private use. The customary land owners (Haubata) are working with the WSWFP to get the land back.

Challenges

Most of the land that is the centre of the current dispute would appear to be road reserve. The site is unlikely to be suitable for a market because of the congestion created, and an alternative site may need to be found. This may be difficult within the boundaries of Honiara City.



Opportunities

The City Council is aware of the need to re-establish a legitimate market in the western part of the city, as part of its strategy to ease congestion in the Central Market. There is an opportunity for women to seize the agenda if a suitable site can be found. However it is thought that this will need to be in a different location given the recent development of White River as a men's place, and given its lack of suitability for a proper market.





Next Steps

The Kakabona Women's Association, West Side Women for Peace Association and the Guadalcanal Provincial Women's Council are actively discussing how to progress the land issue. Once a strategy has been developed there may be scope for assistance in

planning a new market, developing appropriate formal agreements with landholders and local government, and establishing an appropriate commercial framework for market development.

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