

COUNTRY PRESENTATION

SOLOMON ISLANDS



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Background Context- Socio Economic Data
- Part A: National skills development frameworks, priorities, and challenges
- Part B: Skills and Qualifications Recognition –Solomon Islands
National priorities, needs, and challenges- Best Practices and lessons learnt

I-SOLOMON ISLANDS –BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Land area : 28,896 square kilometres (11,157 sq mi)

Population: 734,887

Growth Rate: 2.19

Density: 26.18 people per sq. km of land area (2023)

Sex Ratio: 1.070 (1,070 males per 1,000 females)

Life Expectancy: 70.9 (F: 72.5 M: 69.4)

Fertility Rate: 4 births per woman (2024) (1.18% decline)

Vernacular- 120 vernacular spoken

Population in urban centres: around 10%

GDP: at 2,205.25 USD

The majority of the population depend mainly on agriculture, fishing, and forestry for their livelihood

The economy is highly dependent on foreign imports as well as foreign development aid

~ 80% depends heavily on subsistence farming and engaged more on informal economy

High youth unemployment rate is imminent in urban centres with limited formal employment opportunities

2-SOLOMON ISLANDS –BACKGROUND CONTEXT

The education sector in the Solomon Islands has a total of 1,343 schools:

510 standalone primary schools

243 community high schools

16 provincial high schools

10 national high schools

284 registered Early Childhood Education Centres

280 unregistered centres operating

3-SOLOMON ISLANDS –BACKGROUND CONTEXT

- The SINU and USP: offer tertiary education and teacher training in the Solomon Islands.
- 50 Rural Training Centres: offering certificate level courses in such areas as automotive, electrical, plumbing, and constructions skills along with agribusiness, office administration, tourism and hospitality, and business studies qualifications
- In 2019, there were a total of **209,377 students enrolled** (between 47 and 50 percent female at most levels) across Early Childhood Education Centres, Pre-primary year, primary and senior secondary. Rural Training Centres
- The Solomon Islands Standardized Test for Achievement (SISTA 2017) shows overall literacy at **68.9%** of students at or above the expected level and **71 percent for numeracy**. The analysis of Pacific Island Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA results show significant improvements in literacy and numeracy levels and puts the Solomon Islands 14 percent above the regional average in numeracy and above average in literacy (PILNA, 2012, 2015 and 2018).

PART:A

NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS,
PRIORITIES, AND CHALLENGES-
SOLOMON ISLANDS

ESTABLISHMENT OF SITESA, ITS GOVERNANCE AND FUNCTIONS

- ❑ SITESA was established by an Act of Parliament in 2017 (SITESA Act 2017).
- ❑ The Authority is Governed by the “SITESA Board”, which reports to the Minister of Education to the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.
- ❑ SITESA has 5 Divisions:
 - 1. Quality Assurance Division**
 - 2. National Scholarships Division**
 - 3. Strategic Planning & Performance Division**
 - 4. National Development Division**
 5. Corporate Services Division

Role & Functions of SITESA as the Regulatory Authority

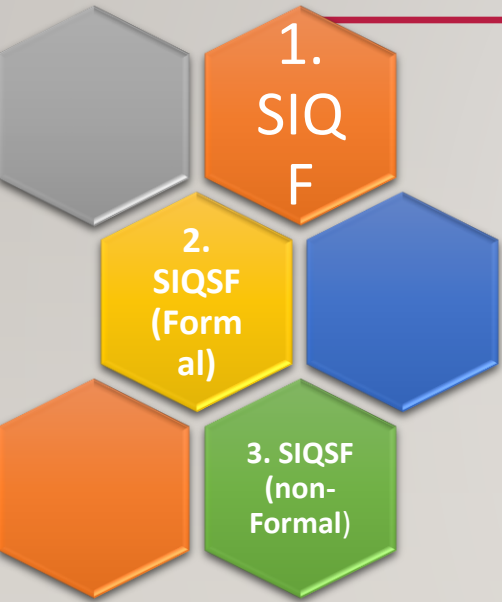
Part 2, Division 1, Section 7 (SITESA Act), there are ten (10) functions listed for SITESA to perform.

The regulatory mandate of SITESA is stated in Function (d),(e):

“SITESA to provide for quality assurance of tertiary education and skills development...Accreditation of Tertiary Courses...Registration of providers of accredited tertiary courses...and promote recognition of tertiary qualifications obtained in Solomon Islands in the region and internationally”.

In short, this reaffirms SITESA is the quality assurance agency for tertiary and skills development sector in Solomon Islands

Building Blocks of a National Quality Assurance System



1. Solomon Islands Qualifications Framework (SIQF)
2. Solomon Islands Quality Standards Framework (SIQSF) for the Tertiary Sector:
 - Quality Standards for Tertiary Course Accreditation (Nine (9) Quality Standards)
 - Quality Standards for Tertiary Provider Registration (Fourteen (14) Quality Standards)
3. Solomon Islands Quality Standards for Non-Formal Learning Providers
 - Quality Standards for Non-formal Learning Providers not offering Accredited Qualifications

Solomon Islands Qualification Framework (SIQF)

1. The SIQF:

- Sets the standards for qualifications that can be issued in Solomon Islands.
- Aligns to Regional frameworks (PQF) and considers other National qualification frameworks of countries such as NZ, Australia etc.
- Ensures referencing of qualifications are comparable to other qualifications in the region.

Level	Qualification
10	Doctorate
9	Masters
8	Bachelor Honours, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate
7	Bachelor, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate
6	Advanced Diploma
5	Diploma
4	Certificate IV
3	Certificate III
2	Certificate II
1	Certificate I

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

- Public (delivered by the Government ministries and departments or agencies)
- Private (Faith-based, or commercial training organizations)
- NGOs
- Industry-based
- Others

SITESA plays a pivotal role in ensuring that TVET or skills training adhere to the highest standards. Quality in training will ensure that individuals are equipped with the competencies required for successful careers, thus contributing to the nation's development.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SOLOMON ISLANDS- FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- ESF 2015-2030
- Overarching framework for TVET in the Pacific region for the years 2012 – 2015.
- NDS 2016-2035
- NEAP 2016-2020, 2022-2026
- SITESA ACT 2017
- SIQF- SI Quality Standards for tertiary and non-formal learning
- National Skills Packages
- National Human Resource Development Plan 2013
- Apprenticeship Act
- Labour Mobility Strategy 2019-2023 and Labour Mobility Policy Framework.
- Labour Mobility Policy and Action Plan for 2024-2028.
- SI Economic Reintegration Strategy
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- Training providers (Tertiary Educations/Skills Development) SINU, RTCs etc.. & industries/Associations or professional bodies
- Apprenticeship Act -NTTT- Apprenticeship scheme
- Donor programs/Schemes/initiatives
- Regional Programs/ others



IDENTIFYING SKILLS GAP AND LABOUR MARKET NEEDS AND DEMAND

- World Bank studies
- ILO
- UNESCO-SDG
- NDS- Workforce plans and strategies
- NH RTP-consultations, workforce plans, skills studies
- Labour market studies- Annual surveys
- Advertisements for vacant posts
- Pacific labour market studies
- MCILI- skills survey
- SICCI skills survey
- ISC-National Skills Packages-meeting industry needs

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES ALIGNED TO NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

The NDS 2016-2035: Objective 2 and Strategy 6:

- *increase Solomon Islanders' share of regional employment markets, and*
- *to identify opportunities for labour mobility overseas. These opportunities include but are not limited to unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, in a broader range of sectors.*

Medium Term Strategy 6

- increase employment and labour mobility opportunities in rural areas and improve the livelihoods of all Solomon Islanders.
- GNUT-100 Days policy documents- Skills Development

I-SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND MAXIMIZING NET BENEFIT FOR SOLOMON ISLANDERS

- Solomon Islands Economic Reintegration Strategy, PACER Plus Implementation Unit 2023.

- *Returning labour mobility workers can be a ready workforce who are familiar with the local work environment, they can facilitate the transfer of acquired skills, social values, and social capital for local private sector development, and they can also invest financial capital including remittances including in entrepreneurial activities.*

2--SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND MAXIMIZING NET BENEFIT FOR SOLOMON ISLANDERS

- Alignment of skills training programmes in labour receiving countries to skills development needs of workers and development priorities of the Solomon Islands;
- Facilitate skills training programmes upon return;
- Develop and deliver a national work-ready and employability skills training programme that meets local and overseas industry requirements;
- Promote and facilitate opportunities for labour migrants to gain or advance their formal qualifications;
- Develop and provide a programme for recognizing the skills gained by labour migrants;
- Engage returning workers as short-term voluntary trainers in Community Rural Training Centers (CRTCs); and
- Encourage investment of remittances by labour migrants in higher education of household members

3-SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND MAXIMIZING NET BENEFIT FOR SOLOMON ISLANDERS

- Work with industry, partners and other agencies to:
 - determine further training programmes to align to industry skill demands
- identify opportunities for apprenticeships, intern programmes, or work placements to prepare workers for mobilising and ensure they are work-ready. This could include industry partnerships with receiving countries.
- Work at a regional level (including at PLMAM) and with receiving countries to match skill development and opportunities, for example, in the energy, forestry, fisheries, maritime, construction, and agriculture sectors.
- Work with Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority in collaboration with Solomon Islands National University and training providers to identify further opportunities for training and curriculum development to prepare workers for labour mobility.
- Work with receiving countries and other Solomon Islands partners to strengthen pre-departure briefing material and deliver training. This includes ensuring that the content of training is relevant, comprehensive, and up-to-date.

4-SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND MAXIMIZING NET BENEFIT FOR SOLOMON ISLANDERS

- Work with receiving countries to ensure employers provide opportunities for workers to attend training opportunities in receiving countries to acquire additional skills to bring home and meet reintegration goals
- Promote the skills of returned workers to local industry
- Use the IRD to keep track of returned workers to help with reintegration support including recognising their skills and qualifications, and supporting them to achieve their goals
- Work with partners to consider how to support returned workers with information or training, identify returned worker skills and support them into new work opportunities, and empower returned workers to open and sustain businesses

LABOUR MARKET MOBILITY DATA –SOLOMON ISLANDS

- Solomon Islands met target for 2019-2023 mobilising 5,500 workers by June 2023, and more than 7,709 people have now participated.
- In May 2024 7399 workers were mobilised to Australia and 310 to New Zealand.
- Solomon Islands has built experience with labour mobility schemes, developing a greater understanding of what works and opportunities to strengthen participation. There is huge demand from Solomon Islands workers to participate in labour mobility.

TARGET SECTORS FOR LABOUR MOBILITY (POLICY DRAFT 2024-2028)

Target Sectors

- Meat processing
- Agriculture / horticulture
- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Age care and nursing
- Tourism
- Early childhood care.



To have mobilised 16,000 workers by June 2028. For labour mobility remittances to make up 10% of Solomon Islands GDP by 2028

I-GOING FORWARD

- Effectively harness the potential development benefits of our participation in labour mobility schemes to contribute to sustainable economic growth for the country.
- Addressing issues of quality and relevance- Skills development and training
- Mismatch between skills training offered and skills in demand.
- Disconnect between the informal worker and the formal economy
- Lack of demand driven data
- Establishing a credible and real-time Labour Market Information System (LMIS) for analysis of skills requirements in different sectors.
- Improve stakeholders coordination in skills development and training and delivery
- Developing a strong industry-institution linkage and participation in skills development

2- GOING FORWARD

- SITESA-Role of the Industry Councils –development of the national skills packages based on identified priorities and labour market demands.
- Creating pathways and models of excellence
- Coordination and Capacity- Establishing clear roles and responsibilities within sectors.
- Inconsistent donor activities (piecemeal).
- Improved Coordination of stakeholder advisory groups or coordination bodies. Professional bodies to be part of workforce planning and development activities.
- Sector regulatory bodies in collaboration with SICCI need to develop regulatory practice and professional standards setting.
- Legislating the TVET sector in Solomon Islands

PART B:

Skills and Qualifications Recognition –Solomon Islands
National priorities, needs, and challenges- Best Practices and
lessons learnt