



International  
Development

Australian Broadcasting Corporation



ON AIR

# Solomon Islands Media Research Study 2012

Baseline Indicators for SOLMAS Phase III

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Centre for Social &  
Community Media  
The University of Goroka



Australian Centre for  
Public Communication



Solomon Islands College  
of Higher Education



*Training for a difference*

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The views and opinions expressed in this report are that of the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the view of the ABC.

## **The Lead Research Team**

The lead research team comprised researchers from the Centre for Social and Creative Media (CSCM) at the University of Goroka and from the Australian Centre for Public Communication (ACPC) at the University of Technology Sydney. The lead research team included Dr Verena Thomas, Kate Britton, Joys Eggins, Mcleen Pickacha and Prof Jim Macnamara.

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABC ID	Australian Broadcasting Corporation International Development
ACPC	Australian Centre for Public Communication
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
C4D	Communication for Development
CSCM	Centre for Social and Creative Media
CMS	Content Management Systems
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
MASI	Media Association of the Solomon Islands
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PFNet	People First Network
PR	Public Relations
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
SI	Solomon Islands
SIBC	Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
SOE	State owned enterprise
SOLMAS	Solomon Islands Media Assistance Scheme
UOG	University of Goroka
UTS	University of Technology Sydney

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## Executive Summary

This research study provides baseline indicators for the Solomon Islands Media Assistance Scheme (SOLMAS) Program Phase III. It presents findings around the current quality of media, experiences of training to date, and relationships with stakeholders such as development organisations, government communications and the National Disaster Management Office.

This executive summary presents main findings from the study, under several key areas: media quality and inhibitors of quality; training and capacity building; audience needs and new media; media and development issues; the Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI); the public broadcaster Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC); and perceptions of SOLMAS to date. These key themes are presented in more detail in the body of the report.

### Quality of Media

Most media practitioners are young (62% are under 29 years old), which indicates a **lack of seniority and maturity in journalism** practice in the region. Even more concerning, **50% of media practitioners do not have any higher education and less than a fifth have a university qualification**. This is considerably lower than the education level of journalists in developed countries – for example, 90% of journalists in the USA hold at least a Bachelors degree (Rosen 2003) – and it is below the recommendations of the *UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education* which advocates three levels of higher education for journalists at Diploma, Bachelor and Masters degree levels (UNESCO 2007).

Despite improvement in recent years, the **technical quality of media production varies**. Regular grammar and spelling mistakes occur in news stories and frequent technical shortcomings are found in TV stories (e.g. exposure of shots).

**Government sources and angles dominate media coverage**, comprising 28% of all sources used across media. This suggests a lack of independence, diversity of views and critique in media.

Development issues occur often as a secondary angle, but **issues such as health, women, or anti-corruption** are predominantly event-focused and **lack in-depth reporting**. These are important issues warranting increased focus by media.

Interview participants expressed a **desire to see more 'positive' stories** and 'success' stories represented in media, linking this to the aim of improving coverage of development issues. Notwithstanding, media should retain a 'critical edge' and not distribute unchecked PR material.

**Remote, rural, and urban-fringe communities are substantially under-represented** in media content. Equity and fair representation require greater attention to these groups.

The majority **of news stories across all mediums were 'straight' news stories** (i.e. direct accounts of events with no additional analysis). However, interview data reflected a strong desire among practitioners to upgrade skills in feature writing and in-depth coverage, describing the role of the media in the Solomon Islands as being to **'educate first, then inform'**.

Quality indicators to emerge most strongly include:

- Use of multiple sources and portraying **'both sides of the story'**
- Ability of journalists to **ask the 'tough questions'** (media as watchdog)
- Consideration of the effects of publishing a story (**responsible journalism**)
- Ability to incorporate **context, impact, and critique** ('bigger picture journalism')
- Appropriate representation of **minority groups and development issues**

### **Inhibitors to Quality Improvement**

Across all stakeholders, the most frequently mentioned challenge to producing quality media was **financial hardship**. **Low levels of education, logistical difficulties** in expanding **reach** and improving coverage of remote and rural areas, high levels of **staff churn**, and a **lack of management and business skills** were identified as other barriers to quality improvement.

### **Training and Capacity Building**

Media stakeholders involved in the SOLMAS training find it positive, **with an average of 56% of survey respondents rating their improvement as either 'high' or 'very high'** across all training areas. Further training in technical skills and business and management skills were identified as most pressing, as well as in-depth, 'bigger picture' journalism.

There is a view that the Solomon Islands need an upgraded **locally-based tertiary facility for journalism students**. While it is hoped that SICHE can expand to fulfil this ambition, the current lack of a local degree qualification is often identified as inhibiting industry growth.

### **Audience Needs and New Media**

**Media staff most commonly receive feedback from audiences informally** such as phone calls or letters (56%) and interpersonal communication (51%). This suggests that greater awareness and more use of formal audience feedback could benefit media quality.

Only **34% were aware of the 2010 SOLMAS Audience Survey**. Of this 34%, however, 83% identified the survey as useful, with 70% saying their organisation's practice had changed based on its results.

New media and emerging technologies are in a transition period. **A majority of media practitioners use mobile phones, online media and social media for work at least 'a few times a week'**. Negligible numbers of respondents indicated use between once a week and once a month. **Up to 16% (for mobile phones and social media), indicated that they do not use these technologies at all, indicating a significant lag among some practitioners**. A strong desire for training in the use of emerging technology was expressed across all stakeholder groups.

### **Media and Development Issues**

Across the board, media stakeholders acknowledge and champion the role that media can play in development issues, highlighting the potential impact media can have in communicating development messages and mustering support and action in communities. Advocacy for **rural communities, youth, people living with a disability, and women** was seen as part of the media's role.

There is enthusiasm among stakeholders to increase interaction between media and NGOs, through an **increased media presence 'on the ground' among communities**, more networking and information sharing opportunities, and dedicated media time or space to development issues.

Women's issues were represented well across the media, but lacked in-depth reporting. Health issues and anti-corruption were reported on less frequent and were mainly event-focussed.

45% of media staff said that they do not usually work with NGOs. 27% of media staff said that they work with NGO at least a few times a week.

### **Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI)**

While **70% of survey respondents were MASI members**, interview participants overwhelmingly described the body as inactive, ineffective, and under-resourced.

Over half of those surveyed, despite being members, were not aware of the **Code of Conduct or Constitution**.

There is a widespread sense that MASI should be performing some of the activities that SOLMAS is currently undertaking, such as training, facilitating funding opportunities, and providing opportunities for the exchange of information.

### **Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation**

There is a **lack of faith in present governance of SIBC among staff**, compounded by financial and logistical pressures.

SIBC has a disaster management plan in place. Management at SIBC are aware of this plan, and have executed limited trial runs of the system.

This system mandates that in an emergency a directive from the NDMO is received by SIBC when a situation has escalated, whereby SIBC hand over control of the station to NDMO entirely. SIBC staff have limited awareness of what eventuates following this directive.

Loss of transmission remains relatively frequent (weekly or more from interview accounts). SIBC have two back-up generators. When these are functional and the systems in place run smoothly, operations can be restored within minutes. There remain issues, however, with lack of fuel to run the generators, technical problems, and poor response times.

### **Response to SOLMAS**

There is a desire for SOLMAS to take training to the 'next level' and **incorporate formal advancement and long-term training** in some way.

Stakeholders would like to see SOLMAS continue its engagement with local partner organisations. Across all stakeholder groups, there is a desire to see a clear plan regarding the sustainability of SOLMAS program.



# 1 Introduction

This study is commissioned by the Solomon Islands Media Assistance Scheme (SOLMAS). SOLMAS is an initiative funded by AusAID through the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The implementing partner for the program is ABC International Development. The objective of the scheme is to “improve the reach and quality of media in the Solomon Islands” (SOLMAS 2012) by providing skills and training to media stakeholders and building capacity for wider access to quality media and information by Solomon Islanders. By doing so it aims to contribute to a “peaceful, well governed and prosperous Solomon Islands” (SOLMAS 2012).

Media play a critical role in a democratic society and in contributing to good governance (UNESCO 2005). Particularly in fragile states such as the Solomon Islands, which has experienced significant civil unrest in its recent history, building a strong, independent and high quality media environment is key to working towards a stable and prosperous society, where minority groups can be appropriately represented and audiences can be informed about issues affecting them. The SOLMAS scheme aims at contributing to this strengthening of media by providing infrastructure support, skills training, ongoing research and other needs based activities in the further development of media.

The results of this study provide baseline indicators which can be tracked over time to assess the impact of the SOLMAS program in line with its M&E framework. By examining understandings of media among SOLMAS stakeholders and measuring the quality of their output, the study provides a comprehensive picture of current media production by SOLMAS partners. In addition to investigating current quality and perceptions of the SOLMAS program, the study sought to understand the challenges still faced by media stakeholders, and what they see as critical in improving quality of media in the Solomon Islands in the future.

## 1.1. Background

SOLMAS was established in 2008 following initial support provided to Solomon Islands media outlets in 2005 and 2006 through advisory placements. Phase I of SOLMAS focused on building relationships in the SI media sector. Phase II (2009-2011) focused on capacity development in the SI media and support around coverage of the 2010 national election (see Ferguson & Raseta, 2011). The current Phase III seeks to implement media strategies based on the M&E framework developed by ABC ID (see Appendix). Phase III is also interested in moving towards a Communication for Development (C4D) approach. “C4D is defined as a systematic, planned and evidence-based strategic process to promote positive and measurable individual behaviour and social change that is an integral part of development programmes, policy advocacy and humanitarian work... It privileges local contexts and relies on a mix of communication tools, channels and approaches.” (UNICEF, 2011).

An audience survey conducted on SI media in 2010 by SOLMAS provided useful background information regarding media consumption in the country (Tebbutt Research, 2010). The audience survey revealed that there is a strong desire among audiences to see media of all

kinds increase and be strengthened as an independent source of information, education, entertainment and debate. Public broadcast radio (SIBC) is the primary source for information and available in all provinces. The newspapers are secondary sources and TV is a tertiary source, as it is mostly received in the urban capital and mostly represents the urban population. The audience survey also revealed that affordability is a key factor in access to technology (Tebbutt Research, 2010).

This study involved a sample of Solomon Islands media stakeholders involved in SOLMAS' programs. This included members of the press and broadcasters from across radio, print, and television.

## **1.2. Research Objectives**

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

- To provide baseline measures on key evaluation questions for the SOLMAS program.
- To assess the current quality of media outputs by SOLMAS partners.
- To understand current challenges that SOLMAS media partners face and capture suggestions for improvement.

This study also serves to contextualise local specificities of Solomon Islands media and assist in understanding barriers to quality media production in the Solomon Islands. Understanding these local concerns and challenges will form an integral part of SOLMAS' engagement with a C4D paradigm, which emphasises the inclusion and development of local ways of knowing and practices.

## **1.3. Scope of the study**

This study is grounded in the SOLMAS program design and focuses on current SOLMAS partners and as such does not reflect on the Solomon Islands media industry as a whole. SOLMAS partners include press and broadcasting outlets (print, radio & TV), NGOs, educational institutions and government departments.

The study predominantly focused on local and national news reporting and the ability to disseminate local stories and information to audiences. The study was Honiara-focused, as the vast majority of media practitioners and media outlets are based in Honiara. All participants are involved in the production of media in some sense, whether directly as a practitioner, as an educator, as a development partner, or as a government communications worker, and have been involved in the SOLMAS program in some capacity. No audience participation was invited.

The study was carried out over a period of 10 weeks which included pre-research, fieldwork, data analysis and report writing. Media content production was observed in a timeframe of 2-6 weeks depending on the medium, and an overall of 536 articles and broadcasts were collected and analysed, in addition to 25 qualitative interviews and collection of 106 survey questionnaires.

## **Collaboration with SICHE**

This study also sought to build research capacity in the Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) was chosen as a local partner for the study, with a view to ongoing collaboration. A team of seven media and journalism students and one journalism lecturer from SICHE were involved in the study. At an initial workshop held at SICHE in April 2012, the research instruments were discussed and finalised. This ensured that the research design was adapted to local context and at the same time familiarised field researchers with the methods and specific procedures necessary to undertaking the research. Field researchers were engaged over a 2-week time period which became part of their assessment in the media and journalism course.

## **Limitations of the study**

Given the short timeframe and limited scope of the study, there were a number of limitations. Samples from the various methods were disparate. Survey sampling was largely convenience in order to gain as large a pool of respondents as possible. This means that figures reported from survey results may not be reflective of the media industry as a whole. Further, interviews were conducted with senior media staff in management and decision-making roles, whereas surveys were conducted predominantly with media practitioners 'on the ground'. Hence statistical data from the survey mainly reports on media practitioners, excluding senior managers. The difference in sampling accounts for discrepancies in data triangulation. For example, survey results in which practitioners rated the quality of their media output as 'high' contrasting with interview and content analysis data, which indicated a number of shortcomings in media outputs.

Discrepancies such as these are explored in the report in the context of the specific findings. While this can be regarded as a limitation of the study, it also highlights the difference between perceived quality of media or best practice (via surveys) and actual quality of media (via content analysis). This in itself is a point for analysis and can contribute to understanding the current state of the SI media industry.

## 2 Methodology

A mixed-method approach was used to address the research objectives, combining semi-structured interviews, a survey questionnaire and a content analysis of print, radio and TV outlets, produced by SOLMAS partners. The research design was developed by the lead research team and then updated with local partners and feedback from ABC ID, SOLMAS and SICHE to ensure that the local context was privileged in the approach. This was an invaluable step in developing the methodology, as local input from both SOLMAS and SICHE was instrumental in ensuring local relevance and applicability of the study. The methodology for the study comprised the following methods:

- **Interviews with Key Stakeholders**  
Interviews provided in-depth, first-hand qualitative data on stakeholder perceptions of media quality and the outcomes of the project. They provided insights into how quality is perceived, perceptions about SOLMAS' work to date, and were able to provide context and detail on specific issues such as MASI and SIBC's relationship with the NDMO and the representation of development issues.
- **Content Analysis**  
The content analysis provided indicators of media quality by examining the way issues and news are reported, with researchers systematically coding content to identify features such as issues reported, sources used, topics and angles presented, etc. Using a coding framework developed in consultation with ABC ID, content covering local news and development issues was collected and analysed.
- **Surveys with Media Practitioners**  
The survey provided data on media practitioner perceptions involved with SOLMAS to the current reach and quality of the media in Solomon Islands. The survey also captured their understanding of audience needs and engagement with new media and provided quantitative information to complement qualitative interview data on these themes. The surveys are also replicable, which will afford longitudinal evaluation, including year-on-year comparison.

Data from each research method was collated and analysed independently before being triangulated to gain overall findings from this 2012 study. In addition, supporting documents such as the 2010 Audience Survey was used to build on the existing SOLMAS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, and broader developmental concerns in line with AusAID's focus in the Solomon Islands.

## 3 Findings

This section outlines the key findings, starting from an examination of indicators for media quality in the Solomon Islands, before exploring key themes around media strengthening, media values, and media and development. An additional section is provided to discuss specific goals and indicators for the strengthening of MASI and the Solomon Islands Public Broadcaster, SIBC. These findings align, where possible, with the SOLMAS M&E framework, providing baseline measures in the context of key evaluation measures outlined in this document.

Measuring the quality of media needs to be understood both at the input level, such as education and qualification of journalists, resources, and at the output level, such as quality of reporting or quality of content, and impact of publication or broadcast. In addition to 'universal' indicators of good journalism practice such as balance, attribution, or writing style, which factor into media production no matter the context, the media landscape in the Solomon Islands also requires examination of locally specific indicators, which may be pertinent to the Solomon Islands media but not elsewhere, to provide a robust sense of quality.

### 3.1. Media Training and Capacity Building

This section brings together findings from content analysis, survey findings and interviews to examine the quality of media in the context of the Solomon Islands. It does so first by providing an overview of some demographic values of participants (inputs), and then discusses journalism values and indicators (outputs), before moving into a more specific local understanding of media and how quality and impact might be achieved.

#### 3.1.1. Education and Qualification

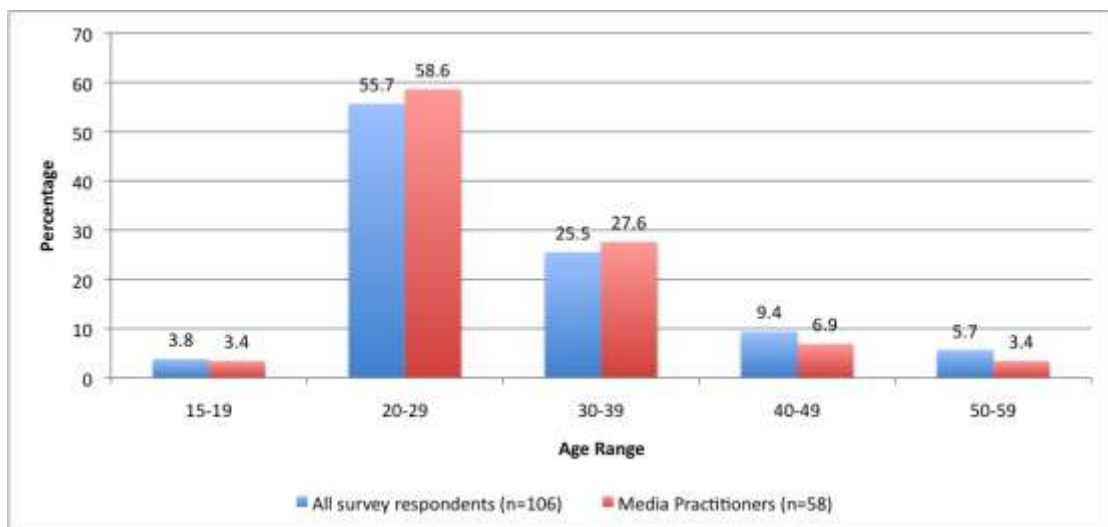
*A young work force with limited experience of working in media provides both a challenge and opportunity for addressing media quality.*

The survey targeted people working directly in or with the media. It included respondents from media production outlets, NGOs, educational institutions and government departments (**n=106: all survey respondents**). A subsample of this group includes staff from media production outlets only (**n=76: media staff**) and more specifically staff from media production outlets directly involved in content production (journalists and technical staff) (**n=58: media practitioners**). The survey collected demographic information in addition to their perspectives on quality. The demographic background of the respondents showed:

- 72 respondents were male and 34 female, closely reflecting the overall gender imbalance in SI media today (Ferguson & Raseta, 2011).

- 60% of all respondents surveyed and 62% of media practitioners were less than 29 years of age, indicating how young the industry is. However, this is not surprising in a nation where 70% of the population is under the age of 29<sup>1</sup>.
- A majority of media staff have worked in the industry for less than four years (63%), with 84% less than nine years. Only 11% have experience over 15 years, the majority of which work at SIBC. All respondents at SIBC with this level of experience have worked at SIBC their entire career.

**Fig 1. Age range of all survey respondents and media practitioners**



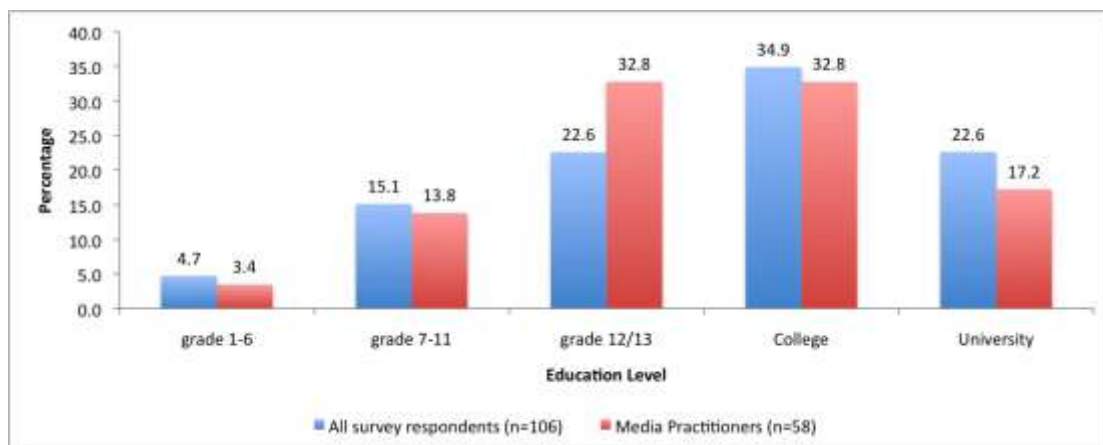
Base: Comparison of age range of all survey respondents (n=106) and media practitioners (n=58).

Almost half of all respondents (42%) have no higher education (see Fig. 2), with less than a quarter having completed a university qualification (23%). This number is even less if only media practitioners are included in the sample, with only 17% of respondents (n=58) having completed a university qualification. The high number of media practitioners with only a grade 12/13 qualification (33%) supports the interview data that suggests that the media industry is a field that attracts people straight out of high school, who have no further formal training or education.

*You won't find any that has been around for more than 10 years and that's really important in the media. So that's why the quality is a bit low. – Media*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.savethechildren.org.au/where-we-work/solomon-islands.html>

**Fig 2. Education level of all survey respondents and media practitioners**



Base: Comparison of educational level of all survey respondents (n=106) and media practitioners (n=58).

This may be the result of a lack of opportunities to receive formal education in journalism in the Solomon Islands.

*One of the problems we have here is a lot of journalists, most of them are not university journalists, most are just high school students interested in media and when they come on board working directly in the media industries they don't really understand the principle of media as well as ethics. – Government*

SOLMAS has been working with SICHE and together they were able to establish a media and journalism certificate program in 2010. The impact of this program is not yet visible, as only six students have graduated to date. Formal training and experience is regarded as particularly important when covering more in-depth stories.

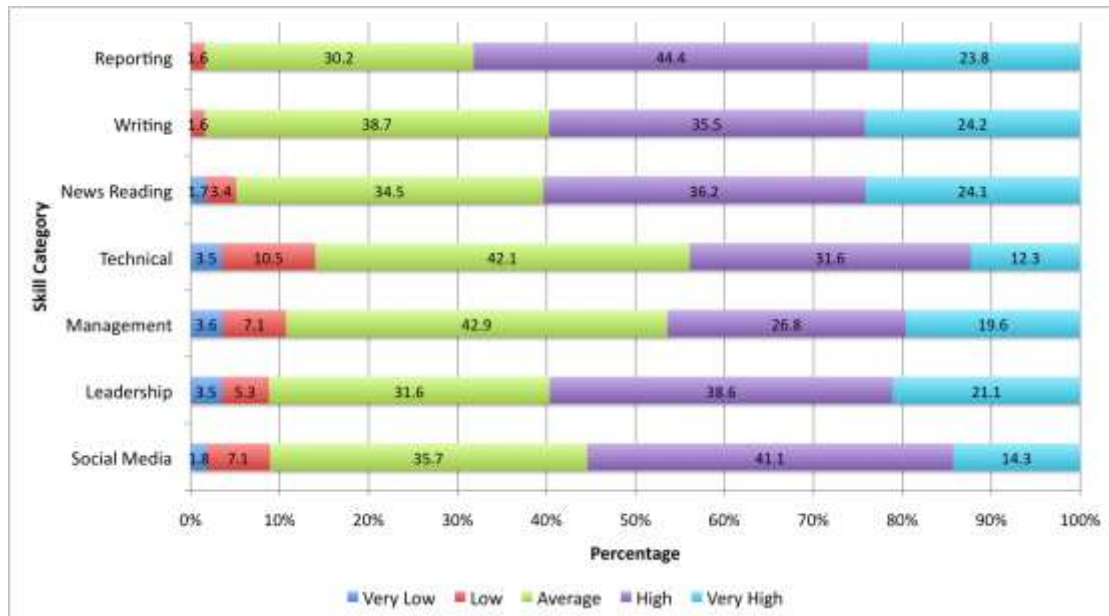
*I try to help [journalists] to think about and look at the messaging in a broader and look at broader picture and because some of them are not, they don't have the experience and the training under their belt to be able to see. – NGO*

### **3.1.2. Training and Increased Capacity**

***SOLMAS fills a significant gap in media training in the Solomon Islands. Stakeholders would like to see the continuation of training as well as more opportunities for formal education of local journalists.***

About 62% of all survey respondents had attended SOLMAS training in the past. Those who attended were asked to rate their own level of improvement through the training. Responses were generally positive in regards to overall assessment of improvement, with most survey categories reflecting either 'high' or 'very high' perceived improvement. Respondents rated technical and management skills as least improved, indicating that these areas are key for further training.

**Fig 3. Respondents' assessment of their own improvement from SOLMAS training**



Base: All survey respondents (n=106): Valid percentages of respondents who participated in SOLMAS training (64 respondents) and respondents' applicable topics: Reporting (n=63), Writing (n=62), News Reading (n=58), Technical (n=57), Management (n=56), Leadership (n=57) and Social Media (n=56).

A pervasive theme throughout the interviews was the desire to see media and media training in the Solomon Islands locally owned and locally focused:

*I think the biggest challenge is how you could translate whatever you learn through your education to be applied within the context of your own country. – Government*

In a young industry, foreign journalistic styles and practices can easily dominate. While this is not necessarily identified as a negative factor, the need to ensure that media is responsive to audience needs and appropriate to local contexts is key in producing an industry that is relevant, sustainable, and engaging. It seems timely during SOLMAS Phase III to understand these issues, particularly as SOLMAS prepares to engage more actively in C4D. This places considerable significance on the involvement of local communities and the inclusion of local ways of knowing:

*I kind of believe that's the proper way to do things, especially for our local journalists, teaching them our issues so that they can effectively advocate for our issues. – NGO*

*Why is the news bulletin at nine at night not at six? I said because Solomon Islanders are not in their house at six. We did a research on it. I have expatriates say to me 'your news is too late' and I said but you are not my market. We tend to sleep, do things later at night than westerners. So our style of programming relates to that. – Media*

One of the most recurrent themes to emerge from the interviews was the significant lack of formal training available to journalists locally. Excluding the SOLMAS workshops, which have filled a considerable gap in the media landscape, there appeared to be little or no training



available to stakeholders. Although there are programs at Don Bosco and newly at SICHE, these programs are young, and have not yet established themselves as major players in the media landscape.

Despite this, there is much optimism among media practitioners that these programs can be developed to become significant institutions for local media, particularly the course at SICHE, currently in its second year. There is strong support for SOLMAS to take a more active role in developing this course as a more sustainable and formal training program to replace or supplement their current workshop-style programs.

*I got some suggestions to suggest to SOLMAS, could you support especially SICHE because that's where we will look to when SOLMAS [leaves]. – Media*

*I'd like to see the program at SICHE developed. I'd like more if not all the reporters in this country have at least a degree in journalism because trust me, it boosts confidence. – NGO*

*I believe very much in the SICHE set up because it's teaching our young people things that we experience here in the Solomons. Instead of getting things from outside we're teaching them things that are happening in the Solomons, issues that we have in the Solomons - mostly developmental issues. – Media*

There was a strong sense throughout the interviews that formal training was needed not only to establish long-term programs to ensure sustainable industry growth, but also to formalise practitioner's sense of legitimacy through qualification-based outcomes. This can boost confidence among journalists, and change the way journalists are perceived and treated by external groups such as politicians. It can also mitigate some of the internal organisational problems of media institutions, such as inappropriately qualified management and leadership.

*I don't have the qualification. That sort of training I am very much interested in. We've been working in the media for more than ten years already but still have no qualification. – Media*

*I think we need more qualified journalist to work for us. To match the needed qualification or expectation of the public... Because they still see us as reporters, especially people from the government, they still see journalists as not qualified, not doing their job, things like that, so we need our journalists to attend more trainings to be more qualified. – Media*

### 3.1.3. Leadership, Management and Business Skills

***Leadership and management are perceived to be lacking in media organisations. Practitioners expressed a need for further training and regard the strengthening of business skills for both public and private sector as important.***

One of SOLMAS' goals under the M&E framework is to strengthen leadership and management skills across the media sector (M&E 3.2). Work with SIBC in this regard has been progressing through SOLMAS' operations. However, the wider commercial and non-media stakeholder environment is yet to be significantly addressed.

*How can you grow a good media industry? You are pumping all resources and funding into [the] public broadcaster that is controlled by the government. You should be pumping [it] into the private sector, keep that strong. – Media*

This is one of the most significant priorities of SOLMAS Phase III, with a good deal of attention being devoted to strengthening leadership across the whole sector, as referenced above.

*For us commercial companies [the] business side is quite broke, just to keep us running, that's the main point. – Media*

In survey questionnaires, respondents (n=106) on average rated their management skills lower than other practical craft skills, with 47% rating their management skills as average or below, in contrast with reporting skills and writing skills, in which only 32% and 29% of respondents respectively rated their skills as average or below (see also Fig. 5).

Leadership is lacking across the media sector. There were allegations of corruption, unethical behaviour by media owners (all unsubstantiated in the scope of these interviews), very poor working conditions, and of a general lack of qualified management candidates by the respondents. Even those holding management positions frequently expressed their sense of being unqualified for the role, and their desire for more qualified managerial specialists to step in.

*You can be a very good programmer, a very good presenter but probably when it comes to management you might have problems, yeah. You don't have the skills, you don't have the way to handle your staff. – Media*

*Things like [business skills] I think are lacking. That's from our perspective, because none of us are trained accountants or managers. We are just media. – Media*

Training in leadership skills and business survival is desperately needed and much anticipated by media organisations, who all struggle to survive in a relatively new competitive market. Sales, marketing and strategic planning were all identified as vital. This also includes increasing the reach of media to rural areas, which has the potential to become a race for audiences and with improving technology this is becoming more affordable and logistically possible.

*[Business training] is definitely needed. I saw horrific things done financially within the organisation I was with before.. and I hope I don't repeat that with anyone I ever to get to work for me. – Media*

*I would like to see SOLMAS... providing training for sales, sales marketing and people in human resource and management and accounts and things like that they could include that. – Media*

Despite resourcing barriers and poor leadership training and capacity, there is a strong sense of willingness and commitment by media practitioners to improve these areas. Staff members are highly motivated to upgrade their skills and look towards generating revenue, be they management or journalists.

*I mean I really want to go out and sell airtime... but I just don't feel that I have the skills to go negotiate that sort of thing. – Media*

There is a sense among many media stakeholders that improved business skills would bolster a more competitive and commercially diverse market. Indeed, competition is viewed by many as a positive influence in the media landscape. Competing outlets were seen as a way of stimulating quality improvement via efforts to capture a bigger share of the market.

*I think competition is healthy for the business... If Island Sun was not here the Solomon Star would be the same [as it always was]. I firmly believe in competition. – Media*

## 3.2. Quality of Media

### 3.2.1. Journalism Practice

*Good quality media is perceived as balanced, ethical, diverse and responsible.*

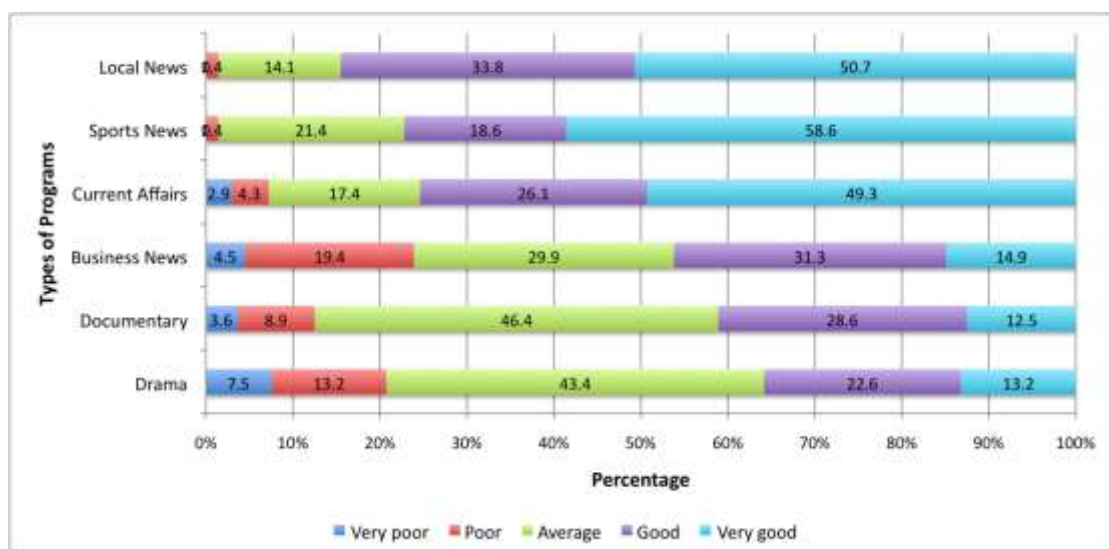
*Currently SI media is characterised by:*

- *Dominance of government-related stories, predominantly using only one government source.*
- *Lack of technical proficiency evidenced in grammatical errors (print) or varying visual production quality (TV).*
- *Lack of in-depth and critical reporting around development issues, most of which are event-triggered.*
- *Underrepresentation of rural populations.*

Among all media staff surveyed (n=76), most work in print (36%), radio (33%) or television (22%). 4% indicated that they work across these different mediums and 3% work in a medium other than radio, print, TV, photography or online media. No respondents elected online media as their primary and current medium of work.

Media staff rated their organisation's quality in producing content highest for local news and sports news. Local news quality was rated good or very good by 85% of media staff, sports news 77%. The quality of drama production, documentary and business news were rated as average or less by more than half of media staff (drama 64%, documentary 59%, business news 54%).

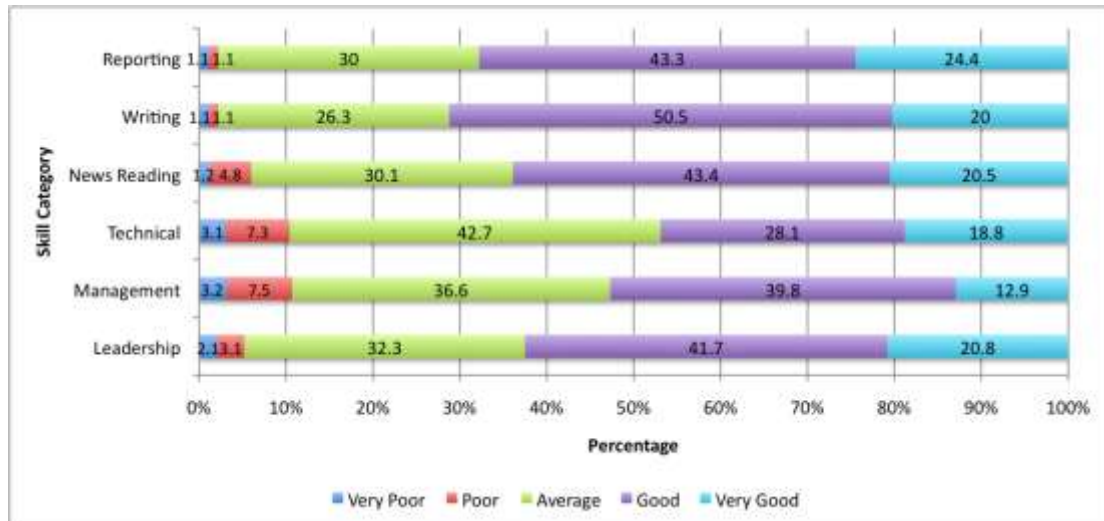
**Fig 4. Quality of media in respondents' organisations according to production categories**



Base: Media staff: all respondents working at media production outlets (n=76).  
Valid percentages of respondents' applicable categories: Local News (n=71), Sports News (n=70), Current Affairs (n=69), Business News (n=67), Documentary (n=56), Drama (n=53).

When rating their own skill level, respondents assessed their technical skills as least satisfactory, with over half of the respondents assessing their technical skills as average or lower (53%). Management skills were rated as average or below by 47% of respondents. The majority of respondents assessed their reporting and writing skills as good or very good (writing skills 71%, reporting skills 68%).

**Fig 5. All survey respondents rating their own skills**



Base: All respondents involved in the media industry (n=106) Valid percentages of respondents' applicable topics: Reporting (n=90), Writing (n=95), News Reading (n=83), Technical (n=96), Management (n=93), Leadership (n=96).

The content analysis examined local media content according to predetermined journalism indicators. Writing quality was predominantly measured by examining the report structure and grammar of articles and broadcasts. Production elements were analysed in terms of the technical quality of audio visual production components. Reporting quality was measured by the type of news frames, balance (number of sources), diversity and representation (sources and angles), coverage and use of language (for a definition of key terms see coding reference in Appendix D).

**Table 1. Quality measures used in content analysis**

Quality Indicator	Measure
Writing quality	Grammar Report structure Use of language
Production elements	Technical audio and visual components
Reporting quality	Sources, number of sources Angles Coverage Type of news frames

## **Writing Quality - Language and Structure**

**Newspaper:** Writing skills are essential in producing quality newspaper articles. The content analysis across all three newspapers revealed spelling and grammatical errors consistently, with errors found, on average, in every third story coded. Common grammatical errors included incorrectly constructed sentences, incorrect use of conjunctions such as 'although' and 'but', and adverbs such as 'however' and 'likewise'. Singulars, plurals and collective nouns were also regularly used incorrectly. Missing verbs or missing the definite article 'the' were other errors. 90% of news stories in the newspapers had a clear news report structure. Others included creative writing (3%), expressed opinions and were subjective (3%) or were coded as unstructured (4%). For news reports in newspapers, 94% of coded stories were written with attributed comments, and did not include subjective language, culturally offensive and defamatory language. 4% of stories used subjective comments, while 1% of stories used unattributed comments. For example:

*Solomon Islanders admire the ideals of liberty*<sup>2</sup>

Without attribution to a source, this statement appears assumptive.

**Radio:** Radio scripts were all coded having a clear report structure at both SIBC and ZFM. SIBC had very few grammatical errors (0.3 on average per story); ZFM, despite the short length of stories (and bulletins), had an average of 1.8 grammatical errors per story. ZFM and SIBC used clear language, with proper attribution to sources and the avoidance of subjective, culturally offensive or possibly defamatory language. For SIBC, report structure in 93% of news stories was clearly built on the 5 Ws<sup>3</sup> and following an inverted pyramid structure.

**Television:** One TV's<sup>4</sup> story structure kept to a basic news structure (94%), while 5% of stories lacked news structure and 1% was a clear vox pop. 100% of One TV's news refrained from the use of unattributed, subjective, culturally offensive and defamatory language, indicating writing quality in these areas.

For sports reports across all the stories coded, an exception was made on the use of language. Hyperbole and descriptive commentary, designed to capture the excitement or drama of a game was often used. Hyperbole such as "electrifying Lea'alafa", "spectacular save", "intriguing last gap"<sup>5</sup> was used to excite sports readers/followers.

The majority of survey respondents rated their writing skills as good (51%) or very good (20%). The content analysis, however, revealed writing errors (grammar and spelling) in every third news story published across the three newspapers. The confidence expressed by survey respondents was not reflected in the content analysis. Many interview participants also expressed a sense that quality was still relatively low.

*We're just going on five years now, so very young, and although people think that we've achieved a little bit, for me personally, we still have a long way to go. – Media*

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<sup>2</sup> Author unknown (2012) Solomon Islanders admire the ideals of liberty. *National Express*, April 2, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> 5Ws and 1H is an abbreviation of who, what, when, where, why and how; a basic principle of journalism reporting translating to the inverted pyramid structure, where these important facts are noted earlier on in a story.

<sup>4</sup> One TV is the Solomon Islands' only locally-produced television station.

<sup>5</sup> Lilimo, P (2012). Warriors beat united in narrow gap on the title race. *Sunday Isles*, March 25, p. 16.

The discrepancy could be due to the different demographic groups sampled for each method. The interview participants tended to be more senior, more experienced, and thus more critical. The lower education level of the average survey respondent could also contribute to this discrepancy – practitioners making grammatical errors may be unaware that they are doing so and rate their practice as good or very good, while a more senior member of staff may pick up these mistakes.

### ***Production Elements***

Production Elements refers to the technical quality of visuals and images used in newspaper and print layout and to the audio/visual technical quality in radio and television. Audio quality indicators consist of clarity of voice and sound. Visual indicators include clarity of images, which can be measured by criteria such as focus, framing and in the case of video cameras, movement.

**Radio:** For radio bulletins, the news was audible and no further notes were made.

**Newspaper:** Out of 144 newspaper pictures coded (either accompanying stories or picture captions), 77% of pictures had captions describing the images, 23% did not. 24% of pictures used were head and shoulder shots. Head and shoulder shots do not include any action or give indication of place, space or time. These give prominence, authority or value to a person rather than contextualising an accompanying story. This was especially common for government figures. Printing quality was mostly clear, with colour printing usually only on the front and back page of the newspaper.

**Television:** Producing television requires a higher technical skill set as audiovisual components come together in production and postproduction. For all One TV packages that included cutaways and interviews, about 70% of stories had audio and visual technical shortcomings. These technical shortcomings predominantly included issues around exposure (over exposed shots or interview participants too dark), as well as shots that were out of focus and shaky camera work. Some had the boom (microphone extension) in the frame or there were a high number of panoramic shots in a story. 90% of the stories had clear audio for both reporter and interviewees. Of the bulletins coded, editors used a repeat-shot 30 times and two repeat shots four times. This means that for any one story, one shot would have been used two times in that story. This occurred 30 times in two weeks. It was also noted that shots were at times repeated across stories.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Repeated shots both within a story and across stories indicate a lack of originality or freshness of news, and might be often due to a technical shortcoming that not enough footage was captured on location.

## Reporting Quality: Balance, Diversity and Coverage

### Balance

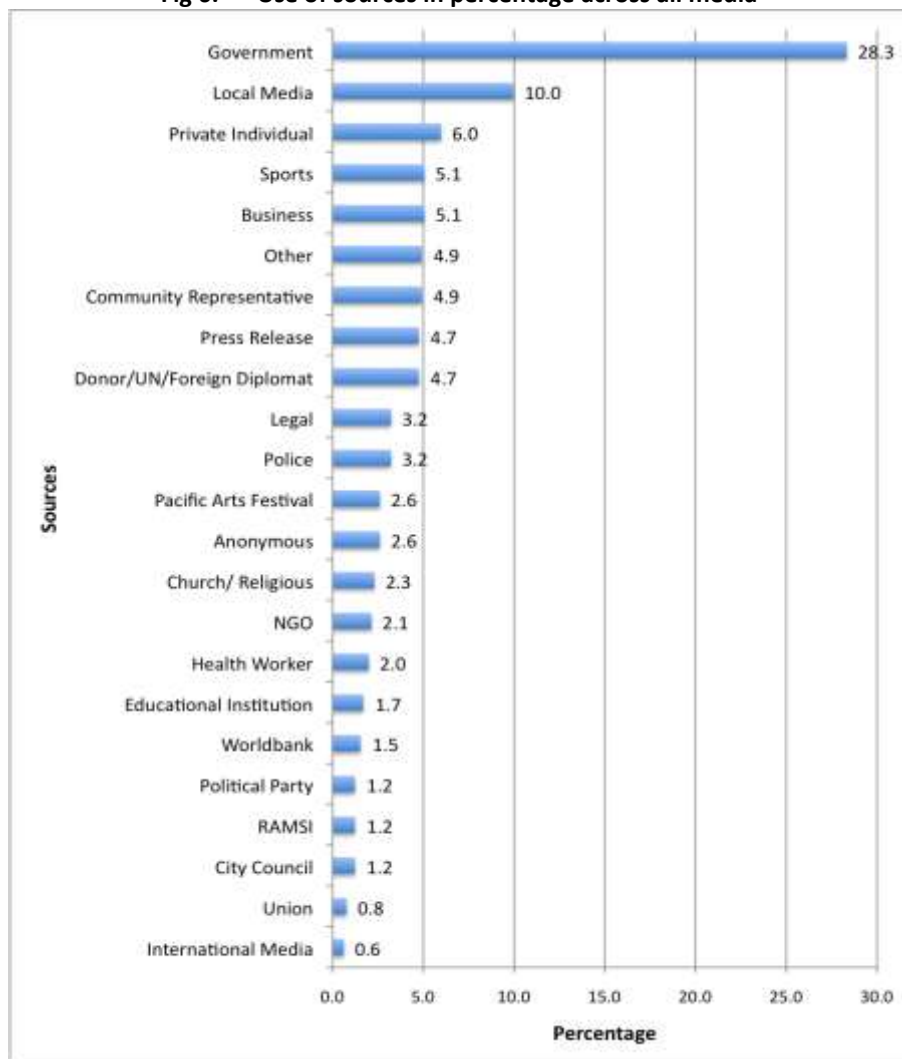
Balance is one of the key indicators of basic journalism quality. This was commented on by stakeholders across the entire media sector. Balance refers to using multiple sources and representing ‘both sides of a story’.

*To have a quality story you need interviews and different viewpoints - they are all around you. And [a] place like Solomon Islands, where it's such a small community, it's very easy to get side tracked just to show one side of things. – Media*

*Quality media in Solomon Islands to me would be the good reporting, where you have both sides of the story. – Media*

Balance in content analysis was represented by the type and number of sources used for a story. Government sources were dominant across the various media platforms (Radio 35%, TV 20%, and Newspaper 28%) with an average of 28% of all sources used across all media.

Fig 6. Use of sources in percentage across all media



Base: coded stories from Newspaper (n=320), Radio (n=118), TV (n=98), number of all sources is 653.



Radio used an average of 1.1 sources and TV and Newspapers used an average of 1.3 sources per news item. However, the survey showed that media staff (n=76) believed an average of three sources were used per story. 51% feel that their organisation always uses a variety of sources for news stories, with an additional 30% stating that to be the case 'most of the time'. On average, media practitioners (n=58) say that they use three sources per story.

*Minimum of three source checks, maximum five is my safety net. Verification of facts, the same at least three, the best is five, before publishing and always I do not report on second hand information. – Freelancer*

What emerged across the three methods was that, although practitioners consider using multiple sources and fact-checking as vital in producing good quality media, and practitioners surveyed feel that this occurs regularly, this is not reflected in the content analysis. Sources are overwhelmingly governmental, often appearing as the only source in a news item.

This discrepancy could relate to several things. Practitioners may have answered relating to best practice or expectations (social desirability bias) rather than common practice. Sources may be consulted at some stage of research or reporting but not represented in the final output. It is apparent, however, that increasing the number of sources represented in the content itself would align it more closely with what media stakeholders believe is good quality journalism.

Having a variety of sources within a news item cannot ensure balance. Stories with two or more sources may still support the same argument and some stories may not require a number of sources such as stories recounting event-based information.

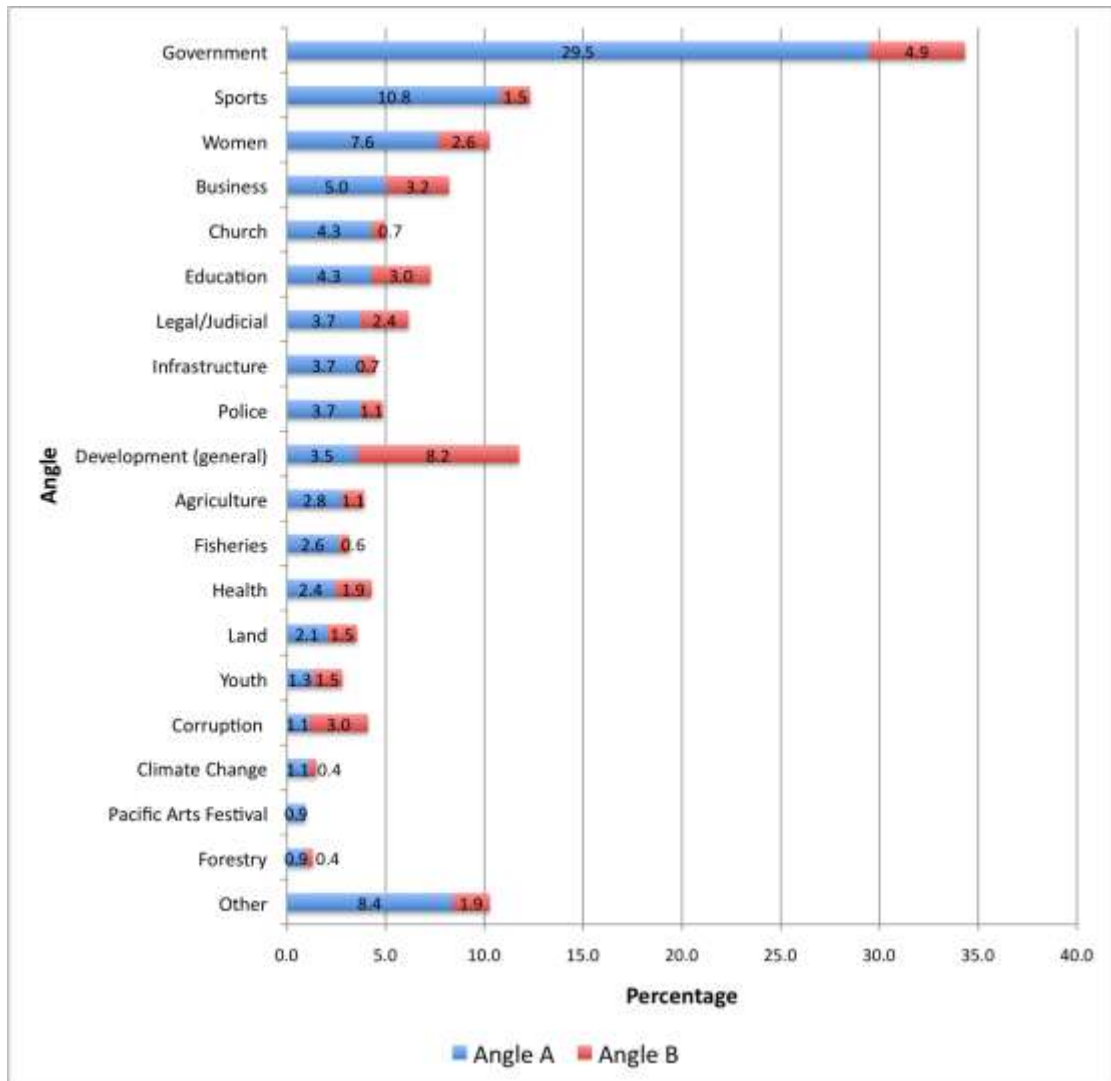
### **Diversity and Representation**

In addition to using multiple sources and showing 'both sides of the story', balance was used by interview participants to describe the coverage of a diverse range of stories and groups in media. In this sense, balance is diversity of representation – the inclusion of both rural and urban stories, women's and men's issues and stories targeting youth and adults.

*When you have a balance between what's happening in Honiara and what's happening from the community, that is what I see, balance is quality media. – NGO*

In order to monitor diversity in the news, the content analysis examined the angle of stories. The angle of the story refers to what perspective of an issue or event the journalist considers important and that is usually highlighted in the headlines to grab the reader's attention. As with sources, government stories (both general government and government initiative) dominated first angles (see Fig. 7).

Fig 7. Angles coded across all media



Base: coded stories (n= 536), per medium: newspaper (n=320), radio (n=118), TV (n=98).

Development rated the highest as a secondary angle across all media. This means that while the story focused on a different primary angle, these angles came through as secondary. For example:

*The National Government through the Ministry of Development Planning and AID Coordination (MDPAC) is implementing a Development Assistant Database to coordinate and facilitate data entry and update all funded projects in the country.<sup>7</sup>*

Stories that used development as a secondary angle were largely responding to events and press releases, without providing in-depth reporting on development issues themselves. This was similar in regards to women’s issues, which while being well represented were often triggered by events. For example:

<sup>7</sup> Bilua, B. (2012). Government sets up database for funded projects. Island Sun, March 29, p.4.

**Heading:** *First Australian GG to witness women’s forum*

**First Paragraph:** *The first female Governor General of Australia Her Excellency Quentin Bryce will participate in a Women’s Leadership Forum at the Parliament House today.*<sup>8</sup>

For women’s issues 59% of the stories across all media were event-based; 16% of the stories were exploring a policy and another 16% were sourcing a report. For example, during the coded timeframe a World Bank report around sexual violence in the Pacific dominated coverage of women’s issues across all media. However, none of the stories provided a more in-depth analysis of the report or associated issues.

*Sometimes World Bank press releases are lifted straight out from the copy and right into the papers. I’ve seen that a lot. It’s good for [the organisation] but sometimes [the] press releases don’t give that much of a story. – NGO*

When asked about the representation of different demographic groups in the Solomon Islands media, 60% of all survey respondents felt that not all groups were represented in the media. The group most commonly identified as under-represented was the rural population. It was commented by interviewees and survey participants that media was Honiara-centred.

*We badly lack coverage of what’s happening outside provinces, what the rural people are doing. – Media*

*What’s happening here is everything is focused on politics, government, town, Honiara, so you cannot really represent the whole of Solomon Islands in the media. – Government*

**Table 2. Categories of representation of groups in SI media**

Well represented	Underrepresented
Politics	Rural people
Soccer	Women
Urban	Youth
Town	Children
Policy makers	Ordinary people
Educated	Uneducated
Literate	Illiterate
Honiara-based	Disabled / elderly

Base: all survey respondents (n=106), groups listed by respondents that felt that not all opinions and concerns of Solomon Islanders are represented by the media (n=61).

Both sources and angles revealed the dominance of government stories, in line with the perceived categories in media. People strongly felt that rural populations are under-represented. The audience survey (2010) revealed that people are keen to see more stories in the media that represent ‘life for us in the Solomon Islands’ (2010).

<sup>8</sup> Hatigeva, G. (2012) First Australian GG to witness women’s forum. *Island Sun*, April 3, p. 3.

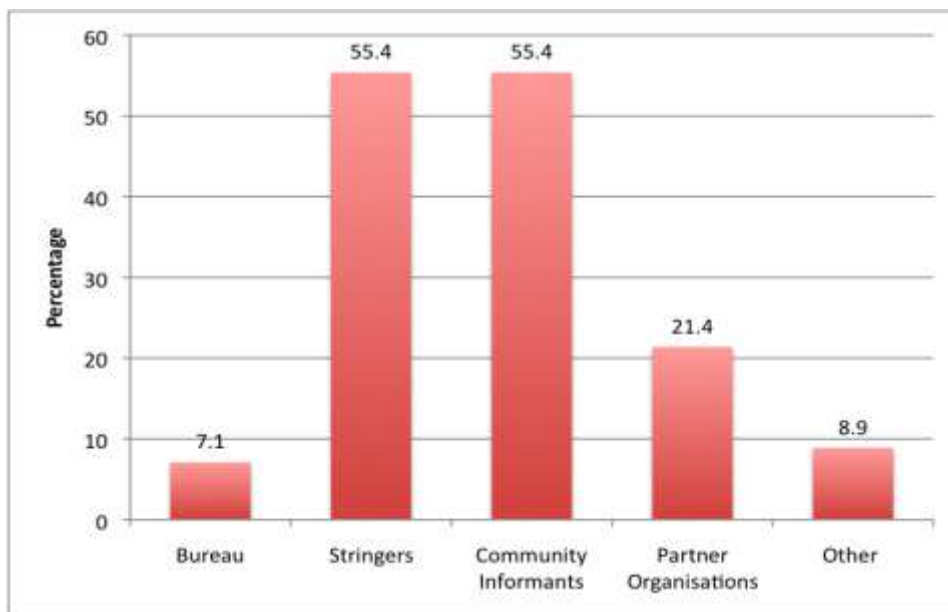
SIBC stood out as an organisation that uses a higher number of community representatives as sources, whereas newspapers included very few community representatives as sources. This can possibly be attributed to the limited reach of the newspapers; as SIBC is often the only media available in remote and rural communities; their programming includes these groups more often. TV also stood out as representing the voice of citizens by relating stories back to the impact on ordinary citizens and tailoring their news packages to reflect this. This was mentioned as a particular goal of their programming by One TV employees in the interviews.

*I have a lot of ABC journalists coming and saying but your [news package] is too long. And I said yeah but that's Australia, this is Honiara. That's a difference here, I'm talking to somebody who has no idea about this issues so I have to take a little bit more time, to really break it down and take it out. - Media*

### Coverage

Media coverage of the Solomon Islands remains a significant issue. All media formats struggle to provide coverage to more remote regions, with SIBC being the only local exception. 93% of audience respondents identified having access to the national broadcaster (Tebbutt Research, 2010). International media also tends to have wider reach than local outlets, although international sources were rarely mentioned by practitioners in the interviews.

**Fig 8. How media organisations ensure coverage according to survey respondents**



Base: All media staff (n=76). Valid percentages of responses (n=74).

It is clear from the content analysis, interviews and from the 2010 audience survey that the media's reach is currently limited, and coverage of remote regions is occurring only in a limited capacity. When asked about how their media outlet ensures coverage of the nation, survey respondents indicated that they mostly used community informants or stringers. Despite evidence to the contrary, 74% felt that their organisation ensured coverage of the

country. It is unknown whether these respondents were reflecting on the plans and desires of the organisation rather than its current state, answered relative to their perceived ability to reach these populations, or misunderstood the question.

### **Type of News Frame**

News frames are used to assess the story telling approach of the reporter. “The most commonly employed narrative frame is a straight news account (the inverted pyramid). These are stories in which no particular narrative element dominates other than presenting who, what, when, where, why and how” (Pew Research Center, 2012). Other news frames might specifically present a conflict story or a reaction story for example (see Appendix D for a full list of news frames that were used for coding).

In newspapers, 44% of stories were ‘straight stories’, where journalists reported directly on an event or issue without any additional analysis or context. 11% of stories were coded as ‘government initiated enterprise is good for the country’, 6% ‘reaction stories’ and ‘reality check’ news frames (see Fig. 9). For example (reality check news frames):

*Gender imbalance & gender - based violence against minority gender women.*<sup>9</sup>

Radio mostly presented straight news stories (32%) where journalists wrote what they witnessed happening as a direct account of events. Radio presents the least percentage of straight stories compared to TV and newspaper. The next category in radio was reaction stories (14%), where sources were reacting to comments, decisions and events that took place. The third type of story frame was government-initiated enterprise as being good for the country (11%). For example:

*Provincial Government calling for speedy response to food shortage on their island/  
Temotu Province's Home Affairs Minister.*<sup>10</sup>

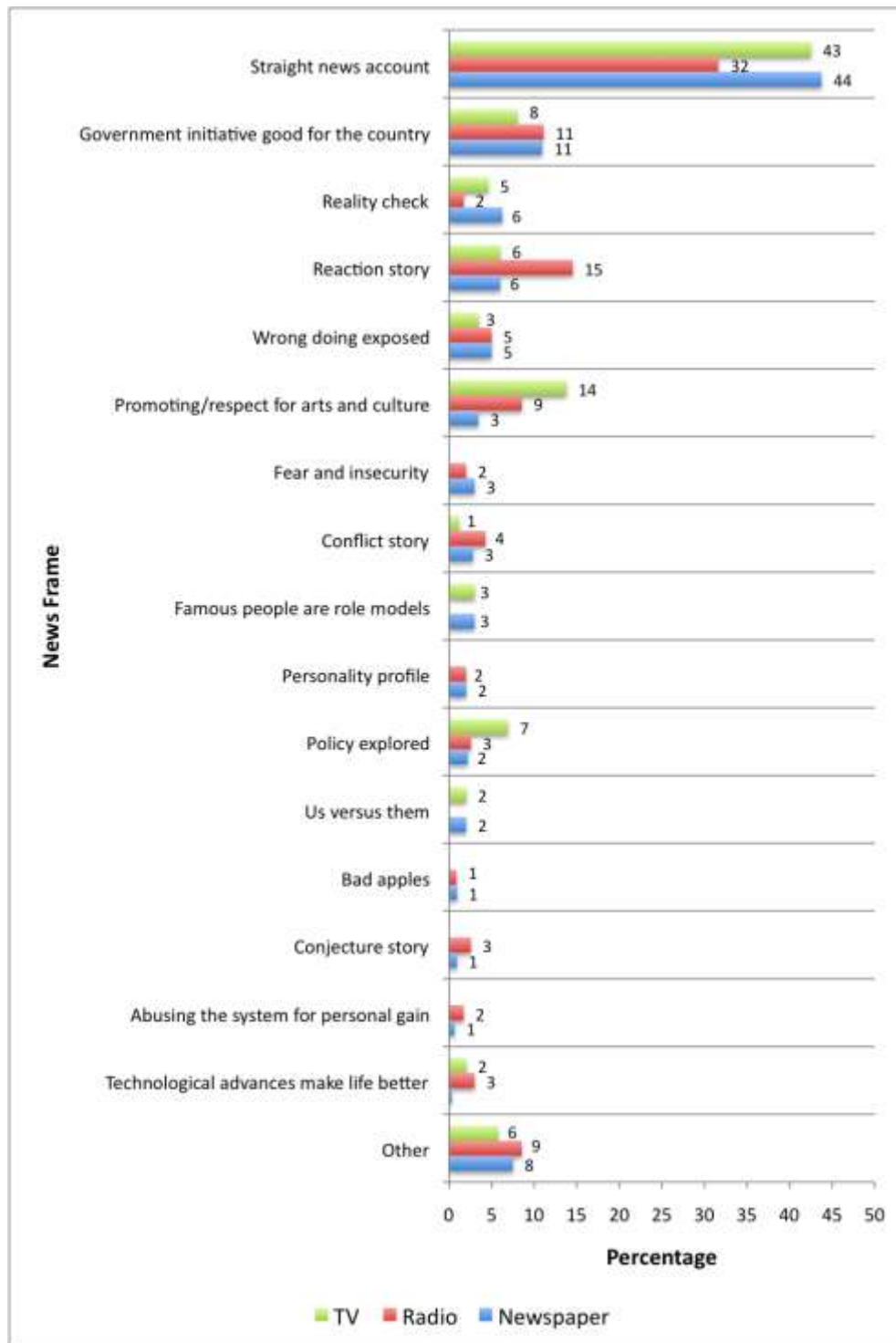
In TV, 43% of the bulletins were straight stories, with about 14% framed as promoting or respecting art and culture, 8% of stories were framed as government initiated enterprise is good for the country, while 7% explored policy. The high percentage of news frames coded as ‘promoting or respecting art and culture’ is likely due to the Pacific Arts Festival to be hosted in Honiara in July 2012, as the town was in preparation for the Pacific Arts Festival during to content coding period.

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<sup>9</sup> Bilua, B. (2012). World Bank launches gender report. *Island Sun*, March 27, p.8.

<sup>10</sup> Author unknown (2012) Provincial leaders in Temotu are calling for speedy response from the government particularly the national disaster management on its current food crises, *ZFM*, March 30.

**Fig 9. Type of news frames across all media**



Base: coded stories for newspaper (n=320), radio (n=118), TV (n=98).

### Independence & asking the right questions

Independence in media for interviewees was significantly tied to the ability to provide another voice, particularly in the political landscape. There is a sense among many

stakeholders that the present media is often unduly influenced by external forces, be they government or NGOs, whose press releases are often published or read verbatim.

Independence in this context represents a media industry that is empowered to question authority, to take an analytical stance and critique information rather than simply providing an outlet for it and to be free from external political, social and economic control.

*I still would like to see a strong independent media. I would like to see some good independent professional journalists to lead the media in this country. – Government*

In order to achieve this level of independence, which almost all interviewees felt is still lacking, there were numerous suggestions: a strong and competitive commercial market, an increase in freelance or independent commentators, and an improvement in working conditions and leadership and thus increased motivation to fulfil such a role were all raised.

*The private media out there are fighting on their own but because they do not have the support... When times get tough here we are the independent voice. Because we are not tied to the politics, we are not owned by them. – Media*

For interview participants, a vital part of being able to provide the 'bigger picture' journalism is the ability to ask the 'right' questions, often also perceived as the 'tough' questions. A strong, independent media is one that is able to openly question the state of things, be that in relation to a government policy, health information, or aid spending.

*I know [there] are a lot of good reporters out there; well trained, well experienced, they have the capacity to see the broader picture, they are really good. The question is why aren't they asking those questions? – NGO*

Numerous inhibitors to this 'hard-hitting' style of journalism were raised: government and politician unwillingness to communicate openly with journalists; media's own vested interests; a cultural reluctance to challenge or question 'big men' in society; inexperience of the media work force; lack of education; threats or intimidation of media.

*Well that's the biggest challenge we have, especially as a newspaper, getting to the right people. In the case of here it is talking to big fellows is quite [a] problem, especially most didn't want to talk to the media, they are not very helpful talking to media. – Media*

## **Responsibility**

Responsibility, as with most themes identified around quality, has significant overlap with other themes. Responsible reporting is seen as ethical reporting, independent reporting, reporting that elicits trust in audiences, and reporting that takes account of the 'bigger picture'. Interestingly, comments about responsibility most frequently came from government and NGO sources, rather than media themselves. Reporting that is considered irresponsible remains an issue for these groups.

*I see in the media... 'Jack said this'. The credibility of what Jack says you never know it's often not filtered... So Jack can make a completely absurd claim, and the media... repeating these things is really problematic. – NGO*

There is an expectation among those dealing with media that they will consider the potential effects of a story prior to publishing or airing it. In this sense responsibility is also about providing editorial judgements to one's own work – what constitutes news that *should* be reported to the nation, and in what way should it be reported?

*I'll put it this way, in journalism, if you are going to cover any subject you have to be very, very familiar [with it]. You have to make sure that you understand and [are] familiar with the subject you [are] going to cover. Now if you don't do that you will have opposing sides, influencing your views over to put up with the people and maybe some weeks down the road you will realise that you have been misled or you have misled the situation. – Government*

## **Ethics**

A sense of ethical reporting and use of media is integral to all indicators of quality that emerged from the study. However, it was also highlighted sufficiently to warrant its inclusion as a primary factor in and of itself.

*To practice in achieving quality in media we need to uphold the principles of media freedom as well as getting journalist in the areas of quality media the basics ethics, even the laws guiding media. – Government*

Ethical media was seen to encapsulate many of the qualities mentioned throughout – balance, responsibility, advocating for community issues, or educating a population that suffers from high rates of illiteracy. In a nation that has experienced considerable political instability in recent decades, these ideas come to hold a particular significance.

Media stakeholders would like to see a media that holds politicians and authority figures accountable and promote transparency, a media that has the power to advocate, and a media that is united against intimidation and corruption. Media is currently performing this role to some extent, particularly in promoting transparency and accountability of government on political issues. The lack of critical reflection and high incidences of single government sources in these articles suggests that there is still a risk that the media is often lacking a critical voice, often reprinting government statements or press releases unedited and uncriticised.

*I think there is a tendency in the media now, especially the print media to be... directly influenced by the political rankings in this country and I think that is a very big risk. – Government*

Equal representation of all groups in media also emerged as a strong component in ethical media; the desire and increase in development stories, for example, was often linked to an ethical impetus to make media more inclusive.

*I think it needs more improving... especially those who work in the newspaper should be taught more their ethics, you know be fair in the reporting and equal chances to everybody in their reporting. – Media*

Corruption or vested interest within both media organisations and society as a whole also emerged as an issue, inhibiting or discouraging media practitioners from performing their professional duties ethically, or being motivated to do so.



*It's hard to talk ethics to journalists and preach these things when they're surrounded by... everybody trying to get by with what they can, how they can, who they know, who they can buy off, who they can get to help them under the table, it's a society thing. – Media*

### 3.2.2. Local Contexts

***In the context of Solomon Islands media, respondents felt that it is critical for local media to educate as well as inform. Media is hoped to be a potential force to advocate for less privileged groups and to share local success stories.***

#### ***Educate and Inform – ‘Bigger Picture Journalism’***

While perhaps not considered a minimum requirement of quality in media, one thing to emerge from the interviews as extremely significant, particularly in the context of moving the media industry forward and towards optimal performance, was the role stakeholders would like to see media play in educating the public about issues affecting them, rather than just informing them about these issues as they arise.

*They have to be able to expand and have an in-depth understanding of a lot of major political, social and economic issues. They have to be able to have a broader scope of what's happening outside and what's happening in the country, what influences the country. – Government*

This broader context includes numerous elements. It involves shaping the conception of media to be more than merely the delivery of the news as it happens. Rather, interview subjects would like to see a media that provides context to events and explores their impact. If something has occurred, why has it occurred, and what does it mean for communities?

*We may have 80% of our people who are not being able to read and write and in that sense they don't understand [a] lot of issues that are affecting the country as a whole. So a good media or a good quality media is one... that strives to give out what are the real issues that affect the people... and to help them to understand. – Government*

There is a strong desire for media to provide these kinds of insights, to both educate and inform populations, and to provide the ‘bigger picture’ of an event. The ability to perform this task is linked to perceptions of quality in journalism.

*Educate first and then inform. Not inform and then educate. – Media*

Interview participants highlighted a quality journalist as one that has an in-depth understanding of the *context* in which they are working and the long-term ramifications of events as they occur, and can relate these contexts and impacts effectively to a wide variety of communities.

## **Advocacy & Sharing Success Stories**

The wider role of media is not only perceived as that of the ‘watchdog’, educator, or political commentator as has been discussed. Media stakeholders would like to see the media advocating for those groups that may not be currently represented, or may be under or misrepresented.

This could be viewed as a new stage in the development of media in the Solomon Islands. The first, basic craft skills and minimum standards, relates to the ability of media to *deliver adequate information*. The second, the role of educators and the ability to challenge authority, represents a media able to *mediate the information delivered*, providing context, history, analysis, and insight into potential impacts. This third role, that of *advocator and communicator for change*, engages media in a more active and creative role, one that no longer merely communicates, explains or questions information, but rather one that uses this information to effect change, to muster communities, and to provide a voice to minority or remote communities.

*I am a firm believer that... journalists communicate for change, advocate for change and development and things like that. So I see not so much as journalist and just to be there... but journalists will be there as advocates for social change and development in their community. So I firmly believe that [journalists] should be practicing at [sic] being somebody who advocates for change in development of the community. – Media*

Advocacy in this sense is also interesting to consider in the context of SOLMAS Phase III, which seeks to explore Communication for Development (C4D) in further depth. While at this point advocacy and communication for development was a secondary theme for many interviewees, the willingness and desire of many to move in that direction points to potential opportunities for SOLMAS to collaborate with media organisations to achieve these ends, in line with the anticipated focus on C4D.

An important part of C4D is the ongoing communication of ‘success stories’ or the provision of examples of development in action. These positive stories serve to inspire, encourage and inform other groups, to promote the work of various organisations and individuals, and to allow participants in such programs the chance to share their experiences in their own words. The sharing of such positive stories in the context of the Solomon Islands also provides a chance to counter the Honiara- and politically-centric nature of the media currently. Interview participants from disparate fields, but particularly from development organisations, expressed a desire to see more positive stories in the media, which is currently seen as focusing on bad news, politics, and urban events.

*I don’t know for other people but for me when I read a lot of negative stories [and] I don’t like it. It’s like is that the only thing that happens in the Solomons and nothing else? – NGO*

*So you writing positive stories and you know highlight development issues that people will read and journalist will find yourself in that role and also helping the community, helping the society as well. – Media*

This in-depth journalism, feature writing, and representation of a wide range of groups is critical to developing an industry that contributes to media for development. This is further discussed in section 2.4 *Media and Development Issues*.

### 3.2.3. Inhibitors of Quality Improvement

***Lack of resources and financial hardship are significant inhibitors to quality improvement in SI media.***

Almost all interview respondents expressed a belief that the media is not currently achieving a desirable level of quality, for a variety of reasons. The primary inhibitors to quality were identified as lack of formal education, lack of organisational resources, staff attrition and associated inexperience in the work force, and poor working conditions and pay (which contributes to staff attrition) and a lack of motivation to perform.

*Finance is the biggest hurdle here to any plans we might have but that I think that's the case everywhere else. Yes, manpower is also one and but again it was to finance if you don't have I mean if not enough funds or not enough money you can't get enough manpower and especially the trained manpower.*

– Media

These pressing financial concerns mentioned across all media impact significantly on other inhibitors, such as training and work conditions. Many organisations cannot afford to send their staff to training, and are reluctant to lose manpower even to the free training sessions provided by SOLMAS.

*We don't have the financial capabilities to provide the training.* – Media

Inexperience continues to be a challenge for many organisations, where high staff attrition only serves to compound widespread inexperience across the sector. This is also seemingly impacted by relatively poor working conditions, themselves linked to financial pressures and a lack of manpower.

*...the biggest barrier for the common, normal Solomon Islands journalists - it's working for limited pay and [to] be expected to use that to do some things, that shouldn't be your responsibility.* – Media

*I think the bigger problem is the pay. The pay is really bad. That's why people are going to better paid jobs.* – Media

Many of these issues are beyond the scope or capabilities of SOLMAS to address through their programs.

### 3.3. Strengthening Media

#### 3.3.1. Understanding Audience Needs

***Almost all media staff consider knowledge of audience needs as important. Most audience feedback however occurs informally.***

***34% of survey respondents had heard about the SOLMAS 2010 audience survey.***

One of the key evaluation questions from the SOLMAS M&E framework is whether media are using the needs of the audience to inform their programming. The audience survey conducted in 2010 assessed the behaviour of Solomon Islands audiences (Tebbutt Research, 2010).

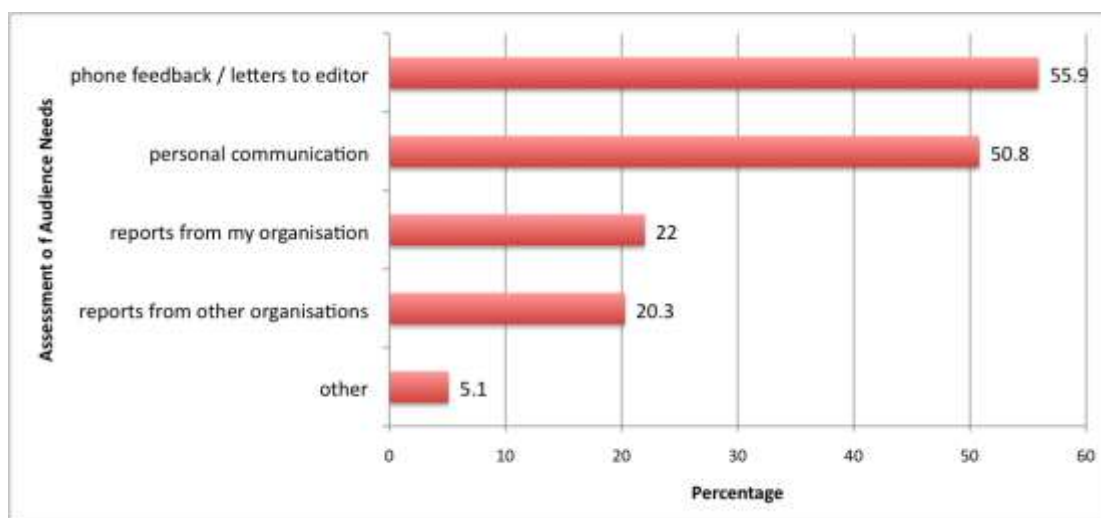
Almost all media staff (n=76) surveyed in this study rated knowledge of audience needs as either important or very important (99%). 83% said they assess audience needs. The most common forms of assessment were personal communication, and feedback to the organisation by phone or in writing (see Fig. 10). These means of communication are informal; reports prepared by external bodies remain the only formal means of receiving audience feedback.

This was confirmed in interviews. Almost all practitioners interviewed receive regular informal feedback from audiences through phone calls and 'on-the-fly' comments. These comments were considered with varying degrees of seriousness, with much responsiveness to audiences being tied to financial and market considerations.

*We don't necessarily get feedback formally or by letters or but we sometimes receive calls and sometimes you meet people on the road and they come and say, oh thank you, or we love that, or we don't like this you know. – Media*

*This is a small place so you get feedback all the time. You broadcast something [and] I don't like, I tell you. We get feedback all the time. We get calls in the middle of the night. – Media*

**Fig 10. Media staff assessing their audience's needs**



Base: all media staff (n=76), valid percentages based on responses (n=59)

In surveys, 88% of media staff felt that information about audience needs informs programming priorities in their organisation.

*To increase in the competitive environment like Honiara, one way of increasing our office here is finding out exactly what their listening music is like, we try to pull people in with music, media, entertainment, something that everybody likes, it's call station formatting. – Media*

34% of all respondents have heard about the SOLMAS audience survey undertaken in 2010. This low level of awareness was similarly reflected in the interviews. The only exceptions to this were in institutions that work particularly closely with SOLMAS, such as SIBC. Of the 34% that were familiar with the survey, about 83% of survey respondents stated that they had found it to be very useful, with 70% indicating that their organisations' practice had changed because of the survey.

Media stakeholders felt that audiences needed to be educated in the role and operations of media itself. Many expressed frustration at the lack of audience understanding of the limitations and environments in which media works, particularly in the emerging television market, with negative feedback about issues beyond their control further contributing to their often poor working environments.

*People need to understand more about the role of a media as well. Good if people understand. They are sort of taking it for granted. – Media*

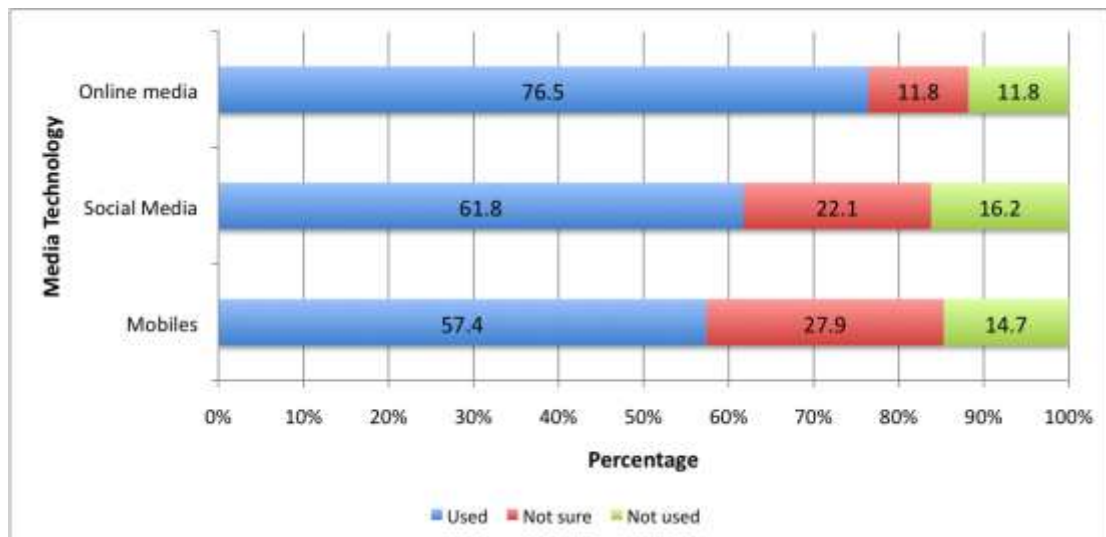
*The problem we had here was we had ABC and BBC up here first on TV so in Solomon Island they expect us to look like that. – Media*

### 3.3.2. New Media and Mobile Technologies

Increasingly, audiences are interested in consuming media in formats outside the traditional print, radio and television mediums, expanding into mobile phones and the Internet. As these technologies become more widely available, it will become increasingly important for media outlets to be aware of these new forms of engagement to build and strengthen their markets.

*Social media is a very important thing you know, like people who get access to mobile phones and they get access to other forms of media, communication, interactions, I think that's very, very important, to get access to the Internet. – Government*

**Fig 11. Current use of new media and mobile technologies by staff for work**



*Base: All media staff (n=76), based on valid percentages (n=68) for all media technology categories*

Currently, online media is used most among media practitioners (77%), followed by social media (62%) and mobile phones (57%). Interviews revealed that while there is a desire to improve areas in new media and mobile communication, there is also awareness that access to new media in SI is still limited. However, some respondents commented on positive experiences.

*I didn't realise that [the website] would have a great audience. We were targeting in Solomon Islands, a lot don't have access here but I was surprised, people have access - more than 400 000 [hits] a month, that's [a] lot of people around the clock. – Media*

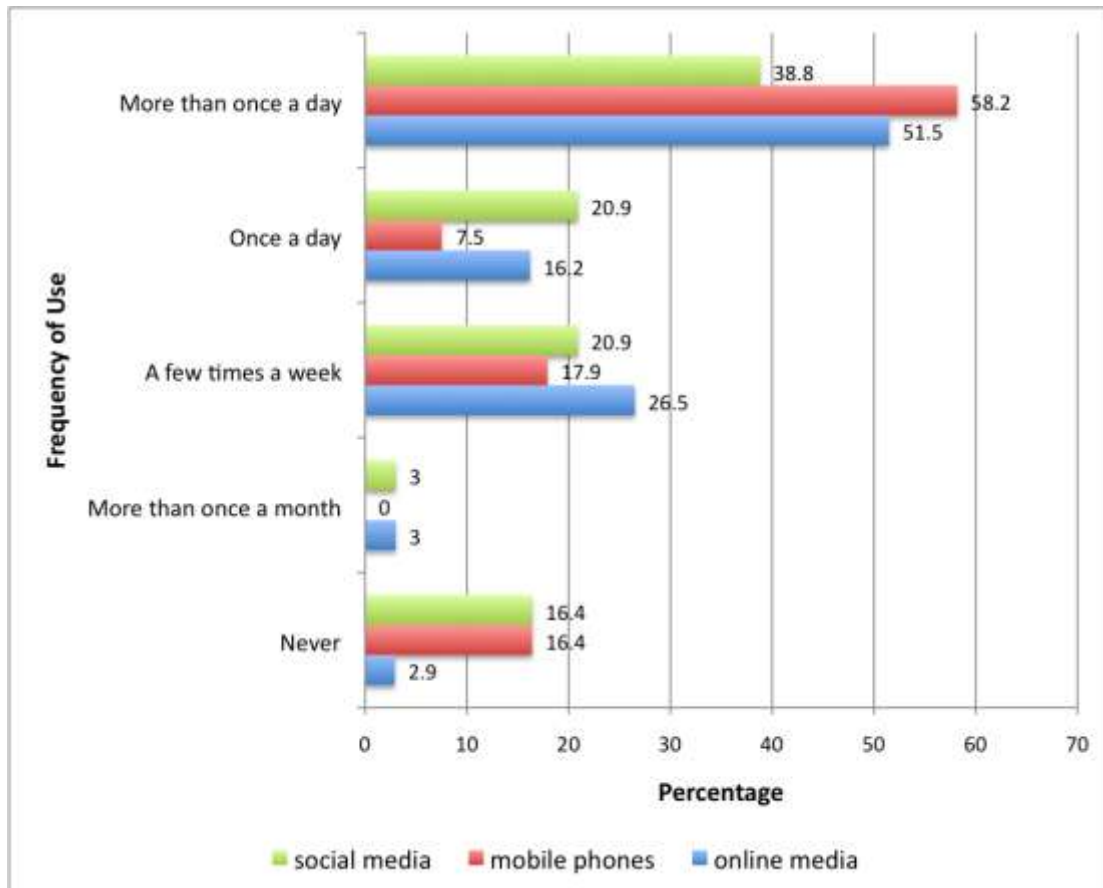
New media remains low priority at this stage for many media organisations based on financial and resource constraints. Ongoing maintenance and updating can present challenges for those who engage in online or new media.

*We just developed a website in December last year. And our staff are excited about [it] and I mean we've got feedback from others, they really want our*

*work to be out on the website. However we don't have someone to manage it. Like to upload information, we do have a lot of data and reports we want to put out on the website. So it's one of our challenge now is getting the right person. – NGO*

65% of media staff stated that their organisation had their own website. Out of these respondents, 54% stated that their organisation's website was updated at least a few times per week, with 42% stating that it was updated daily.

**Fig 12. Frequency of new media and mobile use for work among media staff**

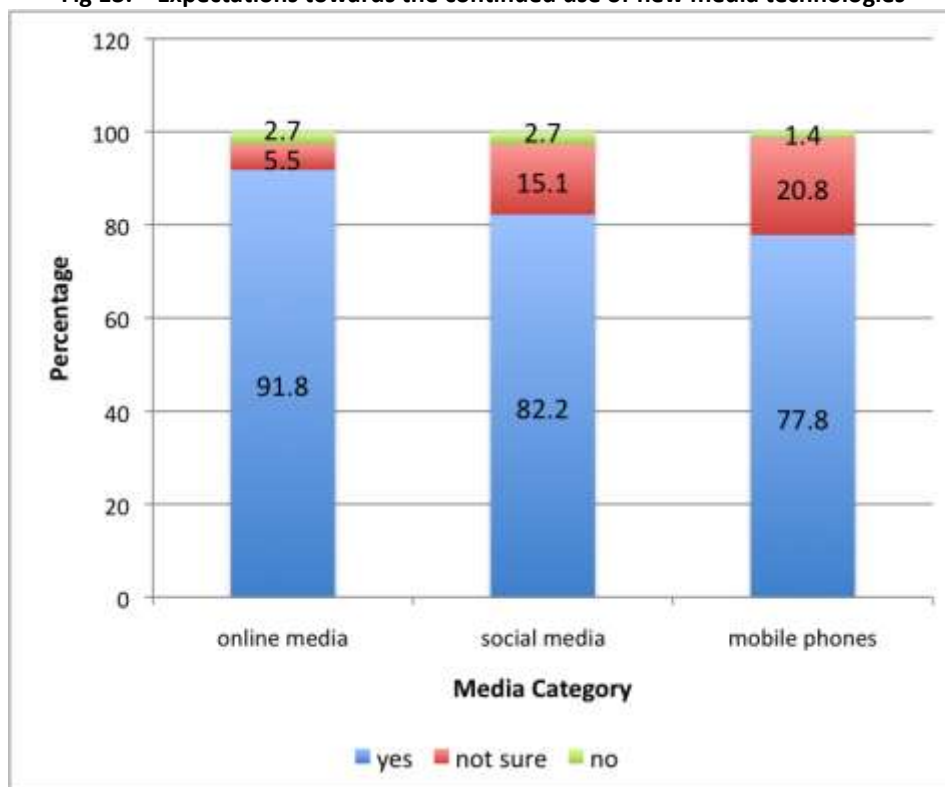


*Base: All media staff (n=95), based on valid percentage of respondents: mobile (n=67), social media (n=67), online media (n=68).*

Over half of the media practitioners (58%) use their mobile phones for work more than once a day (see Fig. 12). Social media and online media are used less but the majority of media practitioners use these technologies at least a few times a week or more (mobile phone: 84%, social media 81%). Significantly, a number of people (16%) do not use mobile phones or social media.

There is, however, agreement that the media organisations will continue to use new media and mobile technologies, and this agreement is highest for online media (see Fig. 13).

**Fig 13. Expectations towards the continued use of new media technologies**



Base: All media staff (n=76), valid percentages for: online media (n=73), mobile (n=72), social media (n=73).

Of all media practitioners (n=58) 17% stated that they have a personal website. Lack of Internet access, unfamiliarity with using the technology and expense associated with running the website were all identified in interviews as reasons why more media practitioners do not have websites, despite their interest in it.

*I know it's important as they say a shop front, everybody's shop front to the world and yeah I definitely would like one shop front but I haven't got one up yet. – Media*

Half of those who stated they had their own website (five out of ten people) said that they also used it for reporting.

There is, despite resourcing limitations, an eagerness to be trained in emerging media technology, particularly in light of the proposed high-speed cable being introduced over the next few years. This desire for training runs the gamut, from basic technical skills such as building and maintaining a website, to commercial and business elements, such as selling advertising space on a website, to online copyright and libel law. There is a sense among media practitioners that their organisation would be capable of making good use of the technology provided they are adequately trained and resourced to meet these goals.

*I mean if they want to widen their knowledge on social media I think [training is] very important. Because then we use Internet a lot. Especially my journalists are very young; it's a young team here, they use the Facebook thing, so it's very important that there is more training in terms of social media. ...legal rights, copyright things because... sometimes you just get things out from the Internet and then without realising that it's copyrighted. – Media*



SOLMAS has already undertaken training in using social media for media organisations. More than half of respondents rated their improvement in this area as a result of the SOLMAS training as high (see Fig. 3). Continued training in this emerging field is important across the whole media sector.

### **3.3.3. Archiving**

One of the key activities for SOLMAS Phase III is the improvement of archiving and CMS's, particularly at SIBC. Interviews revealed limited knowledge about these systems. Some institutions had archiving in place, while others did not. Many newspapers stored hard copies around their offices, while one radio station keeps external hard drive backups in several locations.

*We do two backups, one I take it home and one is here with the boss and one is running, the one running now we use the external. – Media*

The SIBC newsroom has an archive system called *NewsBoss* that allows journalists to archive scripts, author, duration, dates and audio files. *NewsBoss* enabled the study to acquire much of the important details that were needed for this study. All institutions were keen to develop further archiving systems, and SIBC were in the process of upgrading, with SOLMAS' assistance, at the time of the interviews. However, they faced ongoing financial and basic resourcing issues such as paying for power to run air-conditioning to keep the computers and hard drives cool enough to remain functional.

*We change from technology to technology. This is expensive... to properly install or put in an air conditioning system, powering air con is very expensive. We share the same problem throughout, broadcasters, heaps of tapes there and if you don't quickly convert them the magnetic starts to fall off, the weather helps reduce the tapes - these issues are everywhere. – Media*

Archiving remains an issue, with an example from SIBC illustrating: an old report regarding the elections had been aired again in place of a current report as the on-air presenter was the same and had been tagged as such in the archiving without appropriately distinguishing metadata.

*Just one of two weeks ago... one of our young producers in the morning program he aired a piece of information that was talking about the election of prime minister from last year leading up to the election... It was mixture of tapes, the Prime Minister was not happy. – Media*

## **3.4. Media and Development Issues**

### **3.4.1. Relationship between Media Outlets and NGOs**

While communication between media and other stakeholders is something that appears to be improving, there is still a long way to go before development and media organisations are engaged in optimal relationships.

*In terms of lobbying and advocacy yeah media is a very powerful tool, information is very powerful. Now people are actually using that but it takes time also before they can really understand how media works. – NGO*

*I think [development] is one area I think we really didn't cover that much. I think only SIBC is doing that. But I think cause they have this thinking that FM station is just a musical station you know and there's why I always told my staff that for us is different we are not just the musical station but we will be doing awareness programs and all these things too. – Media*

45% of all media staff said that they do not usually work with NGO's. Almost all interviewed stakeholders in media acknowledge and champion the role that media can play in addressing development issues, highlighting the potential impact media can have in communicating development messages and gathering support and action in communities.

*I for one believe that media is an important tool for development in Solomons and especially in communicating. Solomon Islands is an oral society, we kind of love hearing us talking... and I kind of think that the media helps us to promote that what we have been doing in the past and communicating. – NGO*

*I think media does [play a] very important role especially where in the Solomon Islands we don't have plenty of people who read. They don't read but they listen. – Media*

There is a strong desire for improved coordination and communication between these groups, however each seems to place the onus on the other, largely due to their own limited resources. There is a desire for increased media presence 'on the ground' in communities to cover development issues. In addition, practitioners would like training to be available in investigative and in-depth reporting. There is a perception that this would facilitate improved coverage of development issues, provide a deeper sense of the issues and how they play out in communities.

*The NGOs have started to realise the importance of media so they usually give us invitations... [to] short workshops or that sort of thing and inviting media to attend so that we know actually the issues so that when they send a press release or what we are more informed about, what they are talking about instead of just floating around not knowing what the real story or what the NGO is doing. – Media*

*It's good for [media] to actually go and see the people, talk to the people. – NGO*

Demographic groups perceived to be excluded from media access and representation were mentioned frequently in relation to development issues. These were predominantly rural populations, and to a lesser extent children and youth.

*I think, I said the rural people... We badly lack coverage of what's happening outside provinces, what the rural people are doing and I mean it's a area where we - I mean where media – lacks, but then [it] comes back to resources, having the money to go outside, airfare and transport. – Media*

*People in the islands, the rural villages, rural areas, these are the kinds of groups that find it really hard to voice their concerns because the media is set in Honiara and they don't have the resources to travel. – Government*

While a limited number of people felt that development issues were being well-covered, the majority of interview participants felt that coverage was lacking, or could be improved. These improvements, however, do seem to be occurring, with several interviewees expressing that they have seen an increase in the flow of development information.

*I mean from our past observations [development coverage] didn't really happen often but now it's getting there very slowly. We now see developmental stories being covered by our journalists. – NGO*

*I think you'd say that it's improving especially in covering developmental stories. It's like agriculture, health stories they're now getting all those. In the first place, in the 90s up to the early 2000s it's something that you would hardly see. – NGO*

Results from the content analysis showed that women's issues accounted for 10% of all stories produced and health-related stories accounted for almost 5% (see Fig. 7). However, while development issues were covered, they mostly related to past or upcoming events, and reports on development issues often lacked in-depth exploration (59% of all women's stories were coded as event-based). Writing was mostly descriptive with little information or analysis around the development of the issue discussed.

*I mean in the papers now everything is politics. Development issues in Solomon Islands is digressing in some of its Millennium Development Goals and nobody seems to be picking up on that. – NGO*

*Politics is the main life line of the media right now, newspapers, radio politics will be mostly focused on. But development issues not so much but maybe because our reporters aren't that experienced to put across how it affects the country as a whole. – Media*

The majority of development information appearing in media currently is taken directly from NGO press releases or is programmed directly by development organisations, such as the weekly radio program that Vois Blong Mere produce on SIBC. This practice appears to be overwhelmingly unidirectional, with releases and updates being reprinted or aired verbatim.

SIBC's mandate to charge for air time also serves to further limit even these already unidirectional channels of communication. There were calls from a number of distinct stakeholder groups to have designated staff or media time/space for development issues.

*Maybe they might have just a community page there where people can contribute to. And more stories about women issues and success stories about what women are doing and youths. – NGO*

*I'd like to put weekly articles on what they [development groups] do, their stories. I get them to tell their stories once a week or once a month or create a page for them. – Media*

A vital step in improving communication between media and other stakeholders in development is to facilitate the building of stronger networks. Networking is often related to informal personal and social connections, and in an industry as small as the Solomon Islands, where most journalists and stakeholders already know each other, there is a strong sense of community already present that could be utilised in disseminating information.

*It's usually not always the formal - I mean sometimes we chat with them, we see them on the road we chat. In that way we kind of think that, that helps the networking.* – NGO

*You kind of know who you want to talk to, so it's not really hard to find people you want to talk to about certain issues. Not only women but if the women are talking about businesses you know very well who reports on business and all that stuff you can call them.* – NGO

There is a great willingness among media stakeholders to improve coverage of development issues. The most pressing issues inhibiting this improvement to emerge from the interviews (substantiated by survey responses) was the lack of training on reporting development issues appropriately (there is a strong sense that development coverage should be feature-based and include an element of education in addition to information provided), and gaining the support of management and editors, who are perceived to prefer running political content (something that is also reflected in the content analysis).

### **3.4.2. Gender**

There is a pervasive gender imbalance in the Solomon Islands media industry. Despite females accounting for approximately 40% of the survey respondents, the percentage of female reporters was significantly lower within the industry. The content analysis captured information about reporter gender where available. Only 3% of female reporters working in TV were identified, while 68% were identified as male and 29% were unknown. In newspaper, 6% of reporters were female, 56% male and 38% remained unidentified. The percentage of women in radio was much higher with 32% of reporters at SIBC being female. Reporter's gender information was not available for ZFM.

There was no significant data collected as to what stories are more likely to be covered by males or females. This is determined by news rounds and with the percentage of female reporters being minimal, the sample was deemed too small to make a judgement.

Interviews yielded little comment on gender issues. With the exception of one female working in a management role, who remarked that her position was challenging due to a perception that women should not be in leadership roles and unwillingness on the part of male colleagues to play subordinate roles to women.

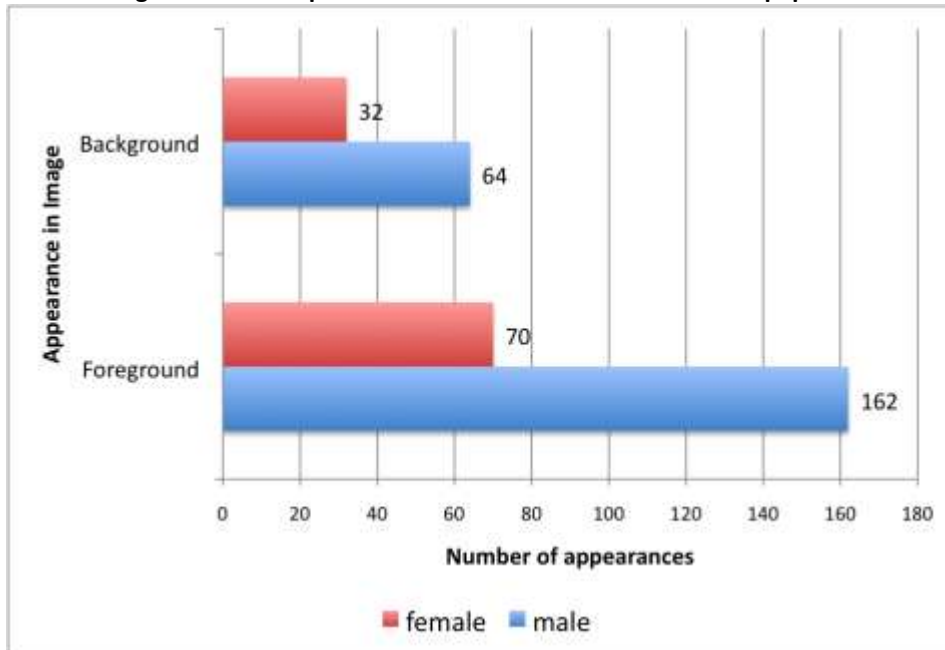
*The biggest challenge is being a woman - to be a woman [in] leadership... Just in the society where sometimes if there are men then half of the time we can't say much here.* – Media

There was, however, enthusiasm to see more coverage of development issues across the board, including women's issues and gender.

*Women, children, how issues affecting them in the community level, getting not only the politicians or those policy makers but getting a wide range of news from different people, for me that is quality media. – NGO*

The content analysis also captured data about the current representation of women in the media, revealing that it is very much male dominated. Gender distribution in newspaper images was determined by a head count. Of the 232 people in the foreground of pictures, 30% were women and 70% were males.

**Fig 14. Visual representation of men and women in newspapers**



Base: coded newspaper stories (n=320), images analysed (n=144).

## 3.5. SOLMAS and Partners

### 3.5.1. Responses to SOLMAS

*SOLMAS' training has improved craft skills among practitioners. Respondents would like to see the sustainability of SOLMAS and its engagement with partners addressed further.*

Responses to SOLMAS from interviewees were overwhelmingly positive. Most participants identified an improvement in media since SOLMAS' arrival, and expressed a desire for work to continue.

Participants generally identified an improvement in craft skills in media across SI. Areas such as spelling, grammar and basic story construction appear to have improved across the sector.

*In terms of the quality of what's coming out its improved I would say, the market has really, really improved with SOLMAS. Some papers are unrecognisable from what they were six months ago, twelve months ago and that's good. – Media*

*SOLMAS training has been an eye opener. Through training provided by SOLMAS I had been able to clearly approach reporting issues to my readers. Reporting for an audience largely made up of illiterate and having diverse cultural background is a challenge. – Media*

There is now a desire among media stakeholders for these successes to be consolidated with more in-depth training in areas such as investigative reporting and feature writing. There is also a strong desire to improve areas beyond the craft itself, such as business skills, contextualising stories, development issues, communication for development, new media and emerging technologies, and sales and marketing.

*Most of the trainings I find in newsroom and... in terms of the training journalist to be you know things like grammar and the use of English and things like that is very useful for journalist here, to learn new skills and writing articles and writing correct tenses in terms of grammar. – Media*

Perceptions that improvement directly follows the training are undeniable and reflect the success of SOLMAS in these areas. However, there is equally a concern that these improvements are perhaps not being sustained in the long term.

*Yes it's been effective, it has been effective, but there's something missing... I think it's perceived as a one off thing, something that's going to be here today and gone tomorrow. – Media*

There were also some comments that reflected a perceived lack of focus in recent SOLMAS trainings. Interview participants frequently mentioned the training provided in the lead-up to the 2010 election as a milestone achievement for SOLMAS, where intensive and purpose-built workshops were conducted with all media to prepare them for the busy election period.

*People need to know why they doing this training and why it's important. – Media*

*I think for me personally I saw the impact around the election time and that was really good... Since that time I think it sort of dropped a bit because maybe there's not enough focus in what they trying to achieve - like at that time it was really specific get everybody discuss the elections and within this time frame and people appreciate that and they greatly supported it. – Media*

Many stakeholders expressed a readiness to progress the training further and to include more hands-on, in-depth and long-term training.

*I feel they should [do] a little bit more hands on training, field trips, maybe actual presence at press conferences, actual presence in newsrooms even. On the job training as opposed to classroom style training which is a lot of the focus now. – Media*

*I think [they] were useful as a means to enhance the knowledge and the understanding and the skills of what the journalists already have. But when [it] comes to giving them more [advancement] and training... you need a far more permanent training arrangement to be able to achieve that. – Government*

There is limited awareness and a degree of confusion among media stakeholders as to the exact role and nature of SOLMAS.

*I think it's important that SOLMAS really come out and explain itself clearly to everybody - not only the media but even people in government. – Government*

*They are doing their own procedures and guidelines and I think it's important that they share this information with everyone so that they can really understand what the interest of SOLMAS [is]. – Government*

Despite this confusion among some stakeholders, it is clear from interviews that SOLMAS has succeeded in establishing a base for engaging local partners. There is an eagerness among stakeholders to see these relationships continue to be strengthened.

*It seems to us, I mean personally the first, second year they were on a finding mission, trying to understand and adjust to the local situation. – Government*

*It must being a learning experience for them as well as for us too... They have to find ways to transfer what they know from there to here. – Media*

*I think ever since they started they were testing waters you know being Melanesian, Solomon Islanders we are quite different. I think SOLMAS has done*

*a good job, they tried their best like coming down and getting to know how we operate and all that. – Media*

### 3.5.2. Media Values and MASI

***Respondents regard the current MASI administration as ineffectual. They would like to see MASI strengthened in order to facilitate the building of networks and a support system for industry professionals.***

The Media Association of the Solomon Islands (MASI) is the key body in bringing all media stakeholders together and providing a forum for sharing common ideas and principles. SOLMAS' strategy is to support MASI as the industry body in the Solomon Islands. Part of this is providing assistance to update the Code of Conduct and the Constitution (Ferguson & Raseta, 2011, Outcome 4.1).

During interviews, media stakeholders across the board expressed strong opinions about MASI. There is a shared sense that the current MASI administration is ineffectual and is not applying their time and energy appropriately. Many expressed disappointment with this state of affairs.

*I'll tell you what MASI's role right now is - just nothing. Pretty much nothing is existing. MASI has played very little, that's in the last three, four years. Yeah really not functioning well. – Media*

*I would say MASI has, I think, lost its course I think over ten years. That's nobody's fault but it's the media industry here itself. Because of the choice of people, we chose it, made it. But the idea of MASI is still a good idea if led properly and driven. – Media*

Despite disappointment with MASI's current operations and leadership, there is a broad acknowledgement that it suffers from extremely limited resources, forcing the closure of its office last year, and that it depends on the participation and support of volunteers.

*I think the resources is also one of the issues they face, I mean they need, they need money, they need good objectives and goals, and they need to have a very clear purpose to what they are doing. And have resources to back up what they are doing. – Government*

*We need a fully functional operational secretariat or administrative office for MASI. Yes that's really one of our needs. To commit to all the affairs of MASI, day to day operations of MASI. – Government*

70% of survey respondents are members of MASI. Of these, 68% have attended previous MASI meetings. Of all respondents 91% said that they would like to attend MASI meetings in the future, demonstrating willingness across the sector to increase their involvement. This corresponds with interview data that emphasised that respondents would like to see MASI



as an effective and strengthened body and would be eager to participate in the association given the opportunity.

*I would like to see it more active, active in a sense that it is there to stand by its members and also to [give] advice [to] its members. – Media*

Stakeholders would like to see MASI play multiple roles. People would like to see MASI as a strong, independent and united association. They would like it to be both a representative and a mediating body. They would like MASI to represent not only media practitioners as a group, but the principles this group should be operating by. Freedom of media, for example, should be protected by MASI.

*For me, probably the biggest role for MASI is keeping all the media organisations together. I'd like to say organised together but I mean sometimes it happens and sometimes it doesn't. – NGO*

*Another thing that MASI represents is I mean we act as a negotiator between the main stream media, the government, even the courts. When issues arise we organise meetings and we sit down and discuss to sort out those. – Government*

*Those are two important areas that [MASI] deal with. Protect the media, promote the media, and to protect the media freedom, the freedom of expression. – Government*

Many evoked MASI's involvement in stepping in when journalists were being threatened during the election period as exemplary of what MASI should be doing in terms of protecting the safety and interests of media. However, there is an overarching sense that they no longer hold the influence to positively impact on similar situations today.

*One time that they acted... in support of a media organisation that was assaulted, I think some of the staff were harassed, they were effective, people listened and people backed off. People respected that there's always a bigger body out there that's helping these people. So yeah they have potential to, it has potential to be a good thing but it's not at the moment. – Media*

*There will come a time when having a collective body and with a collective voice is crucial to the general interest of the media. Particularly when you have a political or social situation that challenges the freedom of the press. Like we have the ethnic tension where it was a direct threat to your life... that's where you have body like MASI to be able to work out how best they could represent and promote and protect the interest of the media and journalist in a situation like that. – Government*

60% of MASI members surveyed did not know about the draft Code of Conduct. This was also reflected in the interviews. There was little or no knowledge about either the Code of Conduct or the Constitution, the only exceptions being those interview participants that were past or present members of the executive and had become familiar with these documents through their roles and engagement with MASI.

*They are working on it, I was informed, but I haven't seen a copy of it. – Media*

*I see the constitution but I don't think anyone else [is] seeing it apart from maybe couple us from the executive. So I think it does reflect [our values] but it's just not in use or it's not going anywhere. People aren't aware of it. – Media*

Where people were familiar with the Code of Conduct there was considerable value placed on it, with 81% of survey respondents familiar with the document rating it as 'very important' in their work.

An overwhelming number of respondents expressed a desire for MASI to step into the functions that SOLMAS is currently fulfilling.

*I mean personally I see that MASI should take charge when SOLMAS withdraw.*  
– Government

*I'd like them (MASI) to replace SOLMAS. Basically support journalists in every way that SOLMAS has. – Media*

*You know what I really want to see is that once SOLMAS leave you know MASI just pick up from where they leave and then they continue with that good work.*  
– Media

Stakeholders would also like to see MASI providing training opportunities and a network for funding and scholarship opportunities.

*I think it should be doing what SOLMAS is doing and should be organising trainings and even if SOLMAS is leaving or nobody to fill in the gap when SOLMAS leaves. I think MASI should step right into that role and to facilitate trainings for its members. – NGO*

*They can help out improve training programs as well I think they can in securing opportunities from elsewhere and giving that available opportunity to all media organisations. – Media*

Although the values of media and the desires for how MASI should be performing share significant commonalities, a real sense of ownership and faith in the organisation is severely lacking. Increased resourcing of MASI could mitigate this, as could a view to eventually handing over training and fund sourcing programs to MASI. There is a sense that MASI has stalled in its operations, and this could also be mitigated by pushing it towards its next life cycle – holding the overdue annual general meeting, circulating the revised MASI documents among media stakeholders, and reengaging them in this lapsed body.

### 3.5.3. SIBC as Strategic Partner

*Media stakeholders across the board would like to see SIBC leadership and governance strengthened, many expressing a lack of faith in the present leadership. Training was identified as a way to mitigate this.*

*SIBC has a disaster preparedness system in place. Off-air periods continue to present a problem, despite back-up generators.*

SIBC is a key beneficiary of the SOLMAS scheme. As the public broadcaster, SIBC plays a specific role in SOLMAS' overall goal of strengthening media in the Solomon Islands. It is one of nine SOE's, and is therefore required by the Minister for Finance and the Prime Minister to complete its obligations under the SOE Act (Ferguson & Raseta, 2011).

#### **Governance at SIBC**

In order to improve governance at SIBC, SOLMAS has various measures planned. The two core areas of focus for Phase III are: (a) the delivery of advice to strengthen governance capacity and improve internal management and accountability systems; and (b) the delivery of training to assist in understanding the principles of business (Ferguson & Raseta, 2011). These areas were both raised frequently in interviews, and reflect aptly many of the most pressing concerns for media stakeholders in the present environment. Advice to executive and governance has been occurring in an ongoing way since SOLMAS' inception, and has been found to be beneficial by those directly receiving this advice. Business survival skills training will be delivered by SOLMAS in 2012, and is much anticipated by all stakeholder groups represented in this study.

*The whole process of management is something SIBC lack, we need some help... Training together with the supervisors will be good. The supervisor, the manager, the GM perhaps all sitting together in one room, we can see across each other's jobs so that we are very... clear, well crossing each other's paths guys should listen to your jobs, a really good procedure of our work. – Media (SIBC)*

At SIBC there seems to be a lack of faith in present leadership, compounded by financial and logistical pressures.

*Management for SIBC needs to be really improved. We need to report matters as they happen, we need to discipline, we need to carry out disciplines properly and timely, that's not happening easily. There's probably several reasons: one as I've said today is the management think our job is out there working rather looking at how people should be managed as a job, one is to do with our cultures and customs where confrontation is quite difficult, they have to get over that, they'll be trained to get over it, managing of an organisation is a culture of its own, we have to have [the] right training to overcome this cultural thing. – Media (SIBC)*

Interviewees commented on the need for management in media to be appreciated as a separate field of work to that of journalism as it requires a very different skill set.

*They have to appreciate that management is a role, I don't think it is well appreciated yet. I think the position of manager is someone of a particular position... Things need to be changed, managing people is a job, [it] is not commentating on the radio, managing is a job of its own. – Media (SIBC)*

The lack of trained and qualified management was something that emerged as a significant issue across all sectors, but particularly at SIBC, where the most training around governance has already been provided.

*One thing I like SOLMAS program to really also look at [is] income generating skills, using media like sales area, how to sell... and also continue management type workshops. Management assistance. – Media (SIBC)*

### **SIBC Disaster Preparedness**

SOLMAS' measures to improve SIBC's disaster management planning were collected through interviews with SIBC staff. SIBC has a disaster management plan in place. Management at SIBC are aware of this plan, and have executed limited trial runs of the system.

*On our part we were able to get things running within half an hour. – Media (SIBC)*

This system mandates that in the event of an emergency a directive from the NDMO is received by SIBC when a situation has escalated, whereby SIBC hand over control of the station to NDMO entirely and relieves their responsibility. SIBC seem to have limited awareness of what eventuates following this directive.

*Our process is [a] matter of implementation. Right away under the NDMO act, SIBC becomes an emergency station. Once the Governor General describes the situation the NDMO obviously takes over service, so that's part of our new role. So we can become a disaster station at anytime. If there is something [happening] and the whole Solomon Islands is at risk, they will take over SIBC full time. – Media (SIBC)*

*You know we are here just to give hand, to do as directed by the National Disaster Management Office in the case of emergency... Previously we sent warnings and messages received from other places, but now it's all centered from Disaster Management Office. – Media (SIBC)*

In the event of a loss of transmission, which remains relatively frequent (at least weekly from interview accounts), SIBC have two back-up generators. When these are functional and the system in place for this event runs smoothly, operation can be restored within minutes. There remain issues, however, with lack of fuel to run the generators, technical problems, and poor response times. How this situation can be mitigated was unclear to interview subjects. Again the seemingly insurmountable resourcing issues arose frequently, however the more pressing issue at SIBC seems to be the lack of a clear chain of command for the smaller details of the plan, for example, ensuring there is fuel to power the back-up generators.

*We were told by the GM yesterday, we were reminded that's the biggest embarrassment that management should have and that is to go off air. – Media (SIBC)*

*Oh off air is so much, like you expect almost every day, because the SIEA (Solomon Islands Electricity Authority), to depend on SIEA for most of the power, if you go off you just make sure our standby generators do have fuel in there and working properly. So we are also depending on the power. Nearly every week we have black outs. Switching between time off - SIEA taking the power off - and coming in is sometimes more than one minute. – Media (SIBC)*

*You cannot really depend on it sometimes it just due to some I don't know technical things... but yeah sometimes when its rainy too when like we fail, we fail our part in having the fuel available knowing or being aware of the load shedding that is I think the recent one sometime this week. – Media (SIBC)*

SOLMAS has played an active role to date in the planning and execution of this improved disaster response program. Outcome 1.2 in the Program Design Document pertains to these actions, which include assisting media with relationship building with disaster management organisations to improve communication and response, and assisting SIBC with developing and maintaining monitoring, operating, and maintenance processes (Ferguson & Raseta, 2011). These goals are well underway. Processes have certainly been put in place around disaster response, and logistical improvements to SIBC's satellites and the like have assisted in ensuring these processes can be enacted appropriately.

## 4 Summary Findings: M&E Framework with Baseline Measures

Despite the many challenges, media practitioners and SOLMAS stakeholders are enthusiastic and passionate about their industry. There is a desire and drive to see it further developed and improved through training, knowledge exchange and expansion. SOLMAS has positioned itself as a key agency in delivering infrastructure development, training and media research, and has fostered significant improvements in the Solomon Islands media since 2008. With its now well-established network of key partners, the program is ready for the next stage with a focus on C4D and development journalism practices, representing a consolidation of the successes they have seen to date.

This report presents the results of a study examining the media engagement of SOLMAS media partners in the Solomon Islands with a view to assisting the consolidation of SOLMAS' achievements to date. The results of the Solomon Islands Media Research Study 2012 are used to establish baseline measures within the SOLMAS M&E framework, which are summarised below.

### M&E Framework with Baseline Measures

Number	Objective	Key Evaluation Question	Baseline Measures
<b>1. Infrastructure, Equipment and Access</b>			
1.1	Media Organisations are aware of audience needs, behaviour and use of technology; consider using emerging media technology to increase reach	What is the reach of the media? What is the behaviour of the SI audience?	<p>The ability to receive some form of media is extensive (98% live in an area where there is either a radio signal, TV signal, newspaper distribution, Internet or PFNet access). However, the availability of technology significantly limits access.</p> <p>In Honiara, all people surveyed had distribution and the technology to access at least one form of communication (radio, TV, newspaper, telephone, or Internet).</p> <p>14% of respondents in the Makira Province stated that they had no access to any of these communication channels, with 9% in Isabel, 7% in Western Province and 1% in Malaita and Guadalcanal provinces making the same statement.</p> <p>Radio is the most widely available form of communication, with more than 19 in 20 able to listen in Honiara, Guadalcanal, and Malaita. In contrast, only 54% are able to listen in the Western Province, 70% in Makira, and 87% in Isabel.</p>
		What is the quality of the SI media?	Audience survey respondents believe the media is doing well, despite many challenges, including poor infrastructure, access, affordability,

		<p>changing cultural values, westernisation and rapidly advancing technologies.</p> <p>The audience survey respondents stated that they want more debate, stimulation and balance from the media. They also want more variety in content and greater in-depth coverage.</p> <p>The majority of media survey respondents rated their writing skills as good (51%) or very good (20%). The content analysis, however, revealed writing errors (grammar and spelling) in every third news story published across the three newspapers. The confidence expressed by survey respondents was not reflected in the content analysis. Many interview participants also expressed a sense that quality was still relatively low.</p> <p>Media staff rated their organisation’s quality in producing content highest for local news and sports news. Local news was rated good or very good by 85% of media staff with sports news 77%. The quality of drama production, documentary and business news was rated as average or below by more than half of media staff (drama 64%, documentary 59%, business news 54%).</p> <p>Balance was represented by the kind and number of sources used for a story. Government sources were dominant across various media (Radio 35%, TV 20%, and Newspaper 28%) with an average of 28% of all sources used across all media.</p> <p>60% of all survey respondents felt that not all groups were represented in the media. The group most commonly identified as under-represented was the rural population.</p> <p>The Solomon Islands media is currently characterised by: a dominance of government related stories, predominantly using only one government source; a lack of technical proficiency, evidenced by grammatical errors and varying visual production quality; a lack of in-depth and critical reporting around development issues, most of which are event-triggered; and an underrepresentation of rural populations.</p>	<p>Most media practitioners (99%) consider audience needs as either ‘important’ or ‘very important’ (n=76).</p> <p>88% of media staff felt that information about</p>
	<p>Is the media using the behaviour and needs of the audience to</p>		

		inform their programming?	<p>audience needs informs programming priorities in their organisation (n=76).</p> <p>Almost 51% of audience needs are received via informal personal communication (n=76). Of those, 56% are received through telephone feedback and letters to the editor. 22% are received from their organisation and 20% through external organisations.</p>
		Is the media sufficiently informed about and leveraging new media, including social media and mobile phones?	<p>Online media is used most among media practitioners (77%), followed by social media (62%) and mobile phones (57%) (n=76).</p> <p>58% of media practitioners use their mobile phones for work more than once a day. The majority of media practitioners use social media and the Internet at least a few times per week or more (mobile phone 84%, social media 81%).</p> <p>There is a desire to increase the use and access of new media and mobile communication, although there is awareness that access is still limited.</p> <p>New media remains a low priority at this stage, for most media organisations, due to financial and resource constraints.</p>
1.2	SIBC has a disaster communication system in place and means of responding when there is a loss of transmission	Is the media servicing the community's disaster preparedness needs?	<p>SIBC has a disaster management plan in place. In the event of an emergency a directive from the NDMO is received by SIBC. SIBC then hand over control of the station to NDMO.</p> <p>Management at the SIBC is aware of the disaster management plan and has executed limited trial runs of the system.</p> <p>In the event of a loss of transmission, which remains relatively frequent (at least once a week from interview accounts), SIBC have two back-up generators. When these are functional the disaster management plan runs effectively and operation can be restored within minutes. However, lack of fuel to run the generators, technical issues, and poor response times create problems in restoring transmission quickly.</p> <p>SIBC employees have limited awareness of what eventuates after the NDMO take control of the station.</p>
<b>2 Media Skills, Professionalism and Content</b>			
2.1	Increased capacity to deliver quality media content	Do local media practitioners have an increased capacity to	Most respondents rated an improvement in their media and craft skills. Over 60% of respondents rated an improvement in their reporting, writing and news reading as either 'high' or 'very high'.



		deliver quality media content through improved media and craft?	Respondents (n=106), on average, rated their management skills lower than other practical craft skills, with 47% rating their management skills as average or below. This is in contrast with reporting and writing skills, in which only 32% and 29% of respondents respectively rated their skills as average or below.
		Is the CMS improving access to archive material?	<p>There is limited knowledge about content management systems. Some institutions had archiving in place, while others did not. Many newspapers kept hard copies and one radio station keeps external hard drive backups in several locations.</p> <p>All institutions were interested in developing archiving systems. The SIBC newsroom has an archive system called NewsBoss that allows journalists to archive scripts, author, duration, dates and audio files. SIBC is currently upgrading its archiving system with SOLMAS assistance. However, it is facing considerable financial and resourcing problems in the establishment of the system.</p>
		Are the media and NGOs collaborating effectively to promote key development issues?	<p>45% of all media staff said that they do not usually work with NGOs. Almost all interviewed stakeholders in the media acknowledge the role that media can play in addressing development issues in the Solomon Islands.</p> <p>Gender representation in the media is very much male dominated. Gender distribution in newspaper images showed 30% women and 70% males.</p> <p>Women's issues accounted for 10% of all stories produced and health-related stories accounted for almost 5%.</p> <p>Of the news items coded (n=536) there was 56 gender based stories, 23 anti-corruption stories and 25 health related stories published by media outlets during the study.</p> <p>Breakup of news items published:  Gender stories: ZFM 1, SIBC 13, One TV 12, Island Sun 17, Nat. Express 7, Sunday Isles 6.</p> <p>Anti-corruption stories: ZFM 1, SIBC 6, One TV 0, Island Sun 6, Nat. Express 6, Sunday Isles 4.</p> <p>Health stories: ZFM 1, SIBC 5, One TV 6, Island Sun 6, Nat. Express 1, Sunday Isles 6.</p>
<b>3 Business Environment and Sustainability</b>			
3.1	Improved	How has the	At SIBC there is a reported lack of faith in the

	governance at SIBC	governance of SIBC changed/improved?	<p>present leadership that is compounded by financial and logistical pressures. Interviewees frequently commented that management was mostly composed of journalists rather than trained managers and that these skills were largely incompatible or lacked overlap for the position.</p> <p>The lack of trained and qualified management staff was something that emerged as a significant challenge across all sectors, particularly at SIBC, where the most training on governance issues has already been provided.</p>
3.2	Strengthened leadership and management skills across the media sector	Do media organisations have an improved understanding and application of business principles?	<p>There is a sense among many media stakeholders that improved business skills would support a more competitive and commercially diverse market. Competition is viewed by many as a positive influence in the media landscape of the Solomon Islands.</p> <p>Training in both leadership skills and business survival is desperately needed and much anticipated by media organisations, who all struggle to survive in a relatively new competitive market. Sales, marketing and strategic planning were all identified as vital to the progression of the industry.</p> <p>Despite resourcing barriers and poor leadership training and capacity, there is a willingness and commitment to improve these areas. Media practitioners are motivated to upgrade their skills and knowledge of business principles.</p>
<b>4 Media Enabling Environment and Media Capacity Building</b>			
4.1	Strengthened role of MASI as a representative industry body	Do the media organisations subscribe to common values? Do they feel ownership of their representative body?	<p>70% of survey respondents are members of MASI. Of these, 68% have attended previous MASI meetings. Of all respondents 91% said they would like to attend MASI meetings in the future, demonstrating willingness to increase their involvement in the organisation.</p> <p>There is a shared sense that the current MASI administration is ineffectual and not applying their time and resources appropriately. Many expressed disappointment with the current organisational capacity of the industry body.</p> <p>60% of MASI members surveyed did not know about the draft Code of Conduct. There was little or no knowledge about either the Code of Conduct or the Constitution.</p> <p>Those familiar with the Code of Conduct placed considerable value on it. 81% of survey respondents familiar with the document rated it as 'very important' to their work.</p>

4.2	Greater coordination between media and other development stakeholders	Do development stakeholders (e.g. NGOs and RAMSI) understand how to use media to affect development outcomes?	<p>There is a desire for an increased media presence to cover development issues and for training to be available for investigative and in-depth reporting that would facilitate coverage of development issues.</p> <p>The majority of interview participants felt that coverage was lacking, or could be improved.</p> <p>The majority of development information appearing in the media is taken directly from NGO press releases or is programmed directly by development organisations, such as the weekly radio program, Vois Blong Mere on SIBC. This practice appears to be overwhelmingly unidirectional, with releases and updates being reprinted or aired verbatim.</p>
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## 5 Appendices

### 5.1. Appendix A: Methodology

The research design (as a mixed-method approach) was originally proposed by ABC ID (SOLMAS 2012) and refined through consultation with both the research team, and local partners. This final local revision during the workshop at SICHE was an invaluable step in developing the methodology, as local input from both SOLMAS and SICHE was key in ensuring local relevance and applicability of the study.

Media stakeholders that participated in the study include:

- Radio: SIBC, Wantok FM, ZFM, and Gud Nius FM.
- Print: *The Island Sun*, *The National Express*, and the *Sunday Isles*.
- Television: *One Television*.
- Government: the Government Communications Unit, RAMSI, and the Electoral Commission.
- NGOs: Vois Blong Mere, Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT), Transparency Solomon Islands (TSI), and World Bank.
- Educational facilities: SICHE and Don Bosco.

#### 5.1.1. Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the most widely-used research techniques in communication and mass media studies. It provides both quantitative and qualitative information about what is being said, who is saying it, through which channel, to whom, and with what [likely] effect/s (Macnamara, 2005). In the context of this study, content analysis allowed the researchers to gain a sense of media quality by examination of issues reported and how they were reported. This afforded information on the types of messages communicated about development, the specific development issues discussed, the sources reported, and so on. While 'quality' is understood in different ways in terms of media, factors such as the use of credible and authoritative sources (as well as more than one source), reporting of facts and statistics rather than opinion, cultural sensitivity, etc are indicators of quality – along with production indicators such as spelling and grammar accuracy, attribution, and production quality of printing, sound and broadcast TV pictures.

To ensure that content analysis was as robust as possible, articles were 'coded' systematically by the researchers. Coding refers to identifying and recording key words and concepts identified in texts (printed and broadcast) against a pre-prepared coding list. (See 4.3 – Appendix C). After training with coders was undertaken, an average of 10% of content in each medium was double blind coded and coding compared to test intercoder reliability. An agreement percentage over 80% was regarded satisfactory. Where frequent disagreements were observed researchers were once again briefed to ensure continued reliability.

As this study used student researchers as coders, all coding was double-checked by a senior researcher before data entry. Coding data was then entered into an Excel data processing system and data cleaned through a process final check in the Excel system. Radio and newspaper stories were coded using a similar coding frame, while the television coding frame was designed to incorporate the visual elements of television.

The content analysis undertaken as part of this study examined newspaper, radio and TV. Content analysis frames for each medium and a coding reference were developed in consultation with SOLMAS and ABC ID. The frames were piloted on Solomon Islands news reports in all three media, ensuring that specific local components of interest to the analysis were captured in the coding process. Media coding included:

Radio:

- Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC)
- ZFM

Newspapers:

- Island Sun
- National Express
- Sunday Isles

Television:

- One TV

Coding periods were as follows (see also Appendix D):

- All radio: March 21 to April 3 (all news bulletins);
- One television: March 21 to April 3 (all news bulletins);
- Island Sun and Sunday Isles: March 21 to April 3 (pages selected for local news, development and sports content);
- The National Express: March 5 to April 3 (pages selected for local news, development and sports content).

The National Express sample was taken over a longer time period due to failure to publish the paper for several weeks while they relocated their offices. Publications from alternative dates were selected in order to allow for content coding to take place across a sufficient number of publications. Alternate dates were selected as close to the timeframe of other outlets as possible.<sup>11</sup>

The sample for the content analysis included:

320 newspaper articles (173 Island Sun, 100 National Express, 47 Sunday Isles)

118 radio news items (99 SIBC AM, ZFM 19)

98 TV news items (71 local news, 27 local sports news)

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<sup>11</sup> The country's oldest and most read newspaper, the Solomon Star, was not included in this study, as the publisher prefers that their staff no longer attend SOLMAS training.

### 5.1.2. Survey Questionnaire

A survey questionnaire was used to obtain quantitative data on perceptions of media quality and reach among (predominantly) media practitioners. Ratings using scales were used to capture respondents' sense of the relevance and importance of certain aspects of media. Ratings on a scale capture more nuanced data than binary ratings (e.g. Yes/No) and allow researchers to understand which issues practitioners feel particularly strongly about, and which they are more ambivalent towards.

The survey questionnaire was divided into a number of sections: demographics, audience needs, content production and training, emerging technologies, and the perceived quality of media. Participants were recruited from existing SOLMAS partner organisations. Respondents included media staff, NGO staff, government staff and media students and staff from educational institutions. The final number of respondents was 106, comprised of:

- Media production outlets 76
- NGOs 16
- Educational organisations 11
- Government 03

Following survey distribution and collection, data was entered into Microsoft Excel and SPSS quantitative data analysis software. Analysis factored in relevance of questions to participating groups and subsamples, which were:

n=106: **All respondents** (incl. media, NGO, Educational, Government)

n=76: **Media staff** (at media production outlets)

n=58: **Media practitioners** (journalists and technicians at media production outlets)

### 5.1.3. Interviews

Interviews were semi-structured and divided into the following broad themes: quality of media, training workshops, audience, media values, development issues and NGOs, challenges, SOLMAS, and emerging technologies.

In addition, there were a number of specific questions asked to certain groups of people in order to address some of the specific M&E indicators, for example information about SIBC's governance or disaster management system, or NGOs collaboration with organisations such as the currently inactive PFNet.

Interview candidates were selected based on an existing SOLMAS contact list of engaged stakeholders. A majority of senior staff were selected in order to provide a contextual ('bigger picture') understanding of organisations. A total of 25 Interviews were conducted during April and May 2012. Interviews ranged from 20 - 78 minutes in duration. This variation in length is standard in semi-structured interviews, being dependent on how much each individual had or was willing to say, and a difference in number of questions addressed to particular groups. SIBC staff, for example, were asked additional questions regarding disaster preparedness and governance. The interviews included:

- 15 media production outlets or media producers
- 4 NGOs
- 5 Government Departments
- 1 Educational Institution

Interviews were complied with UTS and UOG ethical standards. They were audio recorded. After recording, the interviews were transcribed in Microsoft Word and imported into Nvivo qualitative data analysis software. Thematic analysis was done with specific attention to the SOLMAS M&E framework, as well as any emerging themes identified outside this framework. All interviews were confidential, reported anonymously.

#### 5.1.4. Collaboration with SICHE

This study also sought to build research capacity in the Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) was chosen as a local partner for the study, with a view to ongoing collaboration.

A team of seven media and journalism students and one journalism lecturer from SICHE were involved in the study. At an initial workshop held at SICHE in April 2012, the research instruments were discussed and finalised. This ensured that the research design was adapted to local context and at the same time familiarised field researchers with the methods and specific procedures necessary to undertaking the research.

Field researchers were engaged over a 2-week time period which became part of their assessment in the media and journalism course. Student researchers were involved in all methods to expose them to the various data collection processes, predominantly content analysis as this was the most time consuming and required the most manpower. They were also of great value in the distribution of the survey and in ensuring that these were filled out correctly.

## 5.2. Appendix B: Interview Guide

### Introduction:

Introduce yourself and the project, state the aims, estimate time it will take, discuss ethical issues (freedom to withdraw, etc), explain what the information will be used for, **begin recording, consent interview subject** (written and verbal), begin interview.

### Interview Questions – General

#### *Measuring Quality*

1. What do you feel indicates quality media in the Solomon Islands?
2. How do you feel media can be improved? In what areas does capacity need to be further built to improve?
 

**Media only:**

  3. Do you feel your organisation is producing quality broadcasts/journalism?
    - a. Do you use multiple sources?
    - b. Do you fact check? How? Who does this? How is the verification of content ensured?
    - c. Could you tell me about your newsroom management?
      - i. What are your current practices?

4. How has the media changed over the last 12 months?
5. How have you sought to improve your content in the last 12 months? How could SOLMAS help?

#### *Training Workshops*

6. Have you attended any media training workshops for professional development?
  - a. How many?
  - b. Who ran these workshops?
  - c. How did you hear about them?
  - d. Were they useful? How can they be improved?
  - e. What other workshops do you think would be useful?

#### *Audience*

##### **Media only:**

7. How does your organisation consider the needs and desires of audiences in its programming? Is this important?
8. Are you aware of the Audience Market Research in Solomon Islands 2010? How did you use the findings from the survey to inform your work?

#### *Media Values*

9. Are you a MASI member?
 

**MASI members only**
10. Are you aware of MASI's code of conduct? Does your organisation comply?
11. Are important values for you reflected in the code? If so, what are they?

#### *Development*

12. How can media play an effective role in development issues?
 

**Media only:**
13. How does your organisation cover development issues?

#### *Challenges*

14. What are the biggest challenges you face in your work?
  - a. Technical challenges?
  - b. CMS challenges?
15. Do you feel that all groups are being represented in media?
  - a. What groups are being excluded?
  - b. What groups need to be better represented?

#### *SOLMAS*

16. What is your understanding of what SOLMAS is doing?
  - a. Do you feel this is effective?
  - b. What could SOLMAS improve?

#### *New Media*

17. Is your organisation well informed about changes in new media? How?
18. Does your organisation engage new media (Internet, Web 2.0, etc)? How?
19. Do you believe new media is important to use?

#### *Final Statement*

20. *Do you have anything further you would like to add or anything you feel this interview has not covered that is important for us to understand?*

#### Interview Questions - Specific

##### *SIBC –Disaster Preparedness*

1. Do you feel SIBC effectively services the community's disaster preparedness needs? How?
  - a. How does SIBC deal with the National Disaster Management Office?
  - b. Have trial runs for disaster communication been organised?
2. What could be improved on?
3. What mechanisms are used to engage other media organisations to undertake disaster awareness campaign?



4. How often was SIBC off air in the last 12 months? Why? For how long?

*SIBC –Governance and Leadership*

1. Does your organisation have governance in place? Can you give examples of how it works?
  - a. Are there regular meetings? How often?
  - b. Are minutes kept?
  - c. Are reports made? How often? To whom are they disseminated?

*SIDT and NGOs*

1. Are the media and NGOs collaborating effectively to promote key development issues (health, education etc)?
2. Does information appearing in media come directly from NGOs in the form of press releases, etc? To what extent? Are other sources used?
3. Have NGOs been profiled in the media? Can you describe this?

*All Radio*

1. Are you producing any radio drama?
  - a. If yes, is it successful?
  - b. If no, would this would be a good thing to do?

*PFNET & SIDT - Content Sharing*

1. Does content sharing occur? How? Is it two-way sharing?
2. What could be done to improve this?
3. What mechanisms are used to develop relationships between media and NGOs to promote development content?

### 5.3. Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

#### SOLMAS Media Research Study 2012

Survey Interview Code <i>(to be entered later)</i>		Date of survey	
Survey conducted by		Self-administered <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/>	
Data survey checked by		Survey data entered by	

#### Categories

- A Demographics
- B Audience Needs General
- C Audience Needs, Programming and Content
- D Audience Needs, SOLMAS 2010 Survey
- E Content production and training
- F New Media and Mobile Technologies
- G Perceived Quality of Media

A	Demographics		
A1	Sex	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Male 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
A2	Age	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 14 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 15-19 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-29 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 60-64 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and over	
A3	Place of work	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Honiara 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify _____	
A4	Which province are you from?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Central 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Choiseul 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Gaudalcanal 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Isabel 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Makira 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Malaita 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Renbel 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Temotu 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Western 10 <input type="checkbox"/> other, if not from SI name country: _____	
A5	How long have you worked in the media industry?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one year 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 years 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 years 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-14 years 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 15-19 years 6 <input type="checkbox"/> over 20 years	
A6	Organisation currently working for <i>[write name of the organisation]</i>	_____	
A7	How long have you been working with your current organisation?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one year 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 years 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 years 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-14 years 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 15-19 years 6 <input type="checkbox"/> over 20 years	
A8	Current Position <i>[write position title]</i>	_____	
A9	Education level	1 <input type="checkbox"/> grade 1-6 2 <input type="checkbox"/> grade 7-9 3 <input type="checkbox"/> grade 10-11 4 <input type="checkbox"/> grade 12 5 <input type="checkbox"/> grade 13 6 <input type="checkbox"/> college / polytechnic 7 <input type="checkbox"/> university	

A10	Qualification	<input type="checkbox"/> primary school <input type="checkbox"/> secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> certificate <input type="checkbox"/> diploma <input type="checkbox"/> degree <input type="checkbox"/> other _____	
A11	Current medium of work <i>[tick primary medium of work]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> TV/film <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Online Media <input type="checkbox"/> Photography <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify _____	
A12	Has your (current) primary medium of work changed since you first began working in the media industry?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If No, go to section B
A13	What was your primary medium of work when you began?	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> TV/film <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Online Media <input type="checkbox"/> Photography <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify _____	
A14	If it changed, please explain why?		

<b>B Audience Needs General</b>			
B1	How important to you as practitioner is knowing your audience's needs? [Tick only one]	<input type="checkbox"/> Very important <input type="checkbox"/> Important <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Not important <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important	
B2	Do you as practitioner assess the audience's needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If No, go to B4
B3	How do you as practitioner assess the audience's needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> personal communication <input type="checkbox"/> reports from my organisation <input type="checkbox"/> reports from another organisation <input type="checkbox"/> phone feedback / letters to the editor / published opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Other  _____	
B4	Do you as practitioner change your work practice based on your audience's needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	

<b>C</b>	<b>Audience Needs Programming/Content</b>		
C1	Does information about audience needs inform programming priorities in your organisation?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	
C2	Does your organisation consider who is consuming media?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	
C3	Does your organisation consider at what time people are consuming media?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	
C4	Do you feel that the opinions and concerns of all Solomon Islanders are represented by the media?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No  If no, which group of people receive the greatest amount of media attention?  _____  Which group of people receive the least amount of media attention?  _____	
C5	On average in the past year, has news reporting on SI issues in your organisation been balanced, representing all sides of a story?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Always 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Almost always 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Roughly half the time 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Usually never 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Never	

<b>D</b>	<b>Audience Needs SOLMAS Survey</b>		
D1	Have you heard of the audience survey conducted by SOLMAS in 2010?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	If no, skip to question E1
D2	Have you read the Audience survey report?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, is there any specific reason?  _____	If no, skip to question E1
D3	How useful do you find the results of the SOLMAS audience survey in informing your work?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Very useful 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Useful 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Neither useful or not useful 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Not useful 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all useful  In what way, explain:	

D4	Has your organisation's practice changed as a result of the SOLMAS 2010 audience survey?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	If No, skip to question E1
D5	How has your organisation's practice changed?  [you can select more than one – tick all that are applicable]	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Type of programming 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Time of programming 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Style of reporting 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Technical changes 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Reach of audiences 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/ Targeting Audiences 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: _____	

<b>E</b>		<b>Content Production and Training</b>					
E1	Are you a member of MASI?  [MASI is the Media Association of Solomon Islands]	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No					If no, go to E3
E2	Have you attended any MASI meetings in the past?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No					
E3	Would you like to attend any MASI meetings in future?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure					
E4	Are you aware of the MASI Draft Code of Conduct?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No					If no, go to E6
E5	How relevant/ important is the MASI Code of Conduct in your work?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Very important 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Important 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Not important 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important					
E6	How would you rate your own skills in the following areas?						
	<b>Area</b>	<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	Reporting						
	Writing						
	Presentation /News Reading						
	Technical Skills						
	Management						
	Leadership						
	Social Media						

E7	Have you attended any training other than with SOLMAS?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No  Where _____  In what area _____																																																																
E8	Have you attended any SOLMAS training?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	If no, go to E10																																																															
E9	Rate the level of your own improvement from the SOLMAS training in the following areas.																																																																	
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="331 555 582 611">Area</th> <th data-bbox="582 555 678 611">Very low</th> <th data-bbox="678 555 774 611">Low</th> <th data-bbox="774 555 885 611">Average</th> <th data-bbox="885 555 997 611">High</th> <th data-bbox="997 555 1109 611">Very high</th> <th data-bbox="1109 555 1220 611">N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 611 582 667">Reporting</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 667 582 723">Writing Skills</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 723 582 779">Presentation /News Reading</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 779 582 835">Technical Skills</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 835 582 891">Management</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 891 582 947">Leadership</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 947 582 1003">Social Media</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1003 582 1059">Other _____</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Area	Very low	Low	Average	High	Very high	N/A	Reporting							Writing Skills							Presentation /News Reading							Technical Skills							Management							Leadership							Social Media							Other _____						
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Management																																																																		
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Social Media																																																																		
Other _____																																																																		
E10	What areas would you like more training in?																																																																	
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="331 1196 539 1252">Area</th> <th data-bbox="539 1196 667 1252">Not at all important</th> <th data-bbox="667 1196 794 1252">Not Important</th> <th data-bbox="794 1196 906 1252">Neutral</th> <th data-bbox="906 1196 1034 1252">Important</th> <th data-bbox="1034 1196 1161 1252">Very important</th> <th data-bbox="1161 1196 1252 1252">N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1252 539 1308">Reporting</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1308 539 1364">Writing Skills</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1364 539 1420">Presentation /News Reading</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1420 539 1476">Technical Skills</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1476 539 1532">Management</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1532 539 1588">Leadership</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1588 539 1644">Social Media</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1644 539 1700">Other _____</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Area	Not at all important	Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very important	N/A	Reporting							Writing Skills							Presentation /News Reading							Technical Skills							Management							Leadership							Social Media							Other _____						
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Other _____																																																																		
E11	On average, how often do you work with NGOs on producing media content? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a day 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day 3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week 4 <input type="checkbox"/> once a week 5 <input type="checkbox"/> once a fortnight 6 <input type="checkbox"/> once a month 7 <input type="checkbox"/> I don't usually work with NGO's																																																																	

F	New Media and Mobile Technology		
F1	<p>Of the following, which forms of new media and mobile technology does your organisation use for content dissemination?</p> <p>a. Online Media (excl. social media)</p> <p>b. Mobile phones for content</p> <p>c. Social media (Twitter and Facebook)</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
F2	<p>Does your organisation have its own website?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</p>	
F3	<p>Is the website of your organisation regularly updated?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a day</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> once a week</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> once a fortnight</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> once a month</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> never</p> <p>8 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</p>	
F4	<p>How often do you use these technologies for work?</p> <p>a. Online Media (excl. social media)</p> <p>b. Mobile phones for content</p> <p>c. Social media (twitter and facebook)</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a day</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> once a week</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> once a fortnight</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> once a month</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> never</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a day</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> once a week</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> once a fortnight</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> once a month</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> never</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a day</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> once a week</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> once a fortnight</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> once a month</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> never</p>	
F5	<p>Do you expect your organisation to continue to use the media technologies that it is currently using for engaging with audiences?</p> <p>a. Online media</p> <p>b. Mobile media</p> <p>c. Social media</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	



F6	<p>Do you expect the use of the following media in your organisation to increase or decrease in the next 2 years? [only answer for the media currently used in your organisation]</p> <p>a. Online media</p> <p>b. Mobile media</p> <p>c. Social media</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Increase 2 <input type="checkbox"/> stay the same 3 <input type="checkbox"/> decrease 4 <input type="checkbox"/> not sure</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Increase 2 <input type="checkbox"/> stay the same 3 <input type="checkbox"/> decrease 4 <input type="checkbox"/> not sure</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Increase 2 <input type="checkbox"/> stay the same 3 <input type="checkbox"/> decrease 4 <input type="checkbox"/> not sure</p>	
F7	Do you have your own personal website?	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	If no, go to G
F8	What do you use your website for?	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Stories 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Profile 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify _____</p>	

G		Perceived Quality of Media						
G1	How would you rate the content quality of the following types of programs in your organisation?	Area	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good	N/A
	Local News							
	Sports News							
	Business News							
	Current Affairs/ Feature							
	Documentary							
	Drama							
G2	Does your organisation do fact checking?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know					If no, go to question G4	
G3	Who is usually responsible for fact checking in your organisation?  [you can tick more than one]	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Editor 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Sub-Editor 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Journalist 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Person 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____						
G4	Do you feel that news stories presented by your organisation are promptly delivered?	Not at all promptly	Not promptly	Average	Promptly	Very promptly		
G5	Does your organisation use a wide variety of sources for gathering information for news stories?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> always 2 <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time 3 <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes 4 <input type="checkbox"/> usually never 5 <input type="checkbox"/> never						
G6	On average, how many sources would you use to gather information for a story?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 4						
G7	Does your organisation ensure coverage of the country?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure					If 2 or 3, go to G9	
G8	How does your organisation ensure coverage of the country?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Stringers 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Community Informants 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Partners /Partner Organisations 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____						

G9	Please rate by importance in which areas you would like your organisation to improve.						
	Area	Not at all important	Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very important	N/A
	Fact Checking						
	Balanced Reporting						
	Prompt Delivery						
	Representation of all groups including minorities						
	Newsroom Management						
	Program Management						
	Infrastructure						
	Leadership in teams						
	Social Media						

*Any other comments*

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*Thank you for your time.*

## 5.4. Appendix D: Content Analysis Coding Reference

This coding reference is designed for the SOLMAS Media Research coders. This reference provides explanations and definitions for coding sheets for newspapers, radio and television on the content analysis method.

The coding sheets have three parts;

1. The Base Data intends to capture basic information such as publisher name, date of publication/broadcast, etc.
2. The Content Data section further explores the quality of media messages by delving into composition of reports, use of language, types of media frames, and language.
3. The Visual Data focuses on images (still and moving) and both the quality and messages these images convey.

Media outlets and pages and/or bulletins for coding include:

<b>Newspapers</b>
The Island Sun
The National Express
The Sunday Isles
<b>Radio</b>
ZFM
SIBC AM
Wantok "Wan" FM
<b>Television</b>
One TV

A team leader will there to assist when in doubt. All entries should be clearly printed and not in cursive writing. Expand all and any abbreviations that go into the coding sheets.

## Base Data

### 1. Coder

The coder is the person coding the data. Write the first letter of your first name, followed by your surname. For example: Joys Eggins = **Jeggins**

### 2. Publisher/Station

The publisher/station refers to the organisation being coded. Tick the box that corresponds to the media organisation you are coding.

### 3. Headlines

Write down the headline that appears for the story you are coding, whether it is in newspaper, radio or television. For electronic media, the headline would be read out before the story in detail is reported. *\*If the news is in Pidgin, translate as accurately as possible to English,*

### 4. By-line

By-line is a term that refers to the author of the story. The author is NOT the same as the presenter (in the case of radio or TV). If you notice that the article was written or reported by an international news agency or journalist, DO NOT CODE FURTHER. Select from the following.

- 1 SI journalist
- 2 SI other e.g. religious persons / former politicians, etc.
- 3 International news agency **Do not code further**
- 4 Other
- 5 Unknown

### 5. Date

For all the media you code, always ensure you note what the date of the issue was or the date the program went on air. Follow the example below to code dates

WD-weekday e.g. WD 20/04/12

WE-weekend e.g. WE 21/04/12

### 6. Page/Story number

Clearly note what page you are coding or what in order the story is broadcasted/telecasted. In the case of radio and TV programs, indicate what number (in order) the story broadcasted/telecasted in.

### 7. Time (RADIO AND TV ONLY)

For radio and TV, indicate here what time the bulletin went on air. If unsure, consult the team leader.

### 8. Language (RADIO AND TV ONLY)

For radio and TV, indicate here what language the news was broadcasted/telecasted in using the following codes. *\*Translate the story into English if it is in Pidgin.*

1	English
2	Pidgin

## 9. Story Type

The story type refers to the format in which the article is written in. If you are coding a **news story**, then you would select **1** as the code to insert. In the case of newspapers, you could select 1, 2 or 5. For the electronic media, you would select 1, 3, 4 or 5. If you are unsure what to code here, find the main category in the newspaper or listen for when an announcer says “current affairs program”, then code.

- 1
- 2 Sports news
- 3 Business news
- 4 Feature
- 5 Current affairs
- 6 Documentary
- 7 Picture caption story
- 8 None of the above (if so then describe the story)

## 10. Locality of Reporter (RADIO AND TV ONLY)

This refers to where the reporter is filing the story from. If the SI journalist is in China reporting live at a conference, s/he would say “reporting from China” and would coded as **3**. This coding frame would apply to radio and TV only.

- 1 Studio recording
  - 2 Telephone recording
  - 3 Live on location
- Listen for key words "live from", "reporting from", or telephone audio type recording to determine the journalists' locality.

## 11. Reporter's Gender

This frame refers to the author's gender and not necessarily the presenter in the case of radio or TV.

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Unknown

## 12. Column/Inch – Colin and Duration

Column/Inch is often used in content analysis to measure how much coverage is given to a particular issue. Using a ruler, measure the **length** of the text (not including photograph) using the inches part of the ruler and then count how many columns the story is divided into.

The column is then multiplied by the inch to measure coverage. If one column is longer than another (in the same story), or a story extends to another page, measure them separately and add up the total. For example: 2c x 1' = 2 Colins OR 3c x 1' + 1c x 1' = 4 Colins.

In the case of radio or television, coverage would be measured in seconds (“”), so if one story runs for 1'5”, then that story would be measured as 65”.

### 13. Photograph

Simply write YES or NO, where appropriate. Remember that once you note YES, you will need to complete the Visual Data section of the coding sheet. Highlight the YES, to remind you.

### 14. Sources

This refers to the persons/institutions being sourced or attributed as commenting in the story. Read and determine who the source of the story is. A source can be clearly noted by “he said” or “Mr. Tran said” or it can be an institution from which the story is coming from.

To code, write number 1 beside the first source, number 2 beside the second source and so forth. This will help identify who the prominent source is and also how many sources were used in a report.

For example, if a **doctor** is in the news and talking about immunisation, then the **Health Worker** source would be number 1.

## Content

### 15. First paragraph

Write down the first sentence that appears in the newspaper or read on radio/TV.

### 16. Angle

The angle of the story refers to what perspective of an issue or event, the journalist considers important and that is usually highlighted in the headlines to grab the reader’s attention. Choose from the following list, what angle the story is taking. Multiple coding is good here. For example, a story might be about a ministry policy on logging in SI; you can then code **1** and **7**.

- 1 Government initiative
- 2 Government (general)
- 3 Police
- 4 Infrastructure
- 5 Agriculture
- 6 Fisheries
- 7 Forestry
- 8 Climate Change
- 9 Land
- 10 Education
- 11 Women
- 12 Youth
- 13 Corruption
- 14 Health
- 15 Business
- 16 Sports
- 17 Development (general)
- 18 Legal/Judicial
- 19 None of the Above (describe briefly)

### **17. Is first paragraph in line with angle?**

You will need to look at the headline to get an idea of the angle, if headlines and first sentence are saying the same thing, then write down YES. If NO, then read further and write down the number of the paragraph in which it appears. Do likewise for electronic media as well.

YES

NO            If NO, where does it appear?

### **18. Use of language**

Use of language refers to the way in which the journalist uses language to build the story. If the story uses adjectives that describe an issue for example “landslide victory” or “Mr. X is a successful politician”, then you will need to code **2** because these are subjective comments. If you are still unsure, consult the team leader.

- 1 Unattributed Comments
- 2 Subjective Comments
- 3 Culturally Offensive
- 4 Possibly Defamatory

### **19. Metaphors**

Similar to use of language, a metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable. A metaphor is a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, esp. something abstract. You will need to write down the metaphor being used in the report.

### **20. Spelling**

Write the total number of spelling errors under this category and underline the misspelled work in the newspaper and radio script.

### **21. Grammar**

Write the total number of grammar errors and highlight this in the newspaper or radio script.

### **22. Types of news frames<sup>12</sup>**

Types of news frames refers to what themes a story could fall under. Looking at sources, the headlines and angle of the story, it would be clear what theme the story could be coded under. For this category, apply single coding only.

After selecting the category, briefly describe what the major issue is and who the main sources are. For example a report on an Air Solomon employee renting 5 cars to Air Solomon

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<sup>12</sup> News frames were developed using existing frames from the ‘PEW Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism’. Website: <http://www.journalism.org/node/447> as well as from ‘Governance and Development: Report prepared for the State of the Media Project (SOMR) under the Media for Development Initiative (MDI)’ (PNG Media Council, 2007).



staff without registering it with the Transport Office would be coded as **14** and brief: *Air Solomon staff renting cars without registering business / Private individual.*

- 1 Policy explored
- 2 Reaction story
- 3 Conflict story
- 4 Conjecture story
- 5 Reality check
- 6 Fear and insecurity
- 7 Us versus them
- 8 Government initiated enterprise is good for the country
- 9 Personality profile (including sports profiles)
- 10 Abusing the system for personal gain
- 11 Technological advances will make life better
- 12 Promoting/respect for arts and culture
- 13 Sportspeople/famous people are role models
- 14 Wrong doing exposed
- 15 Bad apples
- 16 Straight news account
- 17 Other (specify)

### **23. Structure of report according to story format**

Structure of report intends to identify how a story is constructed. Different story formats use a set structure to build a story. For example, a typical news report would have an inverted pyramid structure, where the most important information is presented at the very beginning (an angle). In the first couple of sentences, you should be able to know the much of the 5Ws of that report.

This section requires a careful deduction of the report to ascertain whether or not a story has followed a clear structure to qualify it as a news report, feature story, opinion piece and so forth.

- 1 News (inverted pyramid - Most important to least important, 5W1H, objective, balance, straight story)
- 2 Feature (creative element, descriptive, attention grabbing, anticipation, intrigue)
- 3 Documentary (contextual, subtle voice to image technique, cinematographic, informational)
- 4 Opinion (argumentative, critical, subjective at times, satirical)
- 5 Vox Pops ('voice of the populous', many voices commenting on one issue/topic, collection of general public opinion, usually begins with a key statement made by journalist)
- 6 Unstructured (describe as much as possible)

## **Visual Data**

### **Newspaper**

#### **24. Does picture have caption?**

If there is a picture that goes with the story, write down exactly what the caption says and how it is written. In the case of picture caption stories, write “refer to article”.

- 1 YES (write down)
- 2 No caption

### **25. Type of shot**

Below is a list of common shots used in newspapers, select a code corresponding to the type of shot you are coding. This will help to describe what kind of picture.

- 1 Agreement / Signing
- 2 Opening / Launching
- 3 Sponsorship / Support
- 4 Certificate awarding
- 5 Sports (in action)
- 6 Sports (celebration)
- 7 Meetings / group shot
- 8 Action/ group shot
- 9 Scenery (environment/landscape)
- 10 Promotion (technology / demonstrations)
- 11 2-person standing shots
- 12 No message shot (mug shots – head and shoulder shots)

### **26. Prominence of actors in the photograph**

Refer to the source list and write down the prominent actor in the photo.

Then count the number of females and males in the **foreground** and write the number in the appropriate box. Do likewise for females and males in the **background** of the photograph.

### **27. Is it clear that this picture accompanies the story?**

YES/NO response

### **28. Message/Issue conveyed**

What is the message being conveyed in the picture? Draw some preliminary analysis here in terms of what is in the picture, background, foreground, type of shot used, arrangement of main actor in relation to supporting actors in the picture and why this shot might have been used.

### **Television**

### **29. List the newsmakers in the story**

Write down the main actors appear in the story. You can use either their names or positions they occupy. The main actor would be commenting on an issue and would be framed using a mid-shot to show authority. Authority would further be recognised by where the main actor is filmed, for example, a politician would be filmed in his office, or on the floor of parliament.

**30. Shots either directly or indirectly relate to the story and/or source in the story**

In the first 3 shots, is it clear from watching that the pictures relate to the story being read by the reporter? If so, code 1 and so forth.

- 1 Yes, first 3 shots
- 2 No, first 3 shots don't

**31. Repetition of shots**

Count how many times a shot (cutaway) is used in the same story and if the same cutaway appears in another story of the same bulletin, make a clear note of that. Make a note also if you see the same cutaway in another bulletin altogether and NOT labeled as 'file footage'. Discuss with other TV coders about the same cutaway and if they saw it in the bulletins they coded. Select from this table, to show many times a shot was used in one news report.

- 1 Twice
- 2 More than twice



## 5.6. Appendix F: Results from Audience Survey (2010) and Media Outlets

### *Radio*

Radio is the main source of information in the Solomon Islands. 95% of people surveyed in SOLMAS' 2010 Audience Survey believed that they have access to at least one radio station in their region, with SIBC having the greatest reach (Tebbutt Research, 2010). This figure significantly exceeds those of newspapers and television, with the most popular and wide-reaching newspaper, *The Solomon Star*, covering 72% of respondents and One TV only 38% (ibid). 3 in 5 respondents identified radio as their main source for information of all kinds, with friends and family being a significant secondary source.

This study included three radio stations across its methods: SIBC, ZFM, and Gud Nius FM. SIBC and ZFM were represented in all methods. Gud Nius FM was included in interviews and surveys only, as they do not produce news, and thus were not eligible for content analysis. All news items were collected for content analysis, and senior members of staff at each station were interviewed. Staff were also represented in surveys.

### *SIBC*

SIBC is by far the oldest radio station, with significantly more reach than the newer FM stations. It is the nation's main source of news and information; the 'voice of the nation' (Tebbutt Research, 2010). Despite this, the station is not as appealing to younger as the more palatable and 'cheeky' FM stations. 93% of respondents in the audience survey stated that they were able to receive SIBC, with 76% stating they have listened to it.

SIBC's focus is on providing radio that is relevant, understandable and appealing to the nation as a whole. It is the only station to reach many of the more remote regions of the Solomon Islands, and thus has a more rural focus than the FM stations. They provide programming that is reliable, trustworthy, and accessible. In an attempt to cater to younger urban markets, they also have a FM station, Wantok FM, which concentrates on music and entertainment.

### *ZFM*

ZFM is known as the 'the joking station' (Tebbutt Research, 2010). They have a strong music focus, targeting young audiences seeking entertainment above information. Apart from their music programming, the hosts joke frequently, and comment on Hollywood gossip and celebrities, which further appeals to their youthful target market. It is the oldest FM station in the Solomon Islands, having originally used the moniker 'Island FM'<sup>13</sup>.

39% of audience survey respondents are able to receive ZFM, with 31% having tuned in at some point. It is a main source for entertainment and music, less so for news and public service announcements, with SIBC dominating these functions.

ZFM are currently very interested in expanding their reach, and are in the process of negotiating funding to utilise existing telecommunication networks and radio towers to reach the Western Province.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.solomontimes.com/news.aspx?nwID=1339>

### *Gud Nius FM*

Gud Nius FM is a Christian station, with its programming reflecting this. It plays Christian and gospel music, and incorporates bible readings. It does not produce any news, however presenters sometimes read from the Solomon Star. The station was identified as a source of comfort in the audience survey, and is respectful in its tone at all times. Development issues are covered to some extent, except where they are in conflict with the Christian morals of the station, for example promotion of condoms.

28% of survey respondents stated that they are able to receive transmission of Gud Nius, with only 18% having listened to the station.

### ***Newspapers***

Newspapers are the second most accessed type of media, after radio but before television. Access is significantly better in Guadalcanal and urban centres, and in the Western Province. As magazines are virtually non-existent in the Solomon Islands, newspapers are the only form of print media available, with the exception of small newsletters produced by some organisations.

The Solomon Star is by far the oldest and most read paper. It publishes 6 days a week, with its nearest competitor, The Island Sun, publishing 5. The National Express, which publishes three days a week, ranks at 'a distant third' (Tebbutt Research, 2010). There is also a Sunday paper, the Sunday Isles.

Newspapers in the Solomon Islands tend to be Honiara-centric. The Island Sun, for example, is accessible to 96% of audience survey respondents in the Capital District, however this figure drops to as low as 3% in Makira-Ulwarra (ibid). Despite this, when access is there readers are regular, with more than four in five respondents in the audience survey having read one of the papers in the last week.

This study included three newspapers: The Island Sun, The National Express, and the Sunday Isles. The Solomon Star was not included, as it is not currently involved in SOLMAS' training programs and is therefore outside the scope of the study.

### ***Television***

Television is the youngest and most limited form of media in the Solomon Islands. Currently there only exists one local television station, One Television, which broadcasts a range of programming, including news six days a week. TV remains very much a tertiary form of information, with audiences being almost exclusively urban. The expense of buying and running a television set is an inhibiting factor for many Solomon Islanders, as is the reach of transmission.

While three in five audience survey respondents in Honiara had viewed one of the four available television stations available at some time, for One Television these figures dropped to 20% of respondents in the Western Province, and 4% in Malaita. These lower rates correspond to a lower availability of signal, and a lower rate of television ownership (Tebbutt Research, 2010).

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