

● ● ●

Aid, trade and security: exploring the links with a gender analysis of livelihoods in Solomon Islands

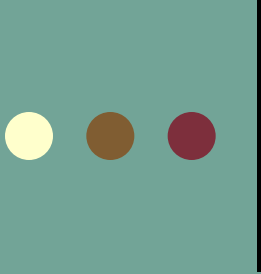


Dr Anita Lacey
Department of Political Studies
University of Auckland
a.lacey@auckland.ac.nz



Context

- Linked to own positioning as researcher in Pacific
- Solomon Islands is a key recipient of and partner to New Zealand aid and development activity
 - Solomon Islands currently ranked 129 in HDI
- RAMSI (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands) involves Australian and New Zealand states in the lives of Solomon Islanders
 - Security/insecurity and securitization
- An apt example of the global security/development nexus (Duffield) and the contemporary governance of security and aid
 - Enfolding of SI into a new global aid regime

- 
- Ways in which discourses of security are seized on and used to facilitate certain ways of doing development?
 - Example of danger of loss of development initiatives to geo-strategic security and market agendas
 - Are these projects taking account of women's needs and desires?
 - Are these projects further enmeshing women into market relationships that potentially exploit them and make their lives less secure?
 - How do we better research, evaluate and support pro-poor local development?



Solomon Islands and the new global aid regime

- pertinent case study of development aid NGOs and the new global aid regime
- new global aid regime:
 - characterized by contemporary neoliberal forms of governance
 - poverty reduction efforts that are shaped by partnership, self-responsibility, and market-oriented activities



Solomon Islands: a governance state

- A site to be reformed or reconstructed as a result of new public-private security frameworks (Duffield 2007)
- States of exception (Dean 2007; Agamben 2005)
- Facilitation of the privatization of the technologies of development or the parceling out of development functions to a range of non-state and private actors
- Key feature of new global aid regime in Solomon Islands has been massive proliferation of development, trade and security partners in SI
 - E.g. new trade deals between EU and SI and Taiwan and SI -- linked to RAMSI's presence
 - Asian Development Bank's Country Strategy and Program Update 2007-9: an apt example of framing Solomon Islands as a site of intervention



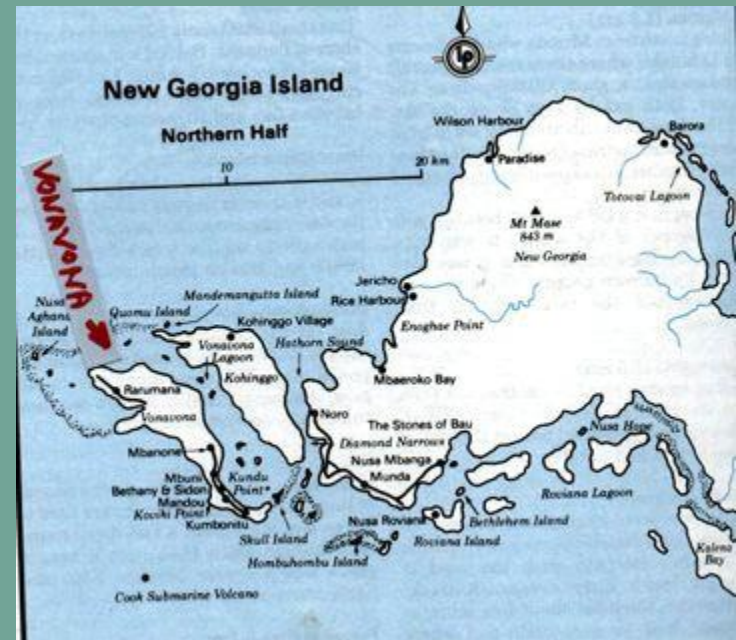
Governance States

- Post-colonial states deemed ‘fragile’ where international development organizations and donor actors operate with the state and its populations through diverse and complex development aid arrangements
- Little notice of local particularities

Noro case study

○ Noro

- New Georgia Islands, Western Province
- Second largest port in Solomon Islands
- Small percentage of local population (approx. 5000 people in Noro and 8500 high rural village population in surrounding district) have waged labour
- Dependency on subsistence farming and fishing and some wage employment in Munda and Noro for their livelihoods
 - Generate cash income from surplus food and marine products





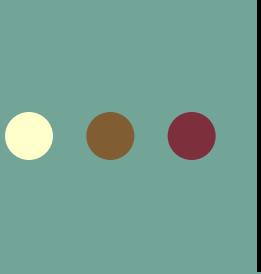
Noro and the tuna cannery

- Close to 1000 workers at the plant
- Over 80% of Soltai cannery workforce are women
 - Kukui 2010: 'In the processing plant, we think the women are better with their hand, you know, they're more gentle and they concentrate longer in the work, in the processing plant.'
 - Issues of double days
 - Labour rights
 - Lack of current day coordinated approach
 - Solomon Islands Women's Information Network use of radio program to inform women of their labour rights
 - Poor living conditions in hostel accommodation
- Food insecurity
 - Lack of market access
- Structural market failures
 - Exporting of raw produce, e.g. tuna loins to Italy – value adding overseas
 - Livelihoods dependant on time contingent trade deals
- Rural to urban drift
- Violence against women
- Transmission of HIV



Bringing gender in?

- AusAID's 'Integrating gender equality in the Solomon Islands Country Strategy'
 - Important stocktake of current initiatives by Australia and other donors, specifically designed to advance gender equality and to stocktake how gender equality issues are integrated in Australian-funded programs
 - Concurrent rural livelihoods strategy
 - Addressing market failures
 - Increasing revenues through better management of fisheries resources
 - Generating export market opportunities in the Pacific
- How do these strategies or agendas reconcile?
 - E.g. tuna fisheries give very few returns at the village level
 - Rural people had very negative images about tuna fisheries because they saw fishing boats offshore and believe they are taking fish that belong to them, with no recompense
 - How can villagers themselves fish tuna for local markets, for processing and/or for export markets
 - How can fishing stocks be safeguarded for future generations

- 
- ADB Solomon Islands Emergency Assistance Project – road building project between Noro and Munda
 - No evidence produced to indicate how this will benefit villagers
 - Discourse of livelihoods security used to enfold women into the remit of this project
 - Concurrent with some awareness of potential harm
 - “Whilst on the one hand the cash income earning opportunities created by road rehabilitation and maintenance are welcome, on the other hand the impact of these on people’s – especially women’s – overall burden and other commitments need to be carefully considered.” (ADB 2007)
 - Need for road building contractors to provide access to HIV/AIDs education and control programs for crew and communities

Conclusion



- Security offers a means to constitute Solomon Islanders as a bound population, as subjects of developmental and security interventions
 - Potential for and existence of locally-informed, pro-poor solutions to poverty and insecurities in Noro and Solomon Islands broadly and practices of resistance to the neoliberal new global aid regime