



## PNG Tracer Study Report

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## DISCLAIMER

The draft analysis and findings in this draft report of an LMAP implemented study are based on a small number of respondents who were available at the time of the survey in one SWP country. Caution should be taken in extrapolating the results across all SWP workers and other SWP countries. As LMAP implements more tracer studies including larger numbers of returning workers, the reliability of the analysis and conclusions will improve. LMAP intends to re-analyse the raw data collected as a larger data pool becomes available.

All findings, conclusions and recommendations are those of the consultant undertaking the study, not LMAP or the Australian Government.

The draft report has been reviewed with changes made by the LMAP Monitoring and Evaluation and Research Specialist.

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## ACRONYMS

AE	(Australian) Approved Employer
AUD	Australian Dollar
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DLIR	Department of Labour and Industrial Relations
DoE	Department of Employment
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
LMAP	Labour Mobility Assistance Programme
NCD	National Capital District
PGK	Papua New Guinean Kina
PNG	Papua New Guinea
POM	Port Moresby
PSWPS	Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme
SWP	Seasonal Worker Programme
WRP	Work ready pool (of possible seasonal workers)

## 0. Executive Summary

Relatively few Papua New Guineans have participated in Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) managed by the Australian Department of Employment (DoE), and its predecessor, the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS). This study is the first among Papua New Guinean returnees and as such is filling an important knowledge gap about the experiences of Papua New Guinean participants in the SWP. Thirty-four (34) seasonal workers returned to Papua New Guinea (PNG) in three groups between August and October 2016. Of these, 26 participated in interviews as part of this study.

The **Demographic, educational and economic background** of the 26 seasonal workers that participated in the study is summarised as:

- Four participants were female with an average age of 42 compared to an average age 32 for male participants.
- Two participants had a post-school qualification while the majority had completed either Grade 10 or Grade 12, and five participants had lower levels of education.
- Seventeen respondents currently live in rural areas. The largest number of participants are from the Central province and the National Capital District (NCD) – the predominance of these provinces implies unequal geographical distribution of the opportunities to participate in SWP.
- The average household size of participants was 7.8 persons, with each worker having (on average) 2.1 children and dependants.
- Twenty-three (23) participants had been economically active before coming to Australia, nine were employed and 14 were self-employed as subsistence farmers, fishermen, or working in the informal economy.
- The average individual weekly income of respondents before moving to Australia was PGK 360 with a range of PGK 15 to PGK 1,500 in average weekly income. Respondents provided (on average) 75% of their corresponding household's average weekly income.
- Participants' households owned an average of eight durable goods. No relationship was found between the number of seasons that respondents had previously worked in Australia under the SWP and the number of durable goods owned by their households.

Half of the respondents were **first-time participants** in the SWP while the other half had **previous experience** with the SWP. Two participants were members of the first group of Papua New Guinean workers who went to Australia under the PSWPS in 2011 and have participated in six seasons. Some respondents who had previously participated in the SWP found that they had encountered readjustment difficulties when they returned to PNG, mostly in relation to coping with the demands of family members. Participating in the SWP for several seasons does present some advantages, including the use of the skills learnt during previous stays and being able to work better and more quickly.

Most participants had found out about the SWP through their family or friends - most citing income opportunities as the main motivator for participating. The high representation of participants living in NCD or Central Province seems to be related to increased difficulty for residents in other provinces to participate in selection and pre-departure preparation processes (including considerable additional pre-departure expenses that are incurred by Papua New Guineans from other Provinces). However, besides this, nearly all participants found the **selection processes in 2016** to be fair.

Most respondents indicated that they understood the **pre-departure briefing** or training and found it useful. The briefing covers a broad range of relevant topics, including information on wage deductions, which is interesting as one of the main grievances of participants in the SWP was that wage deductions were either not clear or were unexpectedly high. This may imply that some pre-departure briefing information is either in-sufficient, or, participants did not understand it. Some respondents suggested

that some reintegration information be included in pre-departure training, for example, setting up a small business.

Participants who had been in Australia for several seasons mentioned that the pre-departure training used to be much more comprehensive in the past. The pre-departure training between 2011 and 2013 was three weeks long and included physical training, including how to lift heavy items. Even so, nearly all respondents felt that they were well prepared for their departure.

Participants reported differences in **pre-departure costs** incurred, implying less clarity around entitlements. Participants outside of Port Moresby and Central Province had to fly to Port Moresby to arrange their departure which adds to expenses. Several respondents were challenged by leaving their family; high pre-departure costs and difficult pre-departure logistics (including the need for suitable accommodation in Port Moresby to arrange for medical and police clearances; apply for a passport; and attend the pre-departure training).

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents were either very **satisfied** or satisfied with their latest work experience in Australia, while none was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Respondents worked at one location in Victoria and two workplaces in Queensland, where they were **tasked** with fruit/nut/vegetable picking, pruning of trees, and packing of fruits/nuts/vegetables. Respondents worked an average of five days per week and 9.2 hours per day with some engaged in shift work. During harvest time participants worked longer hours and earned more. As expected, workers picking fruit were paid on a piece rate rather than an hourly rate, while workers who were packing fruit or pruning trees were paid an hourly rate (which is currently AUD 21.77).

Respondents estimated average total gross earnings in Australia at AUD 13,500, with average weekly earnings of AUD 1,095. The level of knowledge about pay deductions varied considerably. Based on estimated deductions and a gross pay of AUD 900, the weekly net pay is estimated at AUD 455 in Weeks 1 to 8 (due to deductions for advance payments for fares and other expenses) and AUD 630 from Week 9. Based on this estimate, seasonal workers staying in Australia for 25 weeks, will have **net earnings** of around AUD 14,350. Most participants earned as much or more than they had expected.

Nearly all respondents remitted an average of AUD 3,350 each to spouses, parents, children and other relatives in PNG. Most **remittances** were spent on everyday expenses followed by health-related and education-related expenses, as well as traditional obligations/wantok. In some families, remittances were used for investments and in seven cases were used to start a business or to invest in an existing business. In addition to remittances, respondents returned to PNG with an average of AUD 5,400 each in **savings**. They had spent an average of AUD 1,940 in Australia by purchasing durable goods, mainly in the form of mobile phones, clothes, shoes, and laptops.

The average income, savings, remittances and expenses can be summarised as follows:

Gross earnings:	AUD 22,500
Total deductions:	AUD 8,150
Net earnings:	AUD 14,350
Private expenses:	AUD 2,250
Remittances:	AUD 3,350
Income taken back to PNG:	AUD 5,400
Purchase of durable goods:	AUD 1,940
Sum unaccounted for:	AUD 1,435

All participants acquired work-related skills at their workplace in Australia which included fruit packing, fruit picking, pruning and operating machinery. Most participants learnt their **new skills** through on-the-job training or by observing other workers, with two-thirds attending formal training. Seven respondents attended training courses outside their workplace, six of which were offered under the “Add on Skills

Training". Apart from new work-related skills, many participants improved or learnt new general skills, particularly punctuality; English language; knowledge about a healthy lifestyle; using household appliances; as well as on hygiene and personal presentation.

The clear majority of respondents perceived their **health status** either improved in Australia or remained unchanged. Nine respondents visited a health care facility in Australia and three were hospitalised. Nine respondents took between one and 14 sick leave days. On average workers took up two sick days each. Participants described various aspects of **pastoral care** provided by employers, with more satisfied than dissatisfied with every single aspect of pastoral care. When dissatisfaction was expressed, this would typically be around accommodation costs, transport to work, and (lack of) recreational opportunities. Regarding their **social life**, participants particularly liked the friendliness of people and the cleanliness of the environment and all were either feeling very happy or mostly happy about their stay in Australia.

Participation in the SWP has led to **changes in views and attitudes**, with their recent SWP experience generally changing participants views of Australia in a positive way. Four participants changed their views on their own tradition and culture, developing a more critical attitude towards some aspects of it. A few returnees expected some **reintegration** difficulties, although most said that the short duration of their absence and the fact that they had spent all their lives in PNG would guarantee them a smooth reintegration.

Most respondents said they intended to work in the SWP for as many years as possible – with most intending to apply to work in Australia in 2017. Whilst back in PNG, some are planning to continue with the occupation they had had before joining the SWP, some have plans to start a business, and others were uncertain.

The analysis of results has led to the following key findings about the respondent population:

#### **Key Findings: Economic Impacts**

- Household incomes of seasonal workers who have participated in the SWP for several seasons are not higher than those of first-time participants. Initial indications are that household incomes increase during the worker's participation in the SWP but there is no indication that the remittances and savings have had a positive impact on ongoing income generated in PNG. This may indicate that few remittances are used for productive investment.
- Most remittances are spent on consumption items and other necessities such as education and health-related expenses.
- Experienced seasonal workers reported that they worked more hours and earned more this season compared to the previous season. However, they also incurred greater pre-departure costs, especially if they were from outside NCD or Central Province. This lessened their earnings advantage compared to first-time participants.
- Participants from rural farming communities have a higher chance to use their new skills at their work in PNG, while participants from town areas and non-farming communities are less likely to use their skills.

#### **Key Finding: Social impacts**

- Many participants improved their knowledge of a healthy lifestyle and healthy nutrition, although a few suffered workplace injuries with some of these having long lasting consequences.
- None of the respondents, who had just returned, reported adverse impacts on their family life or relationships, although there might be adverse longer term impacts that are not yet obvious.

The aforementioned findings have led to the following recommendations being made for future LMAP tracer studies, PNG LMAP activities and PNG SWP activities:



### **Recommendations for future LMAP tracer studies**

- Recommendation #1: Replication of overall research method in future tracer studies
- Recommendation #2: Follow-up interviews with participants in early 2017
- Recommendation #3: Face-to-face interviews with family members in NCD and Central Province
- Recommendation #4: Short pre-departure interviews of participants in 2017
- Recommendation #5: Individual interviews with returnees as well as either key informant interviews or focus group discussion with returnees

### **Recommendations for PNG LMAP activities**

- Recommendation #1: Support DLIR to promote workers from PNG to employers in Australia
- Recommendation #2: Support DLIR to improve publicly available information in PNG
- Recommendation #3: Support DLIR to establish an electronic seasonal work database and introduce transparent selection processes
- Recommendation #4: Encourage DLIR to minimise disadvantages for participants from outside of NCD and Central Province
- Recommendation #5: Encourage DLIR to introduce a maximum quota for first time participants from NCD with a longer-term aim to introduce quotas for each province or region of PNG
- Recommendation #6: Encourage DLIR to develop strategy to involve the Provincial Labour Offices in the selection and recruitment of applicants
- Recommendation #7: Conduct study on creating sustainable livelihoods for SWP participants within PNG
- Recommendation #8: Support DLIR to improve quality of pre-departure training and introduce a component on occupational safety and health
- Recommendation #9: Support DLIR to enforce compulsory pre-departure training which requires the provision of accommodation in Port Moresby for participants from other provinces
- Recommendation #10: Support DLIR to have offer letters translated.
- Recommendation # 11: Support DLIR to develop and introduce system of support for workers while in Australia
- Recommendation #12: Develop a strategy to increase opportunities for training and work skills development in areas demanded by participants
- Recommendation #13: Identify ways to satisfy pastoral care requests of workers
- Recommendation #14: Conduct study on impacts of promoting the employment of married men and women over unmarried men in the SWP
- Recommendation #15: Conduct study detailing different strategies to divert more remittances and savings into productive investments in PNG
- Recommendation #16: Develop strategy to provide reintegration assistance

### **Recommendations for PNG SWP activities**

- Recommendation #1: Introduce transparent complaint procedures
- Recommendation #2: Increase opportunities for training and work skills development
- Recommendation #3: Encourage employers to broaden pastoral care activities, taking into account of workers' suggestions.

## 1. Introduction

There have been relatively few Papua New Guineans participating in Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) managed by the Australian Department of Employment (DoE), and its predecessor, the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS). The PSWPS was launched in 2008 however the first group of nine Papua New Guineans was not recruited until 2011. Since its beginning in July 2012, the SWP has been dominated by workers from Tonga and Vanuatu although Papua New Guinea (PNG) is Australia's closest and most populous neighbour. Little is known about the experiences of Papua New Guinean participants in the SWP because no study has so far been conducted among Papua New Guinean returnees. Some have filled in an evaluation form administered by the PNG Seasonal Worker Coordination Office under the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations (DLIR). This evaluation form has not been systematically administered in recent years. The information provided in these evaluation forms has not been systematically analysed or published. As such, knowledge is scant about the experiences of returned seasonal workers from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the economic and social impacts of their participation.

Thirty-four seasonal workers returned to PNG in three groups between August and October 2016. Of these, 26 participated in interviews that were conducted under this study. In the interviews, comprehensive information was collected on the demographic and economic background of the seasonal workers, their experiences of working and living in Australia, and their future plans, among others.

The core of this report consists of a summary of the findings from interviews with returned seasonal workers, which are presented in Chapter 3, after explaining the methodology in Chapter 2. In Chapter 4, the process of the tracer survey is critically discussed. In the conclusion, the main social and economic impacts of participating in the SWP for the seasonal workers are summarised, followed by recommendations for PNG LMAP activities, future LMAP tracer studies and PNG SWP activities.

## 2. Methodology

A senior researcher<sup>1</sup> had overall responsibility for the research including developing the methodology, the questionnaire, training research assistants in conducting the interviews and data entry, analysing the data, and writing this report.

Thirty-four seasonal workers returned to PNG in three groups between August and October 2016. Of these, 26 were interviewed as part of this tracer study, including four women (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Summary of survey participants**

Interview date	Number of Returnees	Number of Participants	Location of employment in Australia
23/8/2016	10	2	Robinvale, Victoria
20/9/2016	20	20	Mundubbera, Queensland
29/10/2016	4	4	Ipswich, Queensland

All returning seasonal workers arrive in Port Moresby where they are generally met by DLIR officials. In the past, some returnees have filled in an evaluation form administered by DLIR although some returnees have immediately gone to their families upon their return, without meeting any DLIR officials.

Due to a lack of communication, the workers who returned on 23 August 2016 were not met at the airport by DLIR officials, instead making their way home to their families. Upon contacting them, only

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Carmen Voigt-Graf was contracted by LMAP to implement the study using research assistants from the National Research Institute based in Port Moresby as enumerators.

two of the ten returnees came back to the DLIR the following day and participated in the interviews which were held at DLIR. Preparations and logistical arrangements for the return of the next two groups was improved and all returnees in these groups participated in the interviews. Twenty workers returned on 20 September and were interviewed on 21 September. The workers from outside of Port Moresby were provided with accommodation at the Holiday Inn hotel in Port Moresby. Those from Port Moresby came to the Holiday Inn the next day where all participants were provided lunch and where a room had been hired for the interviews.<sup>2</sup> The third batch of four workers returned on 29 October. DLIR officials picked them up from the airport and took them to the Department offices where they were interviewed. Although the first and third group of returnees were interviewed at the Department's premises, no DLIR officials were present during the interviews.

The interviews were conducted by seven Papua New Guinean research assistants who are cadets and project officers at the National Research Institute. Cadet researchers were trained on using the questionnaire prior to interviewing the first group of returned workers, and then conducted interviews, under the direction of an Australian National University (ANU) researcher.

Given that this is the first research study of returned seasonal workers in PNG, a broad and comprehensive questionnaire was developed that included questions on the demographic, educational and economic background of the workers, previous experience with the SWP, recent experience with the SWP in regard to the selection process, pre-departure briefing, work and income, skills development and remittances, their general well-being and social life in Australia, and future plans.

The questionnaire was developed with reference to questionnaires used in the World Bank implemented impact studies of returned seasonal workers in Tonga and Vanuatu. The questions as well as the alternative answers were adapted to the PNG context. The draft questionnaire was given to the Papua New Guinean research assistants for comments and was adjusted accordingly. The attempt to formally pre-test the questionnaire with a previous seasonal worker failed because the worker did not turn up for the arranged meeting and was uncontactable thereafter.

The comprehensive structured questionnaire included closed and open-ended questions and took about two hours per returned worker. The research assistants were instructed to take detailed notes during the interviews and to expand and correct their notes as soon as possible after the actual interviews. After conducting all interviews, they were trained in data entry. The closed questions were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and the open-ended questions were entered into a Word document. The research assistants were encouraged to include direct quotes in their notes, some of which are used in this report to emphasise certain points and individual experiences. The data in Excel was exported into SPSS due to the excellent descriptive statistics functions in SPSS. Excel was later used to create most tables and figures. The data was cleaned and the grammar in the qualitative responses was corrected. The data analysis focussed on qualitative analysis and descriptive statistics, which is appropriate given the exploratory nature of the survey.<sup>3</sup>

Before each interview, respondents were informed of the purpose of the interview and the envisaged benefits of the research. It was emphasised that participation was voluntary and that the information would be treated confidentially. They signed a consent form indicating their willingness to participate in the survey. In the report, names of respondents have been changed and individuals cannot be identified. Respondents were asked whether they were willing to participate in follow-up interviews. Twenty-five of the 26 respondents agreed and provided their contact details.

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<sup>2</sup> Logistics for these interviews were arranged by Angeline Courtenay from LMAP who was also present during the interview day. Her active support and efforts were critical for the success of this round of interviews.

<sup>3</sup> Due to the small sample size of 26, statistical tests to examine relationships between variables could not be done.

### 3. Findings: Analysis of seasonal worker interviews

In this Chapter, the results of the tracer survey interviews are summarised. Some data is displayed in boxes, tables and figures throughout the chapter with additional tables and figures included in Annex 1. Names of participants have been changed. The three employers are not identified by name.

#### 3.1 Demographic, educational and economic background of seasonal workers

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the main demographic characteristics of the 26 participants in the tracer survey.

**Table 3.1: Demographic characteristics of survey participants**

		Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	22	85
	Female	4	15
<b>Age</b>	Average age	33	33
	Average age male	32	32
	Average female	42	42
<b>Religion</b>	Seventh-Day Adventist	8	31
	Pentecostal	5	19
	United Church	4	15
	Salvation Army	2	8
	Catholic	2	8
	Other	5	19
<b>Marital status</b>	Never married	9	35
	Married	15	58
	Divorced	1	4
	Separated	1	4
<b>Country of birth</b>	Papua New Guinea	26	100
<b>Highest qualification</b>	Diploma/Advanced Diploma	2	8
	Vocational certificate	1	4
	Grade 12	8	31
	Grade 10	10	39
	Grade 8	2	8
	Grade 7	1	4
	No education	2	8

Only four participants were female with an average age of 42, compared to an average age of 32 for male participants. This may point to the fact that younger women are sometimes not permitted by their families to work in Australia under the SWP or that their responsibility of looking after children or other family members makes it impossible for them to be away for several months. There was a significant difference in marital status between the male and female participants. All male participants were either married (14) or had never been married (8), while the four women also included one separated and one divorced woman. Separation or divorce might have provided independence to participate in the SWP (see Annex Figure 1).

All participants were Christians of various denominations and were born in Papua New Guinea. Only two participants had a post-school qualification (certificate or diploma) while the majority had completed either Grade 10 or Grade 12. Five participants had lower levels of education or no education (see Table

3.1). Most participants rated their ability to read and write English as Very Good (11 respondents) or Without Difficulty (9 respondents). Only six admitted that they had difficulty reading and writing English. These answers appear to be based on a skewed assessment of their own abilities. Nearly all respondents required some translation into Pidgin during the interviews and many were more comfortable responding in Pidgin. Hence, if their verbal skills were lacking, it is unlikely that their English reading and writing skills were as high as they indicated.

Seventeen of the 26 respondents currently live in rural areas while 9 live in urban areas. The largest number of participants are from Central Province and still live in Central Province (see Table 3.2)<sup>4</sup>. Seven participants have relocated to the National Capital District (NCD) since returning from Australia - three participants moved from Central Province, three moved from Enga and one from Western Highlands to NCD. One participant moved from West New Britain to Lae in Morobe Province. The predominance of Central Province and NCD as provinces of current residence among participants clearly demonstrates an unequal geographical distribution of the opportunities to participate in the SWP – this may be based on disadvantages for residents in other provinces in the selection and pre-departure preparation process.

**Table 3.2: Home province and current residence**

Province	Home province (number)	Current residence (number)
NCD	0	7
Central	12	9
Chimbu	1	1
East New Britain	2	2
Eastern Highlands	3	3
Enga	3	0
Jiwaka	1	1
Morobe	0	1
Southern Highlands	1	1
West New Britain	2	1
Western Highlands	1	0

The average household size of participants was 7.8 persons. Seasonal workers had an average of 2.1 children in PNG and an average of six persons were primarily dependent on them (see also Annex Table 1). The household size was slightly higher than the average household size in PNG at the time of the last Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) in 2009/10 which was 6.4 persons<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Central Province is bordering the National Capital District (NCD) where Port Moresby is located and where all pre-departure preparation and arrangements are being done. Participants from Central Province can travel to Port Moresby by road. The only other province that is connected by road to Port Moresby is Gulf. There were no participants from Gulf this year.

<sup>5</sup> National Statistical Office, 2009-2010 Papua New Guinea Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES).

Participants were asked about their employment status in the 12 months before coming to Australia (see Table 3.3). Twenty-three of the 26 participants had been economically active before coming to Australia with nine being employed and 14 being self-employed. The majority were subsistence farmers or fishermen, or worked in the informal economy.

**Table 3.3: Employment status and sector of work**

Employment status	Number	Percentage
Employed (including part-time)	9	35
Self-employed	14	55
Not working / Home duties	3	12
Sector		
Private sector (formal)	5	19
Public sector	3	12
Informal economy	5	19
Subsistence farming	8	31
Subsistence fishing	2	8
n/a	3	12

The average individual weekly income of respondents before moving to Australia was PGK 360. The lowest weekly income that one respondent earned was PGK 15. The highest earner had an average weekly income of PGK 1,500, showing an enormous range in income.<sup>6</sup> The household's average weekly income was PGK 490, ranging from a minimum of PGK 10 to a maximum of PGK 2,150. This shows that the respondents' contribution to the overall income of their households was high, standing at approximately 75% on average. In many cases, the seasonal workers were not only the main but the only income-earners in the household. When they left for Australia, someone else was generally taking over their duties, especially in the case of subsistence farmers or informal business owners. No relationship was found between household income and the number of seasons that respondents had previously been to Australia.

Apart from income, the source of light and ownership of durable goods are indications of a household's economic status in PNG. Eighteen of the 26 seasonal workers indicated that their main source of light was from electricity from the grid (see Annex Table 2). This is a surprisingly large number especially given that 17 of the seasonal workers live in rural areas. It is possible that the question was misunderstood. At the time of the last HIES in 2009/2010, only 16.7% of households in PNG (6.3% of rural households and 67.8% of urban households) had access to electricity from the grid as their main source of light. Even if rural workers had participated in the SWP for several seasons and had raised the family income, access to electricity from the grid would not be affected. It is therefore likely that the apparent high rate of access to electricity from the grid does not reflect the reality. It is possible that workers have either misunderstood the question or that, for some reason, they were unwilling to admit that they did not have access to electricity from the grid.

Asked about which durable goods they owned, the average number of durable goods was eight, with one household owning 13 different types of durable goods and one household only owning one durable good. The most commonly owned durable goods were mobile phones and computers (see Annex Figure 2). Twenty-four households owned a mobile phone. At the time of the HIES in 2009/2010, mobile phone ownership was already high at 49.1% nationally (with 42.5% of rural households and 89.2% of urban households owning mobile phones). Mobile phone ownership has increased over recent years and ownership rates among SWP workers appear to be only slightly higher than among the general

<sup>6</sup> Seven participants were unable to provide their average weekly income, and four were unable to provide their household's weekly income.

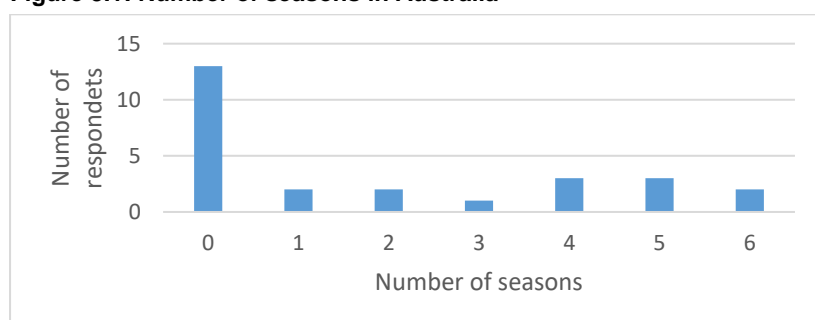
population. The two participants who did not own a mobile phone were two participants from rural areas and included one who participated in the SWP for the first time and one who had previously participated once. All workers who had participated for two or more seasons owned a mobile phone.

Twenty households owned a personal computer. This number is high compared to findings at the time of the HIES when only 4.8% of households in PNG owned a personal computer (including 1.4% of rural and 25.6% of urban households). All households of workers who had participated in the SWP for four or more years owned a personal computer, suggesting that there might be a link between SWP participation and computer ownership. On the other hand, nine of the 13 respondents who were first-time participants also owned personal computers. This might point to advantages of computer owners in accessing the SWP, as it might be easier to regularly follow up with and provide information to the DLIR by email. Generally, no relationship was found between the number of seasons that respondents had previously been to Australia under the SWP and the number of durable goods owned by their households.

### 3.2 Previous experience with the SWP

Half of the respondents were first-time participants in the SWP while the other half had previous experience with the SWP. Two participants were members of the pioneer groups of Papua New Guinean workers who first went to Australia under the PSWPS in 2011 and have participated in six seasons.

**Figure 3.1: Number of seasons in Australia**



Most of the respondents with previous SWP experience had only ever worked for the same employer while three had initially worked for another employer. None of the respondents had ever worked under a different scheme overseas, such as New Zealand's "Recognised Seasonal Employer" (RSE), and none had ever applied to participate in a different scheme.

Four SWP participants had previously travelled overseas on tourist visas, including three who had been to Australia and one who had visited both Australia and New Zealand. Two of these had worked while they were overseas on tourist visas including one in Australia and one in New Zealand. Four respondents had family members who had previously participated in the SWP. These included cousins, an aunt, an uncle and a brother.

Respondents who had previously participated in the SWP were asked if they had encountered readjustment difficulties when they returned from Australia to PNG. Four admitted that they had encountered some difficulties. The main difficulty was coping with the demands of family members (see Box 1).

#### **Box 1: Participants' previous readjustment experiences**

Morgan, who first participated in the SWP in 2015, said: "My family members and relatives have their own expectations upon my arrival from Australia [in terms of financial support] which has created difficulties for me to create a bond with them."

Ron had been to Australia under the SWP four times. According to him, "in Australia things are always done on time. Also we do not spend unnecessarily but according to our planned budget. My difficulty when I returned is timing and budgeting. In PNG we do things according to PNG time, always doing things late and not on time. Also, whenever I returned, I do not spend according to my plans because there are so many unplanned expenses for relatives."

A female participant, Anna, who had been to Australia five times said "in Australia I am free from obligations. Because I was so far away from home, my relatives cannot seek me out and ask for money and resources. When I came back to Port Moresby I found it difficult to cope again with these obligations.... In PNG, there are too many family obligations".

Patrick is one of the pioneers of the SWP. He particularly recounted some cultural difficulties: "The main difficulty when I return is that behaviour in the village is so different. In Australia, people mind their own business. In my village, I try to teach people to mind their own business. ... I also tell them to spend their time on useful things, to make good use of time especially as long as they are still young. Many are just wasting their time... and this is hard for me to see."

### **3.3 SWP experience in 2016: Selection and pre-departure**

#### **Selection process**

Most participants had found out about the SWP through their family or friends rather than through the media alerts initiated by DLIR (five of the 26 respondents identified media as the initial source of information). A typical scenario was that a relative, friend or neighbour with connections to DLIR told them about the SWP and gave them an application form. One participant initially got an application form from his neighbour who had a relative in DLIR. He submitted the form in 2011 and became one of the nine initial SWP workers from PNG. Another participant was also given the application form in 2011 from a relative who works at DLIR. However, he only filled it out in 2015 when he heard about others in the SWP. He was selected in 2016.

A 25-year old male participant from Port Moresby had not received any job offers after finishing Grade 12. His mother, who is a public servant supporting a large family, prepared the SWP application for him and paid all the associated costs. He did not have to wait very long before he was offered work under the SWP.

Many other participants had submitted their application forms with DLIR several years before they first went to Australia. This is to be expected given that the work-ready pool (WRP) at DLIR includes some 1,500 names.<sup>7</sup> One woman, for instance, submitted an application form in 2012 after her cousin had seen a newspaper advertisement. In the same year, she also organised a passport and police clearance because she thought she would be selected to go to Australia. However, she was only selected in 2016.

Participants were all required to undertake health checks with some being required to participate in work ready testing (if required by employers).

Twenty-One (21) respondents thought the selection process was fair, noting the representation of participants from all four regions and various provinces within PNG. Some perceived that being selected based on their profile and skills was fair as employers select on skills needs, not on 'people'.

As discussed earlier, sixteen of the 26 participants that were interviewed were living in either Port Moresby or Central Province, indicating an overrepresentation of these two provinces. The reasons seem to be largely related to disadvantages for residents in other provinces in the selection and pre-

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<sup>7</sup> The work-ready pool contains over 2,000 names. However, according to DLIR, an estimated 1,500 are active applicants who are still available and interested.



departure preparation process, including the considerable additional pre-departure expenses that are incurred by Papua New Guineans from other Provinces. However, the origin of many workers from Central Province may increase group cohesiveness on the farm. The same cannot be said for workers from NCD because all participants from NCD had migrated there from various other provinces. While previous participants are expected to pay for their additional pre-departure expenses (travel to and accommodation in Port Moresby), first-time participants receive reimbursements from DLIR. As such, participants from NCD or Central Province that do not incur these additional costs are saving costs for DLIR. Five respondents said that they had moved within PNG to improve their chances of being recruited under the SWP. Two had moved to Port Moresby from Goroka and Chimbu respectively<sup>8</sup>.

When asked why they wanted to participate in the SWP, income opportunities was one of the main reasons for the majority of respondents, while others were interested in learning new skills and making new experiences. "To earn an income to assist my family financially", and "Working in Australia, you earn good money, and when you change Australian dollar to Kina, you have more and you can start a business" were typical answers. Four respondents specifically mentioned their plans to set up a small business. Six respondents also mentioned that they were interested in learning new skills and eight said they were looking for new experiences: "I was eager to see a new place, especially Australia which I had only heard about and seen pictures."

Twenty-three respondents received an offer letter, while two received a phone call from DLIR. Of the 23 respondents receiving an offer letter, 22 said that they read and 21 said that they understood the letter. Given widespread difficulties with English literacy, which became apparent during the interviews, there are some reasons to believe that the widespread claim of understanding the letters might be a misjudgement, suggesting that if letters are translated they may be better understood.

### **Pre-departure training: Participation and contents**

Twenty-five respondents participated in a pre-departure briefing<sup>9</sup> or training and all but one of them found it useful. The briefing included information on financial management, budgeting, health issues, expenses and fees, behavioural expectations, the lifestyle and culture in Australia, expectations at work, grievance procedures at work, banking, and internet banking. According to some respondents, they were encouraged to start a business upon their return.

Twenty-one respondents said that a health professional spoke during the briefing. According to 22 respondents, information on sexually transmitted diseases was provided, while 11 respondents said that mental health issues were discussed, seven said that dental issues were discussed, and 10 said that dietary issues were discussed. Fifteen participants remembered that they received information on health insurance and 18 said that they were informed on deductions from wages. This last number is remarkable because one of the main grievances of participants in the SWP was that deductions were either not clear or were unexpectedly high. This implies that the information provided in the pre-departure briefing was either insufficient or not well understood.

Most respondents thought that the pre-departure information covered all important issues. Seven respondents would have liked to receive additional information, mostly on financial issues including bank loans and setting up a small business, wage deductions, and pay rates including the differences between hourly and piece rates.

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<sup>8</sup> One respondent said that he had moved from a village to Goroka town and the other two had moved within Port Moresby. It is likely that they misunderstood the question as the chances of being selected under the SWP do not differ between different areas of Port Moresby or between a village near Goroka and Goroka town.

<sup>9</sup> The pre-departure briefing is compulsory and a requirement of the partner country under the terms of the MOU and implementation arrangements with the Australian Government.

### **Pre-departure training in previous years**

Participants who had been in Australia for several seasons mentioned that the pre-departure training used to be much more comprehensive in the past. The pre-departure training between 2011 and 2013 was three weeks long and included physical training. Participants found this extremely useful as it prepared them for the strenuous farm work in Australia. They were also shown how to carry heavy loads without injuring themselves. They would welcome the reintroduction of physical training. In the past, more information was provided on pay deductions and gender issues. The early participants still benefit today from the training and experience provided in the first few years. Although, according to DLIR, the pre-departure training is currently ten days long, respondents stated that they only attended one or two days - one first-time participant only attended one day of the training and had “no idea what was covered during the rest of the training”.

23 of the 26 respondents felt that they were well prepared for their departure with only three responding they felt unprepared. Only one first-time participant of the 13 first-timers felt unprepared. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of participants felt prepared for their departure despite the short duration of the current pre-departure training compared to that of previous years. It is possible that they were not comfortable admitting that they did not feel prepared.

### **Accommodation in Port Moresby during pre-departure training**

From the participants' point of view, the main problem with pre-departure training was that accommodation was neither organised nor provided for participants from outside of Port Moresby. While accommodation was provided in 2011 and 2012, workers have had to find and pay for their own pre-departure accommodation since 2013. An experienced worker said: “This is a huge problem especially for newcomers and those without connections in POM. Their safety is not guaranteed.... They arrive in POM and are stranded at the airport. It is a terrible feeling.... If ever I give up participating in the SWP, it's because of this issue.”

### **Pre-departure costs**

Participants were asked about their pre-departure expenses. Annex Table 3 summarises the main pre-departure costs and who paid for them, according to the participants. The responses differed between respondents and suggest that the level of understanding of who paid for which expenses was low. It also points to differences in costs incurred by participants. All 26 respondents stated that they had to pay for their passport upfront. Twenty-five said they paid for their police clearance and 23 for their medical clearance upfront. Two participants said that their employer paid for their medical clearance which is probably based on a wrong perception on the part of the workers. Participants who live in Port Moresby did not incur the expense of travelling to Port Moresby and paying for accommodation there while arranging their visa, medical and police certificates.<sup>10</sup> Others travelled to Port Moresby from other provinces to arrange for these pre-departure items and some had relatives in Port Moresby where they could stay. While they might not have had to pay for accommodation as such, they were often expected to make substantial contributions to the host households' food and other expenses.

When asked how much they had to spend on pre-departure arrangements, the responses ranged from PGK 330 to PGK 8,482. The actual expenses reported varied depending on costs for domestic flights and accommodation in Port Moresby and whether participants had to renew their passport, medical and police certificates. The range of estimates suggests, however, some misperceptions about the actual costs. Annex Table 4 provides estimates of typical pre-departure costs, based on information provided by team leaders and experienced seasonal workers who had a better understanding of the actual costs.

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<sup>10</sup> However, some of those living in POM indicated that they incurred an expense to travel to POM, probably referring to the expense of travelling to DLIR.

Asked where they got the money from to pay for the pre-departure expenses, 23 respondents said they used their own savings and 16 received assistance from their immediate family. Other sources of money were comparatively unimportant (see Annex Table 5).

### **Expenses incurred by participants from provinces outside NCD and Central**

Expenses incurred by participants from outside of Port Moresby and Central Province who had to fly to Port Moresby to arrange their departure were considerable. Patrick who had been to Australia for several seasons, had to travel to Port Moresby in March 2016 to arrange a new medical clearance. Although he stayed with relatives, the overall expenses for his trip in March were PGK 2,700 including a domestic return flight (PGK 1,600), food contributions to his relatives (PGK 1,000) and transport within Port Moresby (PGK 100). After arranging his medical certificate, he returned to his home province. When he left for Australia, he again had to pay PGK 1,600 for the domestic return flights to Port Moresby. Having participated in the SWP in previous seasons, he had to pay for all these costs upfront. Such additional costs very clearly disadvantage participants from provinces outside of NCD and Central Province. First-time participants receive reimbursements for domestic flights from DLIR, albeit this may take some time. Yet, they have to pay for their costs of accommodation in Port Moresby.

### **Past and present expenses**

Experienced workers compared past and present practices, saying that DLIR used to pay for most pre-departure costs. In the case of one participant, DLIR initially paid for his passport, police clearance and medical clearance and provided accommodation in Port Moresby while he arranged all these and participated in the pre-departure training. A few years later, when he had to get a new passport, he had to pay for the travel and passport expenses from his own pocket. Only first-time participants still receive some assistance from DLIR although it is unclear what exactly DLIR pays for and whether this is done consistently.

### **Pre-departure challenges**

Ten respondents said that they did not face any challenges prior to their departure to Australia. For the other 16 respondents, the main challenges were related to leaving their family (five workers) as well as the high pre-departure costs and difficult pre-departure logistics (seven workers). One respondent said: "The thought of leaving my family was very overwhelming for me". In terms of costs and logistics, finding suitable accommodation in Port Moresby to arrange for medical and police clearances and apply for a passport, and attend the pre-departure training was by far the major challenge. Some workers were extremely frustrated about the situation and accused DLIR of having failed to live up to its duties. Several workers found it difficult to catch early-morning flights to Australia, especially as DLIR did not provide transport to the airport on their departure day.

## **3.4 Work, income and expenditure in Australia**

The respondents were members of three groups of seasonal workers. Table 3.4 provides an overview of the location and industry, and arrival and departure dates in Australia.

**Table 3.4: Summary information of three groups of workers**

Location in Australia	Industry	Number of Participants	Arrival date in Australia	Departure date from Australia	Duration of stay
Robinvale, Victoria	Horticulture	2	14/2/2016	22/8/2016	27 weeks
Mundubbera, Queensland	Citrus	20	14/4/2016	19/9/2016	22 weeks
Kalbar, Queensland	Vegetables	4	21/4/2016	29/10/2016	27 weeks

At the three locations, the main work tasks of the seasonal workers were picking fruit/nuts/vegetables, pruning of trees, and packing of fruits/nuts/vegetables. At the farm in Victoria, the main crops that Papua New Guinean workers were working with were almonds and oranges. One of the farms in Queensland specialised in mandarins and oranges. The other farm had Papua New Guineans working with beetroots, turnips and carrots.

The number of Papua New Guinean seasonal workers at one of the farms has increased gradually from 12 in 2012 to 20 in 2016. For this farm, some workers of previous seasons were not requested in the following season because they were not productive. Some apparently decided not to participate again because they found it difficult to arrange accommodation in Port Moresby for pre-departure requirements. This year, the 20 Papua New Guinean workers arrived at the same time as 20 Tongans and 10 East Timorese workers who together constituted the bulk of the workforce at the farm. Some participants mentioned that they were supposed to stay at the farm for six months but due to visa delays for the Tongan workers the start date was delayed, affecting the duration of their stay and their overall earnings.

### **On-arrival briefing**

Twenty-four respondents received an on-arrival briefing in Australia provided at the workplace. The briefing included information on pay rates and wages, pay deductions including taxation, superannuation, occupational health and safety, expectations at work and behaviour rules outside of work, housing and accommodation, logistical issues such as transport to work and the issuing of tools, as well as grievance procedures. Respondents were informed, by their Approved Employers, of a zero tolerance for alcohol consumption at work or outside of work, although one group of workers was apparently told by their employer that they could drink but needed to behave. They were also assisted with filling in the superannuation forms. The briefing was mostly targeted at first time participants. Experienced seasonal workers said that they received little valuable new information.

### **Working conditions**

Respondents worked between five and seven days per week with the average number of days being 5.9. They worked between eight and 12 hours per day with the average working hours being 9.2 hours. There was little difference between the working hours of men and women. Women worked an average of 9.4 hours compared to men who worked 9.1 hours. Fourteen respondents engaged in shift work while 12 did not.

Assumedly, as casual workers, respondents had no annual leave entitlements. Workers had limited control over their earnings, as this largely depended on how much work they were given. For instance, during harvest time, more work is available and participants worked longer hours and earned more. When they were unable to work due to rain – at one of the locations, there were one to two rainy days each month – they were not paid. Workers packing fruit in the shed were not paid when the machine broke down and had to be fixed.

### **Earnings and pay deductions**

Asked about their earnings in Australia, the answers varied widely, pointing both to a lack of understanding of their earnings and to earning differentials between workers. Earning differentials were caused by the existence of different pay rates<sup>11</sup>. Workers picking fruit were paid on a piece rate rather than an hourly rate, while workers who were packing fruit or pruning trees were paid an hourly rate (which is currently set at AUD 21.77). In picking, the quicker and more experienced workers were able to generate higher incomes.

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<sup>11</sup> Seasonal workers must be paid in accordance with the award and that workers are guaranteed a minimum 30 hours work a week on average.

Respondents were asked to indicate their total gross earnings in Australia for the entire duration of their stay. Their responses ranged from AUD 5,000 to AUD 30,000 with an average of AUD 13,500. Asked about their weekly gross earnings, their estimates ranged from AUD 450 to AUD 6,000 with an average of AUD 1,095.<sup>12</sup> There was no difference between the average weekly earnings of men (AUD 1095.45) and women (AUD 1092.50). However, obvious differences were found in average weekly earnings by marital status, although a statistical correlation could not be proven. While the nine respondents who had never been married earned an average of AUD 874 per week, married respondents earned AUD 1,207 per week or more. This is likely to be linked to married respondents working harder to earn more money to save and remit.<sup>13</sup>

Although 24 respondents said that they understood the deductions from their pay, the level of knowledge about pay deductions varied considerably and many participants did not know how much was deducted for each item. Knowledge about pay deductions was based on different sources, as indicated in Annex Figure 3. For example, many workers knew that they paid 15% income tax but few were aware of how much was deducted for the pre-departure costs.<sup>14</sup> Workers contributed 45% to their return airfare to Australia and to their visa costs via pay deductions – this information is detailed on the letter of offer, which further substantiates the finding that initial offer letters are not properly understood, and may require translation. Further, many workers did not know how much they paid for their health insurance in Australia.

Earning deductions varied between employers. For instance, employers provide daily transport to work and charge the workers for it. One of the three employers charged AUD 25 per week for transport, while another charged AUD 42. Some workers also indicated that they had to pay for their work clothes and tools. While some employers provided some work clothes free of charge, another employer took the workers to a nearby 'Op Shop' to give them the opportunity to purchase affordable boots and working clothes. Some respondents said they paid as much as AUD 300 for tools while most did not seem to pay anything. One worker said he paid AUD 50 for a bag, AUD 150 for a saw, AUD 50 for safety glasses and AUD 50 for another tool. According to others, workers had to pay a deposit of AUD 100 for the tools they needed at work. If the tools were damaged the deposit would not be returned.

Weekly accommodation charges also varied between employers and were between AUD 90 and 110. In some cases costs for utilities were included in the rate, in other cases an additional AUD 5 to 10 were deducted. Accommodation and utilities charges were often deducted from the pay and have therefore been included in Table 3.5. At one farm, four Papua New Guineans and two Fijians shared a house. The farmer paid their utility costs (such as water, electricity) and provided a car which they were allowed to use privately but they had to pay for petrol.

Table 3.5 provides a summary of the estimated pay deductions, based on common responses. Deductions for regular expenses were incurred over the entire stay in Australia, while deductions to repay pre-departure costs were made over a certain number of paydays. Participants could choose how quickly they repaid these and most repaid their pre-departure expenses over the first two months. Accordingly, their net pay increased after the initial two months in Australia.

**Table 3.5: Estimated average weekly pay deductions**

Deductions	Total	Weekly deductions
Income tax	[15%]	
Repayment of pre-departure costs (ticket, visa)	AUD 800	AUD 100 (over 8 weeks)
Travel in Australia from airport to workplace	AUD 100	AUD 12.50 (over 8 weeks)

<sup>12</sup> Given that workers spent between 22 and 27 weeks in Australia, their overall gross income should be around 25 times higher than their weekly gross income, which it is not, according to their estimates. This may be linked to workers not being aware of their actual gross earnings.

<sup>13</sup> There was only one separated and one divorced respondent who earned AUD 1,300 and 1,200 respectively.

<sup>14</sup>

Health insurance	AUD 500	AUD 62.50 (over 8 weeks)
Accommodation		AUD 110 (each week)
Daily transport to work		AUD 25 (each week)

Based on the estimated deductions of Table 3.5 and a gross pay of AUD 900<sup>15</sup>, the weekly net pay is estimated at AUD 455 in Weeks 1 to 8 and AUD 630 from Week 9 (see Table 3.6). Based on this estimate, seasonal workers staying in Australia for 25 weeks will have net earnings of around AUD 14,350.

**Table 3.6: Typical net pay of SWP participant**

Period	Pay and deductions	Amount in AUD
Weeks 1 to 8	Weekly gross pay	900
	Tax deductions	135
	Other pay deductions Week 1 to 8	310
	<b>Weekly net pay Week 1 to 8</b>	<b>455</b>
From Week 9	Other pay deductions from Week 9	135
	<b>Weekly net pay from Week 9</b>	<b>630</b>

Twenty-two respondents said that they would be able to access their Australian superannuation in PNG. The four participants at the third farm did not know or did not answer the question, suggesting that they have not been provided adequate information on superannuation in Australia. Participants in the other groups expected to be able to claim between AUD 500 to AUD 3,000, with an average of AUD 1,260, in superannuation. Some workers were not aware of the fact that if they accessed their superannuation and transferred it to PNG, they would have to pay tax and receive less than their actual savings. There was an expectation that DLIR would provide assistance in claiming their superannuation. Some participants planned to leave their superannuation money in Australia.

### Expenses and savings in Australia

In addition to the regular expenses that were deducted from their pay, participants were asked about their private regular expenses, which are summarised in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7: Average private weekly expenses** (excluding accommodation)

Expenditure item	Weekly expenses in AUD
Transport, other than to work	0
Food and other essentials	50
Entertainment	5
Alcohol/cigarettes/betel nuts	14
Other, including communication	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>

Overall, most participants adopted a frugal lifestyle and tried to minimise their expenses, spending an average of AUD 89 per week. All participants stayed in shared accommodation and typically shared dinner for which they put in around AUD 20 per week. Their lunch expenses, which they organised individually, were around AUD 30 per week. None of the participants said that they spent any money on transport, other than transport to work which was deducted from their pay. Only five workers said they spent anything on entertainment, varying between AUD 5 and AUD 50 per week. Ten workers

<sup>15</sup> This estimate is based on some 41 hours work at AUD 21.77 per hour.

spent money on cigarettes or alcohol with a maximum of AUD 60 per week. The average weekly amount spent on these items was AUD 14. Many workers had no other regular expenses while some regularly spent money on communications (around AUD 10 per week), soft drinks and pies (up to AUD 20 per week), laundry, church donations, and gifts.

Taking these amounts to calculate their weekly savings, Table 3.8 shows the estimated weekly savings of the participants, amounting to AUD 366 during the first eight weeks and AUD 541 from week nine onwards.

**Table 3.8: Average weekly savings and overall savings**

	Weeks 1 to 8	Week 9 onwards
Weekly net pay	455	630
Regular private expenses	89	89
<b>Weekly savings</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>541</b>
<b>Overall savings in 25 weeks</b>	<b>12,125</b>	

When asked to estimate their weekly savings, the replies were similar to the calculation presented in Table 3.8. According to the participants, their average weekly savings were AUD 429, ranging from one participant who said he only saved AUD 100 and another who claimed to save as much as AUD 1,000. Although there was no difference in the earnings between women and men, women saved on average AUD 543 per week compared to men who saved AUD 408. There were differences in the weekly savings by marital status with the 15 married participants saving an average of AUD 428, compared to the nine who had never been married who saved AUD 378.

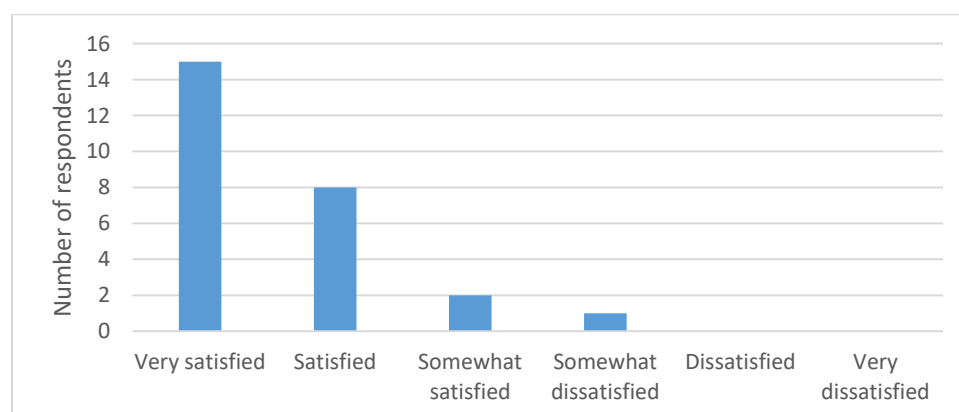
Compared to their earnings expectations for Australia, most participants earned either as much as they had expected (nine participants) or more than they had expected (10 participants) (see Annex Figure 4). The main reasons given for higher than expected earnings included a higher pay rate and working more hours than expected. Four participants earned less than they had expected and they attributed this to a lower than expected pay rate and higher pay deductions.

The thirteen respondents who had previously participated in the SWP worked for the same employer as during last year's season and 11 worked with the same crops. As such they were able to use the skills learnt during previous stays and worked better and more quickly this year. Ten said they earned more this year, seven worked more hours, and nine understood the deductions from their pay better.

### Satisfaction with stay

Asked about the level of satisfaction with their latest experience in Australia, 88% of respondents was either very satisfied or satisfied, while none was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (see Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2: Level of satisfaction with latest experience of working in Australia**



The reasons for being satisfied with the stay can be categorised into income and savings related reasons which were mentioned by eight respondents: “I was satisfied because I achieved my goals” and “I saved more than expected” were typical answers. Some compared this year’s work experience with that of previous years: “When I first started the hourly rate was 19 dollars but in the last two seasons it was increased to 21 dollars. I was also more satisfied with my recent experience because I was able to work at a faster pace because of the experiences I had accumulated over the last five seasons.”

Three respondents pointed out that they enjoyed the type of work they were doing and felt satisfied on the job: “Working in the shed was good. The managers were very good so I am happy with the experience”. Three participants emphasised that they learnt new skills and appreciated the experience while another three stressed personal satisfaction: “I enjoyed my stay there. Life is 100% easy in Aussie. I made new friends, watched rugby live and travelled on the train. It is a peaceful and friendly place.”

Not all experiences were positive, for example, tax deductions were viewed negatively. Overall, 19 of the 26 respondents found their employer helpful and three reported they found their employer not helpful.

### **Co-workers and other work**

The participants worked alongside Papua New Guineans and other Pacific Islanders. They also worked alongside backpackers at two of the three farms and many had Australian co-workers. They had positive work relationships with co-workers from all the other countries. Some respondents explicitly mentioned their good relationships with the seasonal workers from Kiribati. At one of the farms 20 Papua New Guineans, 20 Tongans and 10 East Timorese worked alongside some 10 backpackers from different European and Asian countries. Many respondents mentioned the particularly good relationships and friendships they had with East Timorese workers.

None of the workers at two of the three farms were working in other paid jobs in Australia during their recent stay. Some said that they were approached by nearby employers or workers on other farms, but declined because they did not want to breach the conditions of their visa or jeopardise their chances of being asked to return to Australia.

## **3.5 Remittances**

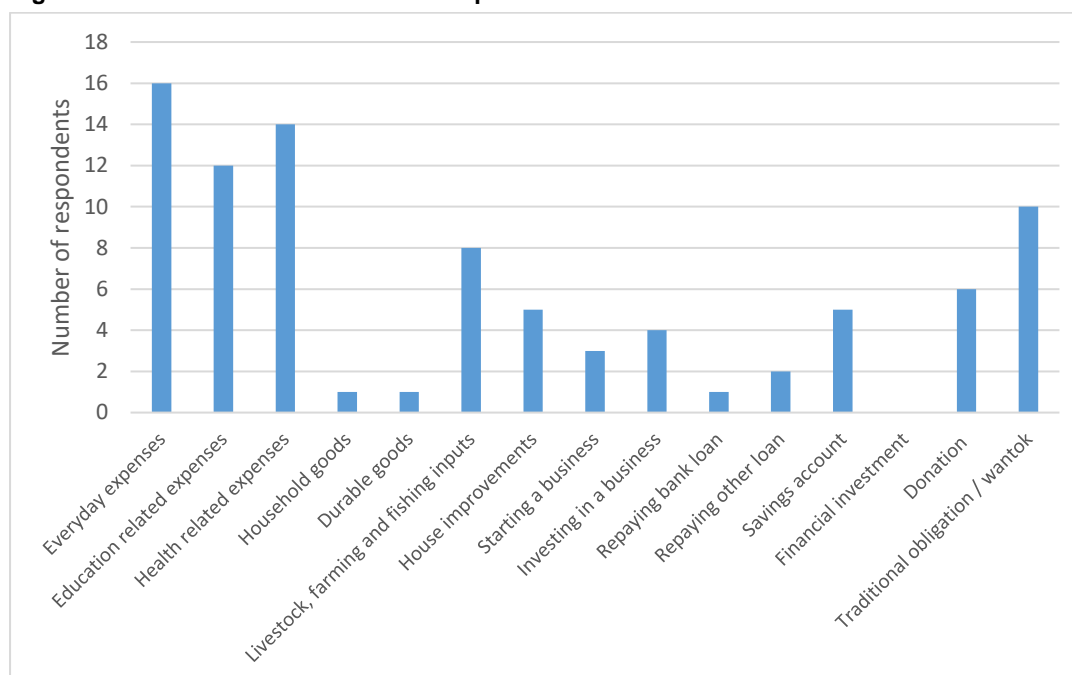
Of the 26 seasonal workers, 24 sent remittances to PNG while they were in Australia. Twenty-three respondents indicated the amount of remittances while one respondent did not know how much he remitted. The amount of remittances ranged from AUD 500 to AUD 11,000 with an average of AUD 3,350. Fourteen respondents sent remittances at least once a month (see Annex Figure 5).

The main recipients were spouses, followed by parents, children, and other relatives (see Annex Figure 6). Most participants sent remittances via money transfer operators, followed by bank transfers and internet banking (see Annex Figure 7). Most participants chose the cheapest channel.

Most remittance senders were aware of what the remittances were used for but only seven of the 24 remitters knew the amount that was spent on particular items. Everyday expenses were the main item on which remittances were spent, followed by health-related and education-related expenses, and by traditional obligations / wantok (see Figure 3.3).



**Figure 3.3: Items that remittances were spent on**



One participant's family spent PGK 4,400 on education-related expenses, while another family spent PGK 4,050 on health-related expenses. The largest amount spent on starting a business was PGK 2,150, and on investing in a business it was PGK 2,000.

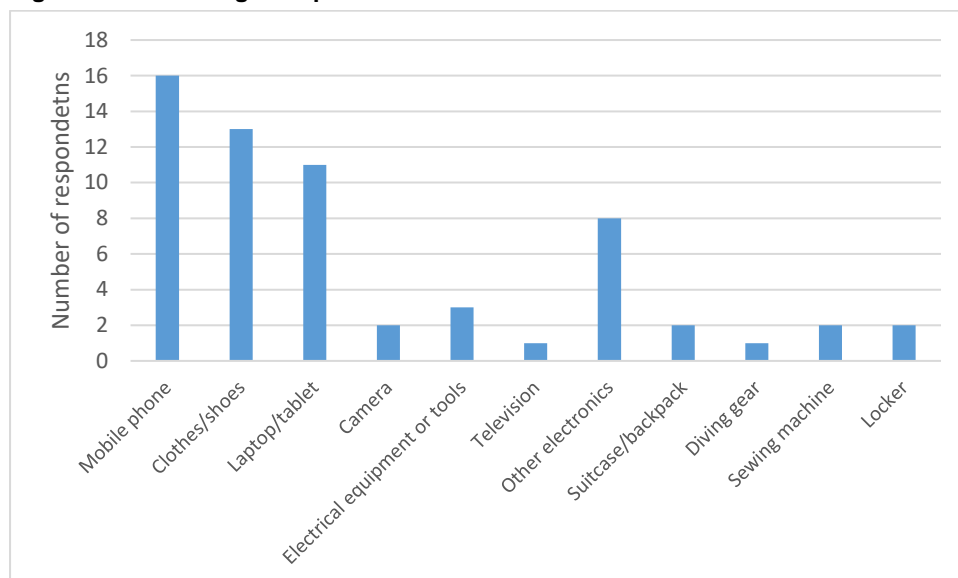
Overall, most remitted money was spent on necessities and consumer goods. In some families remittances were used for investments: Eight respondents said that the money they remitted was spent on livestock, farming and fishing inputs. In three cases, it was spent to start a business and in four cases, it was invested in a business.

Asked who decided what the remittances were used for, eight remitters said that they decided what the money was spent on. In 13 cases, the family members in PNG who receive the remittances decided on their use. This was the case for Brian who explained, "My wife and children decide. I send money straight to my wife and also straight to my children if they request it. I have two children studying at UPNG and Unitech and my two younger ones are in high school." In two cases, decisions were made jointly as one respondent said: "If my family ask me for money, I ask what they need the money for. Depending on the purpose, I will either send it or refuse it."

In addition to sending remittances, participants also took back money to PNG when they returned. The average amount taken back was AUD 5,400 (this is much higher than the indicated amount remitted).

Twenty-four respondents had purchased durable goods in Australia while two had not. The most common durable goods purchased in Australia were mobile phones, clothes and shoes, and laptops, as shown in Figure 3.4. Most of these goods are consumer goods with the exception of three respondents who bought electrical equipment, two who bought a sewing machine and one who bought diving gear.

**Figure 3.4: Durable goods purchased in Australia**



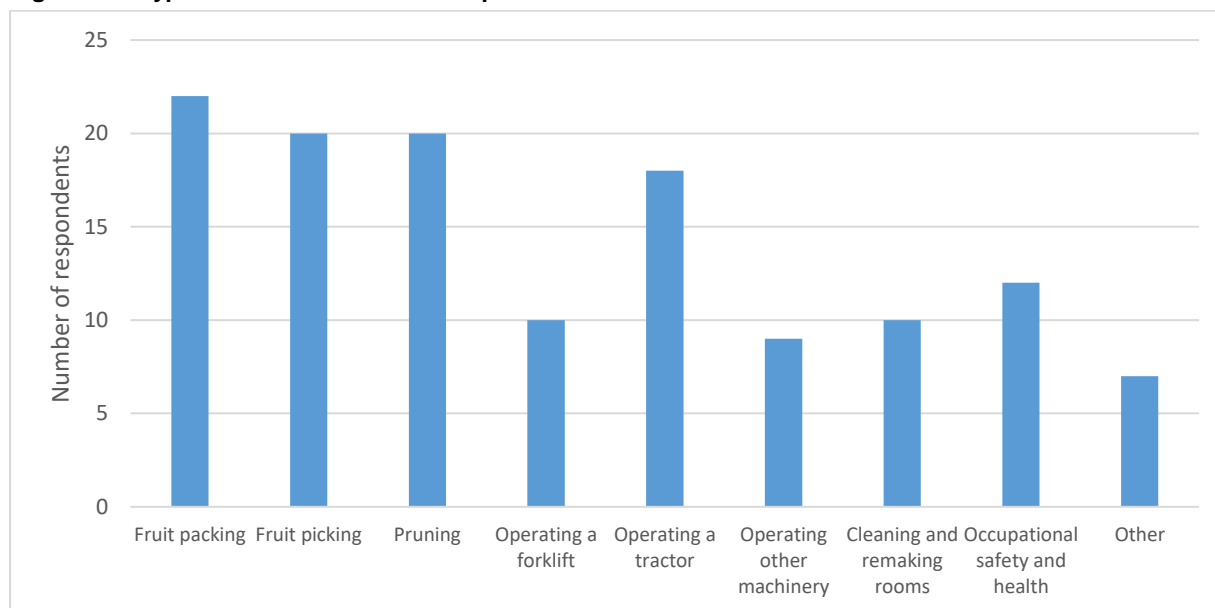
In contrast to other questions, where many respondents were unable to state specific amounts spent on certain items, 19 of the 24 respondents who bought durable items in Australia were able to recall exactly how much they had spent on these items. Their spending ranged from AUD 190 to AUD 3,647 with an average spending of AUD 1,940.

### 3.6 Skills development and training

The 26 participants acquired skills at their workplace in Australia. Figure 3.5 shows the type of work-related skills that participants learnt which included fruit packing, fruit picking, pruning, and operating machinery.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The “other” skills in Figure 3.5 refer to time management, survival and independence, working fast, riding a bike, fitting irrigation pipes, and driving.

**Figure 3.5: Type of work-related skills acquired in Australia**



Twenty respondents think they will be able to apply the newly acquired skills in PNG, while six think that they will not be able to do so. Some of their answers are summarised in Box 2.

**Box 2: Application of acquired skills in PNG**

Some think that they will not be able to apply their acquired skills in PNG, because they live in a coastal or urban area where there are no farms.

Owen said: *"I live along a coastal village, and it is impossible to apply the skills learnt"*, while Joseph said *"I live in Port Moresby. There is no farm here where I will be able to utilize the farm skills I acquired."* Brian also lives in Port Moresby but is more confident of using his new skills, arguing *"since I live in an urban setting, I don't have land to do gardening. But I can share the skills with others."*

Some participants from rural areas with farms thought that their crops were too different and the skills they acquired in Australia were not transferable to their farms in PNG. Jacob explained: *"I farm bananas. I would not need any of the skills that I learnt in Australia"*.

For those who think that they will be able to use their skills, most will transfer the skills to the crops they cultivate in PNG. Patrick said *"I acquired lots of different skills but it is the pruning that I will apply at home. I will transfer what I learnt from citrus to cocoa"*. John, who lives in Port Moresby, planned to *"apply the skills learned to my vegetable farming activity because it will enhance some of my farming practises"*. Kiso who comes from the Highlands said *"I will use the pruning and planting skills from Australia to prune and plant coffee"*. Finally, David, who lives in Port Moresby but is originally from the Highlands, said *"I learnt how to fit irrigation pipes and I will fit pipes for irrigation to water potatoes and cabbages back home [in the Highlands]"*.

Some seasonal workers were lucky in that they worked on the same kind of fruit in Australia as they are in PNG. Jacinta from Central Province is one example: *"I will be able to apply the fruit picking, pruning and packing skills in my village to grow orange trees."* Finally, Frazer from Central Province who has never been married, looked beyond farming, saying that *"I will apply the skills to improve my living at the personal level... I will improve my bedroom by applying the ability to clean and remake room.... I will apply occupational safety and health in the future as I consider a career in mechanics"*.

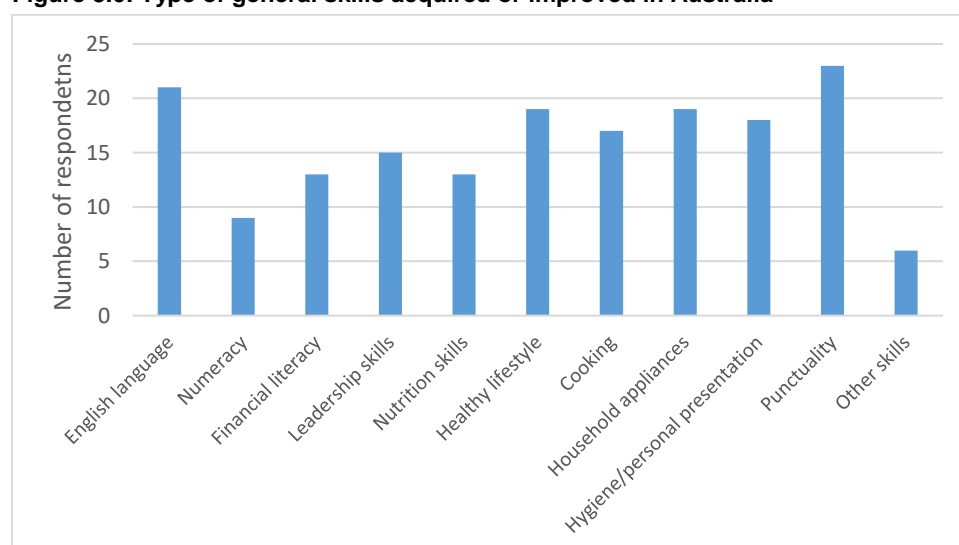
Most participants learnt their new skills through on-the-job training (22 respondents) or by observing other workers (18 respondents). Seventeen respondents attended formal training, mostly at their workplace (see Annex Figure 8). Seven respondents attended training courses outside their workplace, six of which were offered under the "Add on Skills Training". One respondent said that he took courses

in Basic English and Numeracy, Basic Information Technology, and First Aid, while five others took First Aid courses and one respondent took a course in operating machines.<sup>17</sup> One respondent received formal training at the workplace which the employer paid for and which he feels very proud of. As a result, he received a certificate in forklift driving. Some workers who had previously been to Australia had received training in First Aid or other areas in the past.

For those who did not attend any training, four did not know why they did not attend any training, and seven said there was no time to attend training: “We have a tight schedule. Work needs to be done on time”; “There is not enough time. ... We used the one day off to rest”; “There is not enough time to attend trainings. The work we do is very demanding and requires all our time”, were typical answers. Four participants said that their employer did not organise any training, while two said that no training opportunity was available. Overall, only 10 respondents said that their employer encouraged and assisted them to access training while 16 did not receive any encouragement or assistance.

Apart from new work-related skills, many participants improved or learnt new general skills, as shown in Figure 3.6. The most commonly improved skills were in the areas of punctuality, English language, knowledge about a healthy lifestyle, using household appliances, and on hygiene and personal presentation.

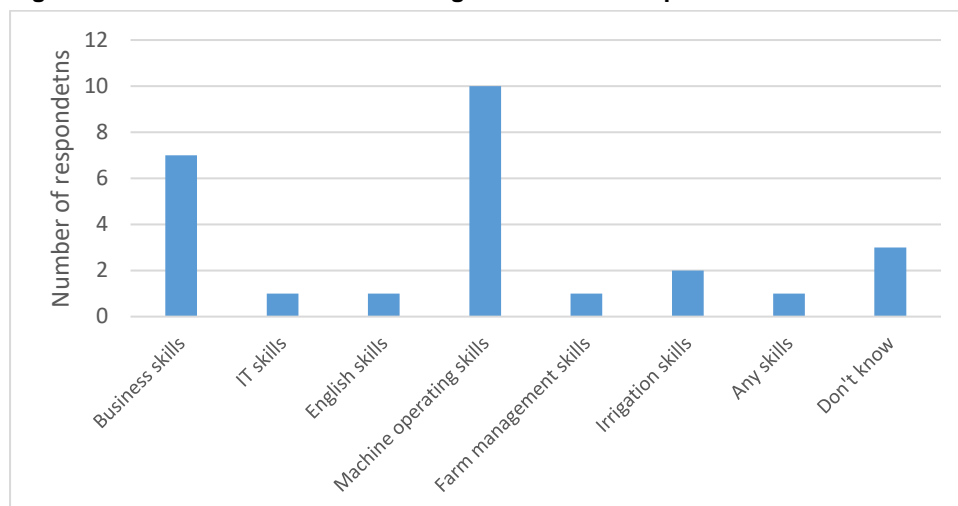
**Figure 3.6: Type of general skills acquired or improved in Australia**



If given a choice between working more hours or taking a training course, 10 participants would prefer to work longer hours, seven would take a training course and for eight, either would be equally preferable. Participants were asked which training courses they would find most useful to take. Their answers are displayed in Figure 3.7. If available, training courses in machine operating (including forklifting) were considered by far the most useful training courses. Business skills including skills on setting up and running a business, bookkeeping, management and financial management skills were also considered very useful.

<sup>17</sup> It is not clear whether a course in operating machines was offered under the “Add on Skills Training” (Editor’s note: operating machines was not offered in the “Add-on Skills training”). It is also unusual that one respondent was able to attend three different courses.

**Figure 3.7: Most useful areas of training and skills development**



Asked which work-related or general skills acquired in Australia will be particularly useful in PNG, the major work-related skill areas were farming skills (six respondents), skills in operating machinery (four), and irrigation skills (two). Abel, who lives in Port Moresby, said, “The most useful skill I learnt is driving the twin-steer. It’s a big car (sic) and not everyone can drive it. I think knowing how to drive it is an advantage and may even get me a good job back home that will give me a good income.”

The main general skill area mentioned as particularly useful was punctuality (four respondents). Brian shared his views: “They [Australians] are always on time. That’s why their work and business are successful.” Kiso, who lives in Port Moresby, said “In PNG, punctuality is a big problem. I want to wear the attitude of punctuality so I can be successful in what I do. From my experience in Australia, time is money. In PNG, we waste time, and this stops us from achieving what we aim to achieve.”

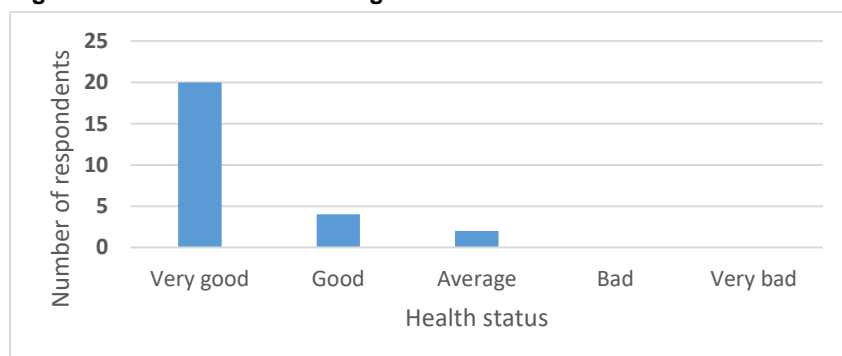
To sum up, participants valued hard job related skills such as machine operating skills, as well as attitudes, such a punctuality, more highly than general knowledge skills offered under the “Add on Skills Training”.

### 3.7 Wellbeing and social life in Australia

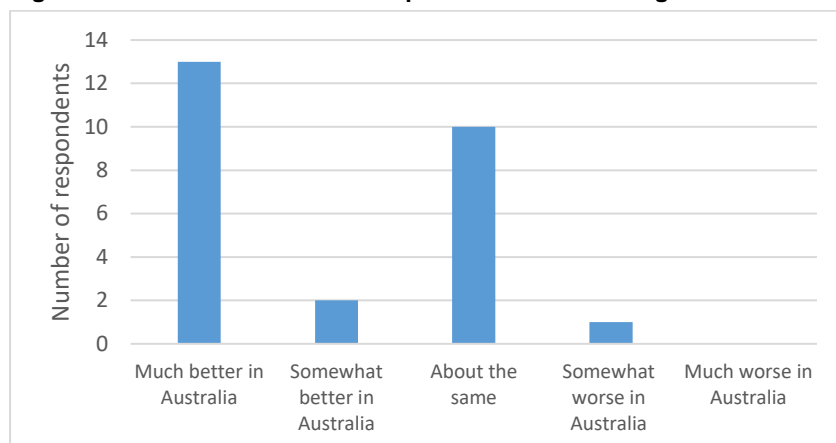
#### Health status

The vast majority of respondents rated their health before coming to Australia as very good or good, and their perceived health status either improved in Australia or remained unchanged (see Figures 3.8 and 3.9). Only one female worker said that her health in Australia was worse than before as a result of a shoulder injury she incurred due to heavy lifting at work.

**Figure 3.8: Health before coming to Australia**



**Figure 3.9: Health in Australia compared to before leaving PNG**



Fifteen respondents did not encounter any health problems in Australia, while 11 encountered some problems, including skin rashes, an eye accident, shoulder, ankle, knee and back injuries or pain. All health problems were the result of injuries at work or the adverse impact of work conditions such as chemicals causing skin irritations and ongoing strenuous lifting causing shoulder injuries.

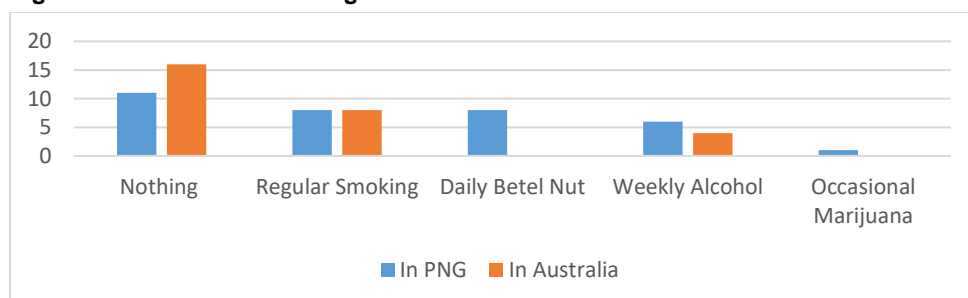
Nine respondents visited a health care facility in Australia and three were hospitalised. Nine respondents took between one and 14 sick leave days. The average number of sick days of all workers was two. According to the respondents, they were not paid for sick days<sup>18</sup>. One worker who injured himself at work and was given one-week sick leave, said that he still went to work during this week and did light pruning jobs in order to get at least some income.

Two women injured their shoulders, one by lifting heavy items, the other one during tree cutting. The woman who injured a muscle in her shoulder during tree cutting was taken to the doctor by her employer, who talked with the doctor on her behalf (without her), so she was unable to understand her injury. This injury happened shortly before leaving Australia, with the respondent only realising on the way to the airport that she didn't receive any pay for the three days of sick leave.

### Recreational use of substances

Eleven respondents said that in PNG they did not normally either consume cigarettes on a regular basis, betel nuts on a daily basis, alcohol on a weekly basis, or any other substances. This number increased to 16 in Australia. The eight smokers continued to smoke in Australia while no respondent chewed betel nut in Australia and none consumed other substances (see Figure 3.10). The number of alcohol consumers dropped from six to four. There was a strict zero tolerance policy on alcohol, which one respondent commented on by saying, "it feels like prison. We cannot even have a drink in our time off work. All the Australians always drink."

**Figure 3.10: Recreational usage of substances**

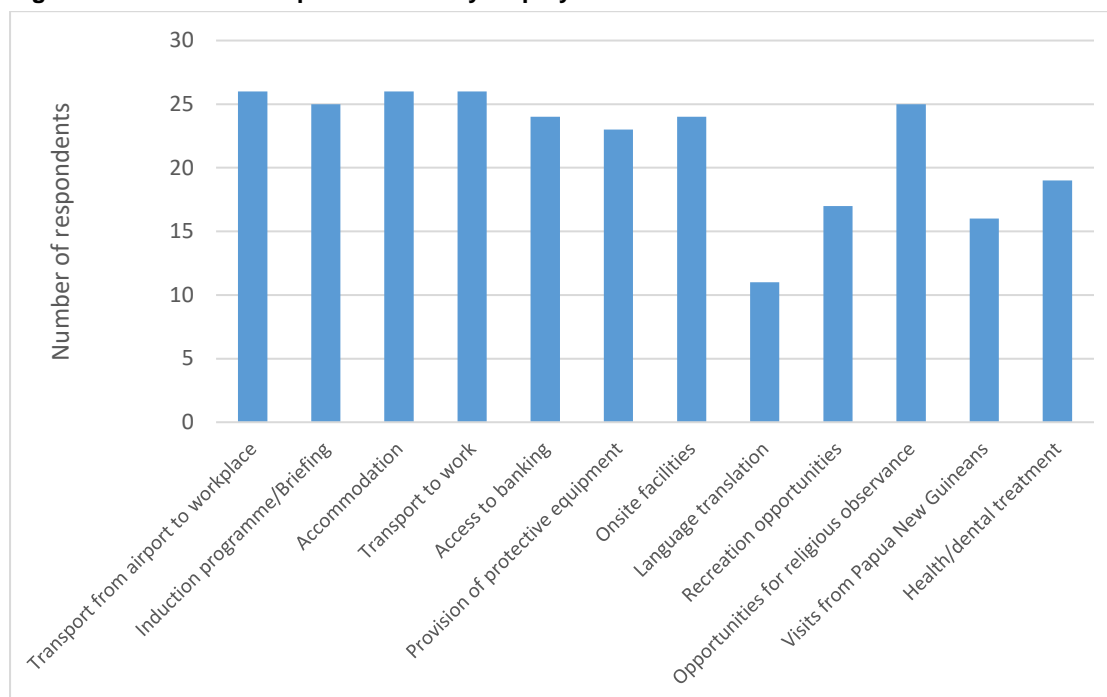


<sup>18</sup> Workers employed on a casual basis are not entitled to payment for sick days.

## Pastoral care

Asked about the provision of pastoral care, all participants were provided transport from the airport to the workplace, accommodation and daily transport to work by their employers (see Figure 3.11). Most also said they received assistance with opening bank accounts, onsite facilities (water, toilets etc.) and opportunities for religious observance (by having one day per week off). Fewer participants said they were provided with language translations, where necessary, or recreation opportunities.

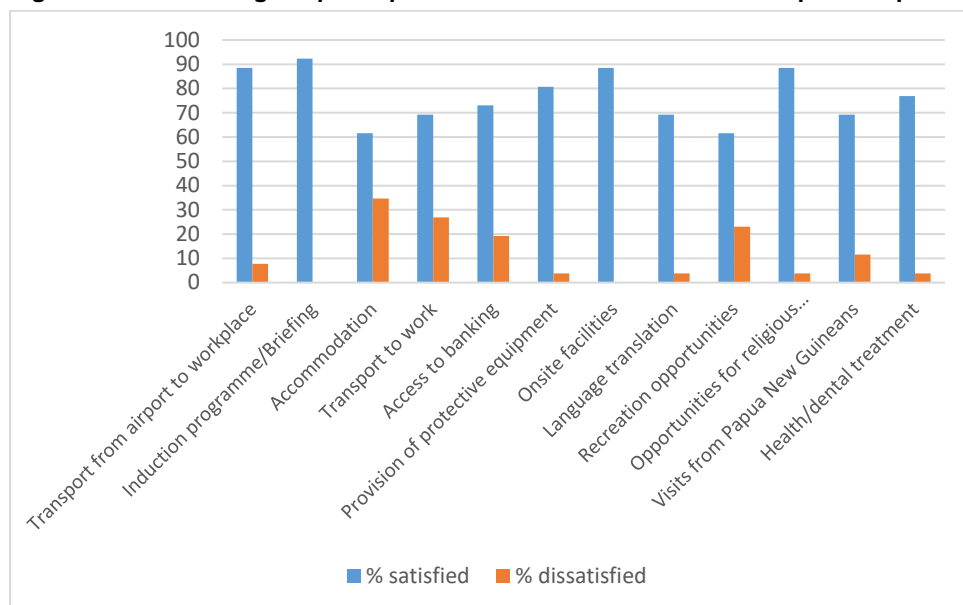
**Figure 3.11: Provision of pastoral care by employer**



Participants could rank their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the different aspects of pastoral care provided by the employer. The detailed responses are shown in Annex Figure 9. Figure 3.12 shows the percentage of participants who were either satisfied or dissatisfied by the various aspects of pastoral care, by combining the answer categories “very satisfied”, “satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” into “satisfied”, and the categories of “somewhat dissatisfied”, “dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” into “dissatisfied”.<sup>19</sup> Overall, more participants were satisfied than dissatisfied with every single aspect of pastoral care. All respondents were satisfied with the induction programme/briefing and with onsite facilities.

<sup>19</sup> The percentages do not necessarily add up to 100 as some respondents did not answer the questions.

**Figure 3.12: Percentage of participants satisfied / dissatisfied with aspects of pastoral care**



The greatest degree of dissatisfaction was in regards to accommodation, followed by transport to work, and recreational opportunities. In terms of accommodation, the main dissatisfaction concerned the costs, rather than the standard of accommodation. Some respondents were unhappy with their employer arranging their accommodation. They had the perception that they could have found cheaper accommodation, although they did not do so even though they are able to arrange their own accommodation. Some participants were also aware that workers on other farms paid less for their accommodation. In regards to transport to work, several workers at one of the farms were dissatisfied that AUD 25 per week was deducted from their pay for daily transport costs although they walked to work.

### General satisfaction

Respondents were asked to name the three major likes and dislikes about their experience in Australia. These are summarised in Table 3.9 and have been divided into work/income and social factors. For work related issues, participants particularly liked their income and the new skills they acquired but disliked pay deductions. In regards to their social life, they particularly liked the friendliness of people and the cleanliness and disliked their accommodation. More details are provided in Annex Table 6 which shows all likes and dislikes mentioned by at least two respondents.

**Table 3.9: Major likes and dislikes about SWP experience**

Major likes	Number	Major dislikes	Number
<b>Related to work or income</b>		<b>Related to work or income</b>	
Income	11	Deductions from pay	9
New skills	7		
Work place and culture at work	6		
<b>Related to social life</b>		<b>Related to social life</b>	
Friendliness of people	8	Accommodation	9
Cleanliness of place/environment	7		
Experiencing / learning new attitude	5		

Given that in general there were more things about their experience in Australia that participants liked than they disliked, it is not surprising that the majority of returned seasonal workers were either feeling



very happy (17 workers) or mostly happy (nine workers) in Australia. Reasons for their feeling of happiness in Australia are summarised in Box 3.

**Box 3: Reasons for participants' feeling of happiness in Australia**

Owen said that he was happy because, *"I had Christian friends who took me out for dinner, and I also did sightseeing in Victoria"*. Some respondents expressed happiness about being financially rewarded for hard work, including Patrick who felt happy, *"because if you work hard you are rewarded. ... I also like the attitude of people in Australia. They mind their own business and use common sense"*.

Anna, a married woman, was happy because, *"people are friendly and the environment is nice and clean... Unlike PNG, people in Australia mind their own business and everyone is so busy doing something instead of wasting time roaming around. I felt happy there"*.

Other typical answers were, *"I was very happy because of the friendly, clean and quiet environment"*, and *"I was happy because I made good money, ate good food, and lived in a nice friendly environment. There was no violence and I learned many new things."*

Asked to summarise the main challenges they faced in Australia, eight respondents said they didn't face any challenges. Some mentioned the tough physical work on the farm: "Work is very tough and we need to be fit and healthy". Others referred to the pay deductions, the difficulties of communicating with co-workers in English, the cold climate, discrimination at work and health issues. Some of the participants' grievances are briefly summarised in Box 4. More detail is provided in Annex Box 1.

**Box 4: Challenges expressed by participants**

A male fruit picker said: *"It is really a difficult task to do picking outside.... To work in the sun and carry huge loads or bags of fruits for eight hours, six days a week, is really exhausting."*

In picking, there was also some uncertainty about the piece rate: *"Normally we fill at least three bins a day. We were unaware that when we exceed three bins the rate per bin is reduced."*

Mary expressed her discontent with the work conditions: *"The noise [in the packing shed] was terrible but they had run out of earplugs and I didn't receive any.... There was also a strong gas smell. It made me sick and the other workers too."*

Anna, who was hospitalised for three days, recounted: *"The main challenge for me was that I had a shoulder problem and had to be hospitalized for 3 days which affected my pay.... The other challenge was with the supervisor. Sometimes he sent us home early for no reason and this affected the hours that we could work and our pay"*.

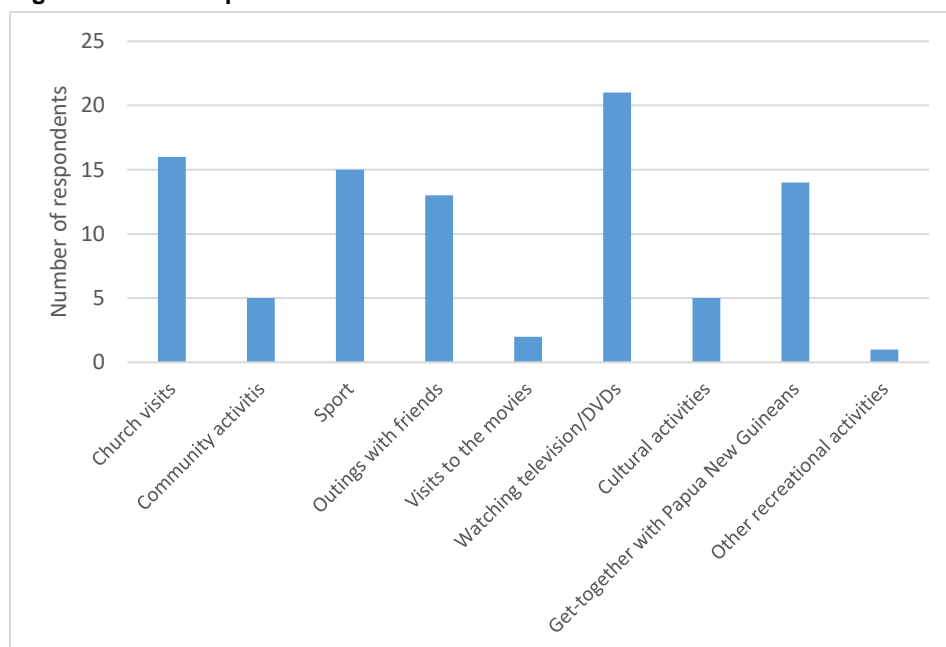
Each group had a team leader who, according to most workers, was chosen on the basis of his experience, English communication skills and performance. One of the tasks of the team leader was that participants raised complaints with him, rather than with their work supervisors. Fourteen respondents raised a complaint with their team leader.

One of the team leaders recounted his challenges as a team leader: "The main challenge for me is the competition at the workplace. There is a lot of competition who picks the most... In previous years, the Tongans used to beat us Papua New Guineans, but this year we were equally fast.... I am the team leader and I always have to cheer them up and encourage them to pick fast. There are no rewards for being a team leader, only verbal appreciation... I want to be replaced as team leader because I hear a lot of complaints about small things. Most complaints are about pay. Especially when we are paid by piece rate, sometimes a bin is not counted. I then have to go to the supervisors or operations managers in my breaks to sort it out."

## Recreational activities

The only day off work for most workers was Sunday, which the majority used to rest, relax, watch television and hang out with friends. They also used this day to do their laundry. Some went to church regularly, while a few went to play or watch sports (see Figure 3.13).

**Figure 3.13: Participation in recreational activities**



During their stay in Australia, 20 respondents visited other places. For seasonal workers at one of the locations, a shopping trip to Bundaberg was organised in their last week in which most Papua New Guineans, Tongans and East Timorese participated. The costs for this trip were deducted from their pay. In addition, most members of this group visited a Papua New Guinean woman, who is married to an Australian and lives in Gayndah. The trips to Bundaberg and Gayndah were the only opportunities for most workers to see other places outside of the farm district. Some respondents were part of a rugby team that visited many places to play matches. They also organised private trips to the Gold Coast and Brisbane.

All participants made new friends during their stay in Australia and this was perceived as one of their positive experiences. Most found new friends among the seasonal workers from Papua New Guinea and other Pacific Islands. Twenty became friends with other co-workers, most of whom were from Europe and Asia.

Asked about relatives in Australia or other countries, twelve respondents had relatives living in Australia including five siblings, four cousins and two aunts. Eight of them met their relatives in Australia during their recent stay and six received some help from their relatives. Four respondents had relatives in other countries which included cousins in Canada, New Zealand and China and an extended family in Niue.

While in Australia, only one worker sought out other job opportunities for himself, two sought out job opportunities for family members, four sought out education opportunities for themselves and two for family members.

Their recent SWP experience generally changed their views of Australia in a positive way. Twenty-two respondents said that they now thought of Australia more positively than before. Some of their comments are summarised in Box 5.

#### **Box 5: Comments about Australia**

*"I thought life is easy and luxurious in Australia. But, now I changed my view. I know that you have to work hard to make money. Australians are hardworking people."*

*"I now think of Australia more positively because it helped me to look after my family."*

*"The town is good. The roads are well maintained and services are good."*

*"Every year development takes place and is evenly distributed."*

*'Australians are different from Papua New Guineans... Their attitude and punctuality, honesty and non-violence makes me look at Australia more positively. People over there mind their own business unlike here in PNG. I also admire their honesty.'*

*"Australian laws are tough. The place is neat, everyone is responsible for their rubbish. People there mind their own business."*

*"Australia is a good place to live in. There is no violence."*

*"Compared to Papua New Guineans Australians are hardworking and always looking for opportunities to make money and improve their lives."*

*"Papua New Guineans are stubborn and headstrong. Australians are open and mind their own business. In Australia you have to (be) independent, and it is important to save up in case of emergencies so you can help yourself. Otherwise it is sad but nobody will help you."*

Fifteen respondents said that their views on gender had changed as a result of working in Australia. Two female participants noted that women and men are equal in Australia and women are treated with respect. Male participants also mentioned that Australia has laws to protect women, and that women are independent and can move around freely. Some respondents commented on the fact that they observed Australian families going out together as a family, which they had never seen in PNG.

All female participants and most male participants thought that seasonal work was equally suited for men and women. Only two men thought it was more suitable for men arguing that it was too tough and physical for women.

Suggested reasons for the low participation of women in the SWP included Australian employers selecting men over women (eight male and one female respondent), the tough physical nature of the work (four male and one female respondent), the selection process in PNG disadvantaging women (one female respondent), women not being aware of the SWP (five male respondents), women not wanting to work in the SWP (one male respondent), and women not being permitted by their families (five male respondents).

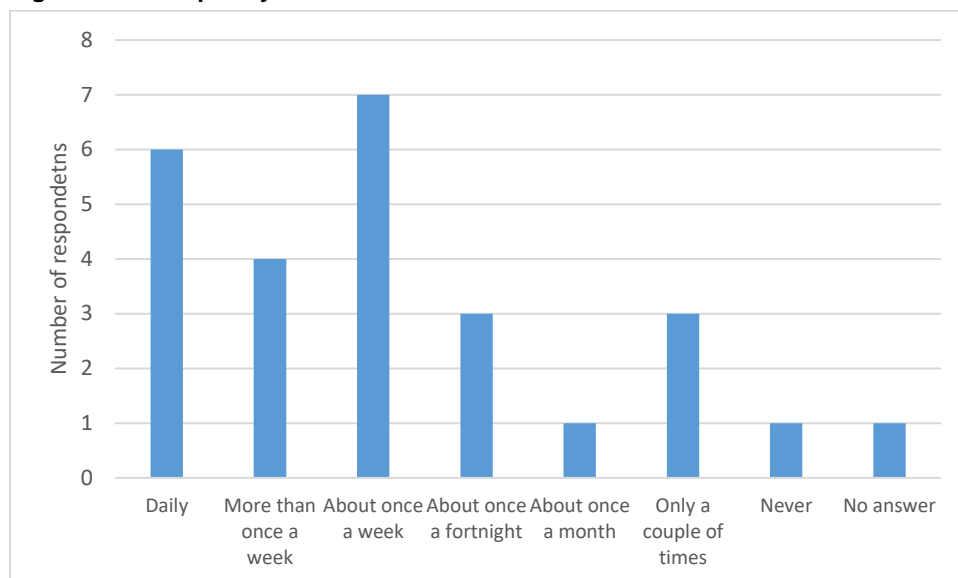
The four female participants found they were treated the same by male workers on the property and they did not experience discrimination on the basis of gender. Two women said that the roles they undertook on the property were different from those of men because they were assigned different roles by the employer. However, two women said that they filled the same roles.

Four participants changed their views on their own tradition and culture, having developed a more critical attitude towards some aspects of it: "I now think that money is not spent well on traditional activities... You work hard and get no personal benefit", and "In PNG, tradition and culture hinders positive changes in personal life styles" were two comments.

### **3.8 Contacts with family in PNG**

The frequency of communicating with their household in PNG varied between daily and never (see Figure 3.14).

**Figure 3.14: Frequency of communication with household in PNG**



All respondents used mobile phones to communicate and had good mobile phone reception on the property. Twenty respondents generally used social media to communicate but only five used it to communicate with their families.

Asked about how their contribution to the household was replaced during their absence, most seasonal workers explained that someone in PNG, often the spouse, took over the contribution and chores. Samuel, who is married with two children and has 11 dependents, said: “There were no replacements for me. My wife basically takes overall control. The family is waiting for me to come back to continue my usual work on the farm.” Another male respondent with two children and four dependents explained that, “During my absence, my wife and mother sell fresh produce at the market to sustain the family”. In some cases, relatives moved in to help with the household.

In particular, three of the four female participants had to enlist the help of relatives particularly to look after children: “My brother-in-law looks after my son” and “My sister-in-law flew in and stayed at home to help my husband and children” were the answers of two female respondents.

Respondents were asked if there were any negative consequences for their household due to their absence. Only five respondents said that their families experienced some negative consequences. Some of their comments are summarised in Box 6.

**Box 6: Negative consequences for left-behind families**

“Yes. My wife went through child birth while I was away and at the same time had to cater for the family.”

“Yes, there were security problems.”

“Yes. Time management was the biggest problem. My wife was often late for work.”

“Yes. The problem was that my cousins and other family members did not attend to my family’s needs while I was away. Yet, whenever I sent money to my mother and my wife, these same people always fronted up to ask for money. Many times, they used bad words and curses on my wife. I feel sad because I was not there to defend my wife.”

All respondents were supported by their families to participate in the SWP. The families largely saw the financial benefits of it. Several workers pointed out that their families not only supported their decision but also provided practical, financial and emotional support during the application process.

### 3.9 Future plans

Asked about their future intentions regarding the SWP, 20 said they intended to work in the SWP for as many years as possible, three intended to work for more than one year while two didn't know and one didn't answer the question.

For the rest of this year, 12 were planning to continue with the occupation they had had before joining the SWP, seven will look at what their options are, and the others had other plans including starting a business (three), building a house and extending the farm (one), helping his parents (one), and going for a visit to his home province (one).

Nineteen are very likely and two are likely to work under the SWP in Australia again in 2017 while the rest either didn't know or didn't answer the question. Overall, it looked positive for the vast majority of participants in the 2016 season: Twenty-three of the 26 workers had received an indication that they would be engaged again in the next season. Three respondents were very likely to also apply to go to New Zealand as a seasonal worker while the rest were not planning to apply for New Zealand. Australia was the preferred country to be a seasonal worker for 20 respondents, either Australia or New Zealand for four, and the United Kingdom for one. Fifteen would prefer to go to Australia for one season a year and spend the rest of the year in PNG while eight would prefer to permanently move to Australia.

Everyone would recommend the SWP to other family members and only six workers expected some reintegration difficulties when they return home this time. The rest said that the short duration of their absence and the fact that they had spent all their lives in PNG would guarantee them a smooth reintegration. Some also stressed that they had bought gifts for everyone to keep them happy. The expected difficulties of the others included unrealistic expectations from the family, tribal fights, and difficulties starting a business.

Eight said they were planning to participate in a reintegration programme although there does not seem to be any reintegration programme in place. Asked which assistance they would find useful to help their reintegration, the most common answers were courses in business skills, access to loans to start a business, and training in agricultural skills including how to apply the skills learnt in Australia in the PNG context. Mary, who was a first-timer this year, simply said, "I would like to have the opportunity to talk to officials from DLIR about my experience."

Experienced workers compared their return experiences from earlier years to that of recent years. They remembered that in 2011 and 2012 they filled an evaluation form for DLIR. In subsequent years, there was no contact with DLIR upon their return, not even "a meet and greet at the airport".

One of the pioneers who has already participated for six seasons did not wait for DLIR assistance. He invested the earnings from Australia. It took him three seasons to save enough money to build a three-bedroom house. Over the subsequent two seasons he built a store next to his house where he employs a relative to work. He has now started saving money to buy a minibus and expects to have saved enough money in 2017 or 2018.

### 3.10 Summary of impacts of SWP participation

Based on the analysis presented above, the main economic and social impacts of SWP participation can be summarised as follows:

#### **Economic impacts**

The average income, savings, remittances and expenses can be summarised as follows.

**Table 3.10: Summary of income, expenses and savings**

<b>Gross earnings</b>	AUD 22,500
Total deductions	AUD 8,150
<b>Net earnings</b>	AUD 14,350
Private expenses	AUD 2,250
Remittances	AUD 3,350
Income taken back to PNG	AUD 5,400
Purchase of durable goods	AUD 1,940
Sum unaccounted for:	AUD 1,435

According to this estimate, the total amount either remitted or taken back to PNG upon their return was AUD 8,750, equivalent to almost PGK 20,000. This has to be contrasted to an average weekly income of PGK 360 or PGK 9,000 for 25 weeks if they had not participated in the SWP and worked in PNG. Hence, the additional average income amounts to PGK 11,000 per worker.

It is surprising that the household incomes of seasonal workers who have participated in the SWP for several seasons are not higher than those of first-time participants and that few other changes in their household's economic position have been observed. No relationship was found between household income in PNG and the number of seasons that respondents had previously been to Australia. This points to the fact that few remittances and savings were invested productively. As such, household incomes increase during the worker's participation in the SWP but there is no indication that the remittances and savings have had a positive impact on income generated in PNG. The household income prior to departing for Australia was not affected by the number of previous seasons worked in Australia.

Most remittances are spent on consumer items and other necessities such as education and health-related expenses. This is not surprising given the large household size and the fact that most households were likely to have less PNG-based income during the absence of the seasonal worker. Compared to spending on necessities, few remittances are spent on productive investments. Of the 26 participants surveyed this year, eight said that their remittances had been spent on livestock, farming or fishing inputs, while three families had used remittances to start a business and four had invested some money in a business.

No relationship was found between the number of seasons that workers had been to Australia and ownership of durable goods of their household in PNG. This suggests that households without SWP participants were as likely to own durable goods as households with SWP participants.

The potentially positive individual economic impact of SWP participation for the household is lessened due to family demands and the wantok system through which resources are distributed across a much larger number of people, although the overall benefit remains the same.

Experienced seasonal workers reported that they worked more hours and earned more this season compared to the previous season. However, they also incurred greater pre-departure costs, especially if they were from outside NCD or Central Province. This has lessened their earnings advantage compared to first-time participants.

Overall, among the 26 participants, only three were planning to start a business in the year after their return and one planned to extend the farm. Most others were either planning to continue doing what they had done before they had left for Australia or were looking at their options. Few have the skills to start a viable business.

In regards to skills development, all participants had acquired new skills in Australia, which included work-related skills and general skills. However, not all participants thought they would be able to apply

their newly acquired skills in PNG. Most respondents valued the work-related hard skills more highly than the more general skills such as First Aid and English language skills. Participants from rural farming communities have a higher chance to use their new skills at their work in PNG, while participants from town areas and non-farming communities are less likely to use their skills.

### **Social impacts**

The main social impacts of participation in the SWP that are likely to have a positive effect on communities in PNG include the changed attitudes of returnees around values such as punctuality, cleanliness, and gender equality. Some participants have become more critical of some aspects of their culture and tradition and started seeing these as hindrances to personal development and economic progress.

Many participants improved their knowledge of a healthy lifestyle and healthy nutrition. At the same time, half of the participants suffered workplace injuries with sometimes long lasting consequences. Therefore, the overall impact of participation on the health of seasonal workers is not clear.

Most households seemed to function well during the absence of the seasonal worker, although some struggled due to the additional chores and additional demands from relatives. None of the respondents mentioned an adverse impact on the family life or their relationship, although there might be adverse longer term impacts that are not yet obvious.

## **4. Findings: The process of the tracer study**

The survey was prepared and managed by a senior researcher who was responsible for developing the questionnaire, training research assistants in conducting the interviews and entering the data, analysing the data, and writing this report.

The senior researcher worked closely with the group of Papua New Guineans research assistants who had an input into all stages of the research. Given their familiarity with the situation in PNG, their comments on an earlier questionnaire were taken into account, as was their input into interpreting some of the responses from the survey. They also provided valuable comments on the research process. Having a group of Papua New Guinean research assistants was absolutely critical for the success of the survey, not only because they were able to translate some questions into Pidgin but also because participants were comfortable sharing their experiences with them, due to a shared language and similar culture.

The tracer study questionnaire was comprehensive and the interviews took up to two hours. The long duration of the interviews made it possible for the interviewers to connect and build a rapport with the seasonal workers. Some workers were initially shy and reluctant to answer some questions. In the course of the interviews, the vast majority increasingly opened up. The atmosphere during most interviews was comfortable and amiable. The research assistants later commented that they were able to “understand the whole persons”.

During or after the interviews, many participants expressed their appreciation of having participated in the study. For many it was particularly important that they were given a chance to talk about their various experiences in Australia which were still very fresh in their minds. In the absence of a debriefing session with DLIR, participation in the survey also provided an opportunity to voice some grievances and make suggestions for improvements of the SWP. Many seasonal workers therefore felt a sense of satisfaction of having the opportunity to participate in the tracer study.

While the length of the interview had several positive effects, it is suggested that in the future, questions about issues that affect an entire group of workers that worked for the same employer be discussed either with the team leader of the group as a key informant or in a focus group discussion with the entire

group. It would be advantageous to share results with the Australian SWP team in advance of this. These should precede the individual interviews (see also Chapter 5.2 below).

A revised questionnaire is attached in Annex 2. It includes the proposed changes and a justification for these changes.

Overall, administrative and logistical support from DLIR was required in arranging the interviews and ensuring that the returnees were available for the interviews. Since the first group of returnees was not met at the airport by DLIR officials, only two of the ten workers agreed to return to the Department the following day to be interviewed. In order for the entire group to be interviewed, Department officials need to meet the returnees at the airport and provide transport either to a hotel or to the Department. The preferred option is for the workers to be transported to a hotel where they can rest and be interviewed the following day. Accommodation costs need to be paid for the workers. The third group of workers this year was taken directly from the airport to the Department where they were interviewed. The situation was not ideal because three of the four workers appeared to be under the influence of alcohol which they probably consumed during the flight. They appeared quite impatient during the interviews as they were waiting to get home after their lengthy absence. Alternative options need further thought.

Given that participation in the survey delays the workers' reunification with their families, it is appropriate that they receive some reward for their participation. In this case, only the second group of workers received a reward in the form of a lunch as well as accommodation for those from outside of Port Moresby. This also served as an incentive for the workers to return to be interviewed.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

### 5.1 Recommendations for future LMAP tracer studies

The in-depth interviews provided detailed information about the experiences and the social and economic impact of the SWP on the returned workers. Within the overall research strategy, this is the first step and the basis on which follow-up studies will be conducted. Depending on the findings from this survey and issues raised in the interviews, the next steps could consist of focus group discussions with the same respondents, follow-up interviews after six months or one year to investigate their re-adjustment into their family, social and economic lives in PNG, or interviews with family or community members. Based on the discussion in Chapter 4, the following recommendations are made:

<b>Overall research organisation</b>
The organisation of the tracer study with a senior researcher taking overall responsibility of the research process, cadets and project officers from the National Research Institute conducting the interviews and entering the data, and LMAP and DLIR providing logistical support in organising the actual interview sessions was successful, and should be replicated in future studies.
<b><i>Recommendation #1: Replication of overall research method in future tracer studies</i></b>
<b>Follow-up interviews</b>
Twenty-five of the 26 survey participants agreed to be contacted for a follow-up interview and provided their contact details. This presents the first ever opportunity to follow up with returned seasonal workers in PNG during their stay in PNG and before some of them will leave again for the next season in Australia. These follow-up interviews could be organised over the phone, where possible, and cover a limited number of issues including any reintegration difficulties, their present economic activities, the progress of their investment plans (if any), changes in the personal and family situation, and changes to their future plans in regards to the SWP (if any). They should be conducted in early 2017 before some of them prepare for the next season in Australia.



<b><i>Recommendation #2: Follow-up interviews with participants in early 2017</i></b>
<b>Interviews with families of selected participants</b>
<p>Given that the economic and social impacts of participation in the SWP are not limited to the participants but affect their families and households, it is recommended that family members of selected participants are interviewed. This could be limited to close family members (such as a spouse, child or parent) of selected seasonal workers to find out about the social impact of the workers prolonged absence on the family and household, the economic impact of receiving remittances and /or any investments that were made, and any issues that occurred after the seasonal worker's return. Since the family members have not previously participated in the research, it is recommended that face-to-face interviews are conducted with willing family members in NCD and Central Province.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation #3: Face-to-face interviews with family members in NCD and Central Province</i></b></p>
<b>Pre-departure interviews and tracer study in 2017</b>
<p>It is recommended that workers selected to participate in the SWP in 2017 be interviewed briefly before their departure to Australia. Logistics of arranging these interviews will have to be coordinated with DLIR. If a pre-departure briefing is organised by DLIR, this could be an opportune time to conduct the pre-departure interviews. These interviews could cover their demographic and economic background, their pre-departure preparation and costs (these sections could be cut from the tracer survey), and expectations about their upcoming participation.</p> <p>Upon return, questions applicable to all workers (such as on the place of employment, work conditions, and accommodation) will be covered either in key informant interviews with their team leader or in a focus group discussion with all workers. The individual tracer study interviews will focus on the individual's experiences based on the revised questionnaire in Annex 2.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation #4: Short pre-departure interviews of participants in 2017</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Recommendation #5: Individual interviews with returnees as well as either key informant interviews or focus group discussion with returnees</i></b></p>

## 5.2 Recommendations for PNG LMAP activities

Based on the findings presented in Chapter 3 and the main economic and social impacts summarised in Chapter 3.10, activity areas and recommendations for PNG LMAP activities are identified. Proposed activities based in Australia are also included in the recommendations for SWP activities below.

<b>Activity area 1: Increase number of SWP participants from PNG</b>
<p>The number of participants in the SWP from PNG is low, despite a work-ready pool of some 1,500 individuals. This tracer study found that Papua New Guinean workers were working hard and were extremely keen to work as many hours a possible, while also being interested in learning new workplace skills. There is therefore potential to substantially increase the number of committed and hard-working participants from PNG. It is recommended that LMAP supports DLIR in developing a strategy to promote workers from PNG to Australian employers, and increasing the confidence of Australian Employers that DLIR will deliver.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation #1: Support DLIR to promote workers from PNG to employers in Australia</i></b></p>
<b>Activity area 2: Selection process in PNG</b>
<p>Most participants found out about the SWP through relatives, friends and neighbours who in turn had some connections in DLIR. The SWP had initially been promoted through the media in PNG but there</p>

has been no promotion through the media over the last few years. The public in PNG is generally not aware of existing opportunities under the SWP. It is recommended that LMAP identifies ways to best assist DLIR to make information on the SWP publicly and widely available. This will broaden the programme beyond those with personal connections within DLIR.

***Recommendation #2: Support DLIR to improve publicly available information in PNG***

The information on applicants in the work-ready pool is not up-to-date and the database is not electronically available. It is therefore almost impossible for DLIR officials to identify the most suitable candidate for a particular position. Instead they often draw on personal connections. After submitting their application with DLIR, applicants generally have to follow up with DLIR about the progress of their application. In order to be short-listed and recommended to an Australian employer, it is helpful to have connections within the Department. There were also accounts of applicants providing betel nuts and cigarettes to DLIR officials in order to progress their application.

It is recommended that LMAP provide assistance to DLIR to establish an electronic database of work-ready applicants that can be updated regularly and to introduce transparent processes through which the most suitable applicants from the database are selected for the SWP.

***Recommendation #3: Support DLIR to establish electronic database and introduce transparent selection process***

**Spread benefits of SWP participation**

The benefits arising from participation in the SWP for participants and their families have so far been disproportionately experienced in NCD and Central Province. Participants from all other provinces are disadvantaged because most would have to fly to Port Moresby for the pre-departure arrangements, adding considerable costs. At present, DLIR appears to reimburse the costs of domestic flights to first-time participants while they have to find their own accommodation in Port Moresby. Experienced workers have to pay for the domestic flights themselves. The arrangement for first-timers adds costs for DLIR and possibly leads to a preference for applicants from NCD or Central Province. For experienced workers, the costs of travel to Port Moresby are a main component of pre-departure costs. All participants from outside of Port Moresby complained about having to find and pay for their own accommodation in Port Moresby. This is seen as a major negative factor, as many feel unsafe and spend considerable sums of money even when staying with relatives.

It is recommended that LMAP encourages DLIR to find ways to minimise the disadvantage for participants from outside NCD and Central Province. This should include the identification of funding sources for domestic flights as well as DLIR arranging accommodation for workers in Port Moresby.

It is desirable to make the geographical spread of SWP participation within PNG more equitable. It would be premature at this point in time to introduce a quota for each province because it is likely that there are few suitable applicants from some provinces in the work-ready pool. It should be a long-term aim to introduce such a quota. As an immediate measure, it is therefore recommended that LMAP encourages DLIR to limit the number of first-time participants from NCD to a certain percentage (e.g. 10%).

It is recommended that LMAP assists DLIR to develop a strategy to involve the Provincial Labour Offices into the promotion of the SWP in the provinces, and taking up a liaising role between applicants from the province and DLIR in Port Moresby such as following up on the progress of applications, instead of the workers having to travel to Port Moresby.

***Recommendation #4: Encourage DLIR to minimise disadvantages for participants from outside of NCD and Central Province***

***Recommendation #5: Encourage DLIR to introduce a maximum quota for first time participants from NCD with a longer term aim to introduce quotas for each province or region of PNG***

***Recommendation #6: Encourage DLIR to develop strategy to involve Provincial Labour Offices in the selection and recruitment of applicants***

Currently, the number of seasons that a worker can participate in the SWP is unlimited. Among the 26 respondents, two had been part of the pioneering groups of 2011 and had participated in the SWP six times, while three had participated four and five times each. While there are obvious advantages of repeated participation for both the employer and the worker, it restricts opportunities for newcomers.

Some respondents mentioned that they were unwilling to promote the SWP to their friends, fearing that increased competition might make them lose their place. Currently no financial support or reintegration assistance is provided to returnees and most workers return to Australia for as many seasons as possible in order to maximise their personal economic benefits from the SWP. This reluctance of experienced workers to voluntarily leave the scheme, limits opportunities for newcomers.

It is therefore suggested that LMAP funds a research study on how to provide a genuine long-term alternative for returnees such as in the form of providing financial assistance and training courses to set up their own business that will provide them with a sustainable livelihood in PNG. If such a scheme was in place, the number of seasons that a worker can participate in the SWP should be limited in order to create opportunities for others.

***Recommendation #7: Conduct study on creating sustainable livelihoods for SWP participants within PNG***

#### **Pre-departure training**

Limited funds are available to DLIR to run pre-departure training for SWP participants. This is one of the main reasons for the deterioration of the quality of training over recent years and for the shortening of the training. As a result, workers today arrive in Australia less prepared than in the past, including in the areas of understanding wage deductions, tax and superannuation. The physical training component has been cut. It is recommended that LMAP develops a balanced, high quality pre-departure training programme and, if possible, provides funds to DLIR for the training. Participation in the pre-departure training should again become compulsory for all workers. Participants from other provinces have to be provided with accommodation in Port Moresby for the duration of the training.

Given a high rate of workplace injuries and unhealthy working conditions reported by the participants, training in occupational health and safety should become a component of every pre-departure training.

***Recommendation #8: Support DLIR to improve quality of pre-departure training and introduce a component on occupational health and safety***

***Recommendation #9: Support DLIR to enforce compulsory pre-departure training which requires the provision of accommodation in Port Moresby for participants from other provinces***

#### **Working conditions/ pay and pay deductions**

Whilst most respondents stated they understood their initial letters of offer, few were able to articulate the information, particularly around entitlements and worker obligations, that it contained. Given that

many respondents had limited English language ability, translation of offer letters may support better comprehension of the content therein.

Several participants mentioned unhealthy working conditions and unfair practices at work. Most of their grievances were about not being paid enough, pay irregularities, unfair pay deductions and sick leave entitlements. DLIR currently does not maintain contact with the workers while they are in Australia and does not provide support to them, which suggests that some form of contact and liaison whilst in Australia can better support workers.

Regular site visits are necessary to ensure that seasonal workers in Australia understand their rights including pay modalities and pay deductions. Working conditions should also be checked. While workplace inspections are conducted by government officials in Australia, occasional visits by DLIR officials at work places would be welcomed by workers and would present them with an opportunity to voice their grievances without fear of retribution. It is recommended the LMAP develops a strategy for DLIR to put in place a system of regular visits to workplaces including identifying funding sources for these visits.

***Recommendation #10: Support DLIR to have offer letters translated***

***Recommendation #11: Support DLIR to develop and introduce system of support for workers while in Australia***

#### **Training and skills development**

Only 10 respondents said that their employer encouraged and assisted them to access training while 16 did not receive any encouragement or assistance. Participants were mostly interested in skills development in hard work skills. Training in operating machines such as forklifts were considered the most useful training, followed by courses in business skills. These are very different courses compared to the general skills courses offered under the Add On Skills Training.

It is recommended that LMAP communicates the training requests of SWP participants to employers in Australia and identifies ways how such training courses could be delivered to larger numbers of workers.

It is also possible that the selection of participants be based on criteria, such as the likelihood of being able to apply skills learnt in Australia in their home village. This means that applicants for training in farming techniques from farming areas would be prioritised over city dwellers and coastal people.

***Recommendation #12: Develop a strategy to increase opportunities for training and work skills development in areas demanded by participants***

#### **Pastoral care**

Employers have generally satisfied their pastoral care duties in most aspects. However, there seems to have been a lack of language translations such as on machines or other equipment operated by seasonal workers. There were also complaints about the lack of recreational opportunities including visits by other Papua New Guineans.

It is recommended that LMAP communicates these pastoral care requests of SWP participants to employers in Australia and identifies ways for how these requests could be satisfied.

***Recommendation #13: Identify ways to satisfy pastoral care requests of workers***

#### **Savings, remittances and investment**

This tracer study found that women were better savers than men and married men were better savers and remitters than unmarried men. By selecting more women and married men to participate in the

SWP, the amount of savings and remittances can be increased. While selecting more women and married men into the SWP would have the positive impact of increasing savings and remittances, there are potential adverse effects. The absence of married men is likely to have a greater negative social impact on the family left behind than that of unmarried men. Women are generally less likely to join or be selected under the SWP for a range of reasons.

It is recommended that LMAP conducts a study on the impacts of promoting the employment of married men and women under the SWP and to develop associated recommendations.

***Recommendation #14: Conduct study on impacts of promoting the employment of married men and women over unmarried men in the SWP***

At present, many participants are overwhelmed by the demands from relatives for money and support and this is one reason for the relatively little productive investment that savings and remittances are spent on. It is possible that if workers were given incentives, they would use a greater proportion of their savings for investments into existing farms or businesses or to open new businesses. It is recommended that LMAP produces a study detailing different options based on evidence from other countries. Options could include a Government contribution to each investment made from SWP savings.

***Recommendation #15: Conduct study detailing different strategies to divert more remittances and savings into productive investments in PNG***

#### **Reintegration**

There is currently no reintegration assistance for workers returning to PNG. It is recommended that LMAP develops a strategy to introduce a reintegration programme that would include the following:

- Assistance to access loans and open small businesses upon return by providing training in business skills and by establishing a micro credit scheme for seasonal workers. APTC could be tasked to develop specific training programmes for returnees including on business skills;
- Providing training for returned seasonal workers such as under the APTC that will increase their general employability. APTC could offer short certificate courses that give SWP workers the opportunity to formalise the skills learnt at the workplace in Australia, such as operating a forklift, a tractor or other heavy equipment;
- Providing training in agricultural skills addressing the question of how skills acquired in Australia can be transferred to PNG. This could be done by Department of Agriculture.

***Recommendation #16: Develop strategy to provide reintegration assistance***

### **5.3 Recommendations for PNG SWP activities**

Several activity areas included in the section above on recommendations for LMAP activities can be addressed by SWP activities.

#### **Working conditions/ pay and pay deductions**

In regards to workers' grievances on working conditions and pay, SWP workers should have an opportunity to raise any concerns or complaints confidentially.

***Recommendation #1: Introduce transparent complaint procedures***

#### **Training and skills development**

With training demands focussed on areas that are currently not included in the Add On Skills Training, opportunities for training should be broadened for workers in Australia. Specifically, they should include courses providing workplace and business skills, rather than general skills.

***Recommendation #2: Increase opportunities for training and work skills development***

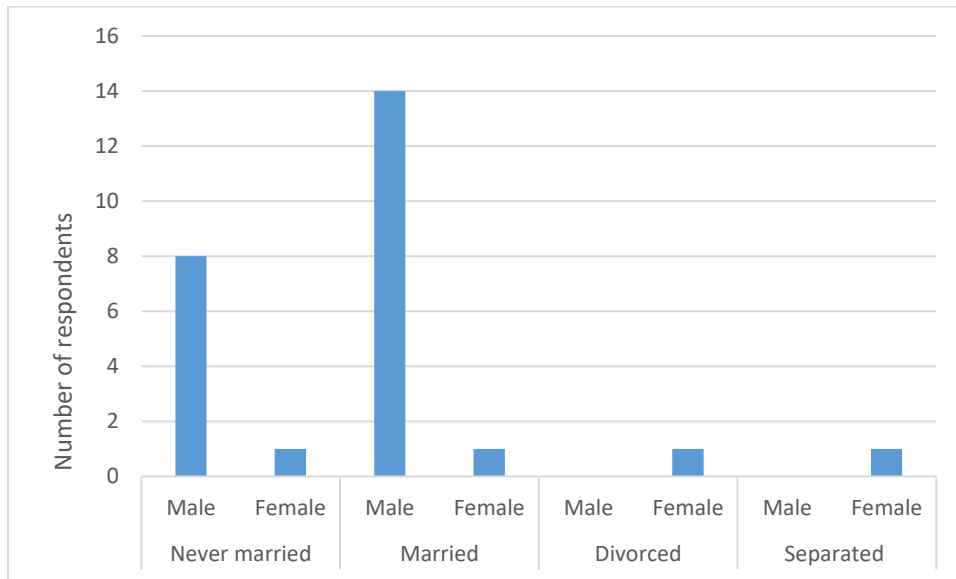
#### **Pastoral care**

Pastoral care by employers should be broadened to address those areas, identified by the SWP workers, that are not covered well. Currently, areas for improvement include language translations especially on operating instructions, and the provision of recreational opportunities.

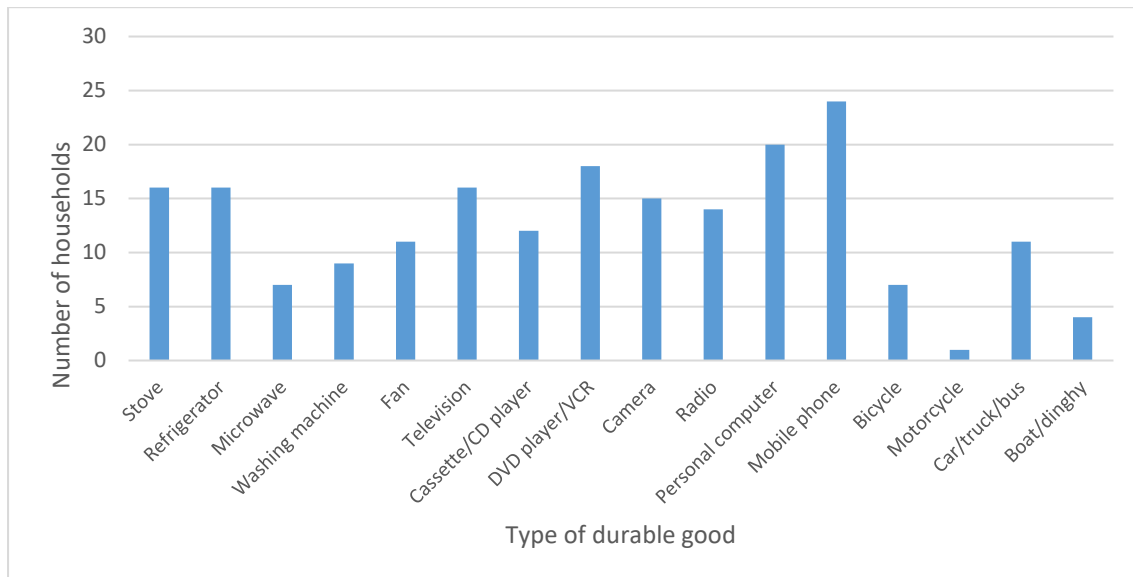
***Recommendation #3: Encourage employers to broaden pastoral care activities, taking into account workers' suggestions***

## Annex 1: Additional Detailed Figures and Tables

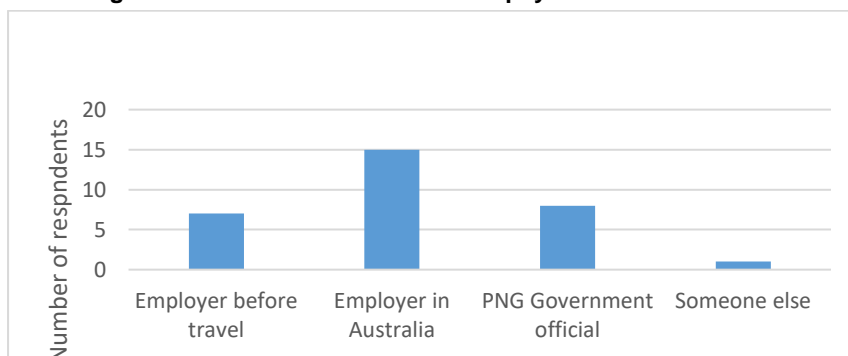
**Annex Figure 1: Marital status by gender of survey participants**



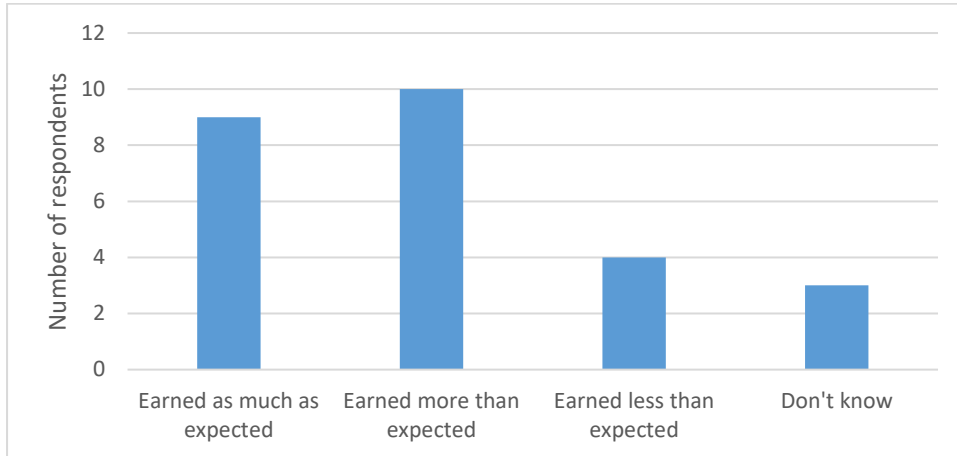
**Annex Figure 2: Number of households owning durable goods**



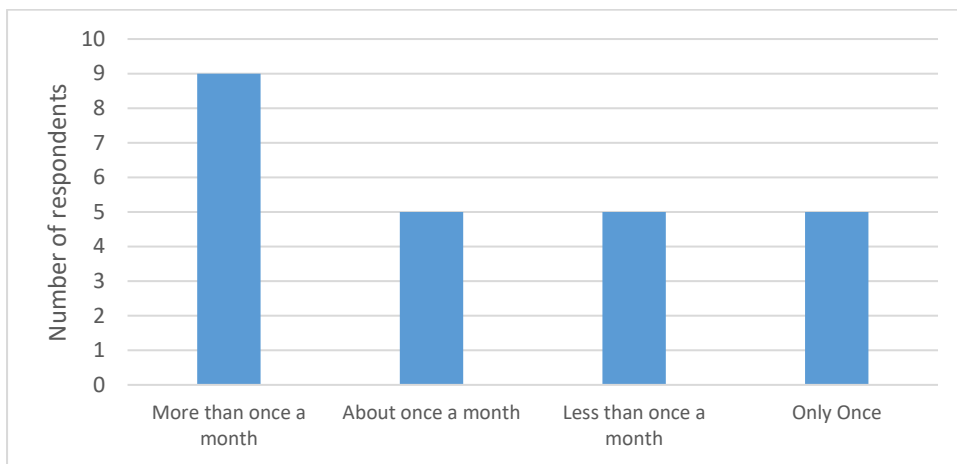
**Annex Figure 3: Information sources about pay deductions**



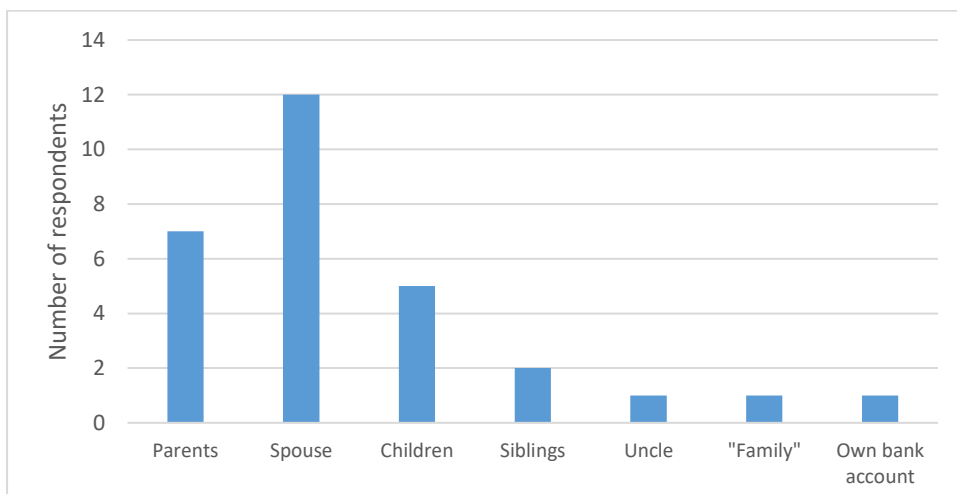
**Annex Figure 4: Earnings in Australia compared to what respondents had expected**



**Annex Figure 5: Frequency of sending remittances from Australia**

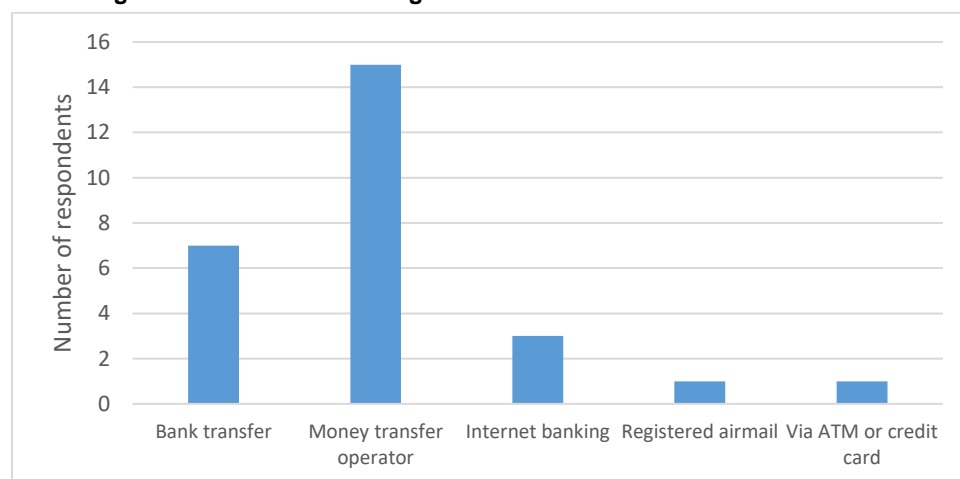


**Annex Figure 6: Remittance recipients**

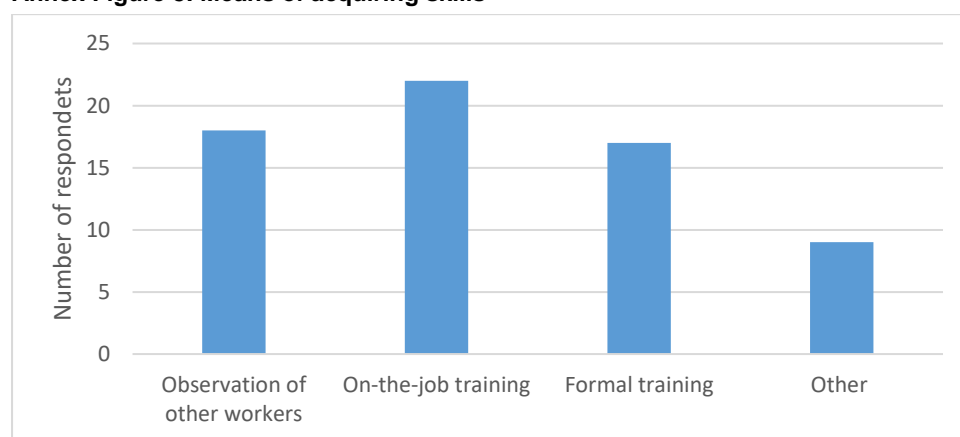




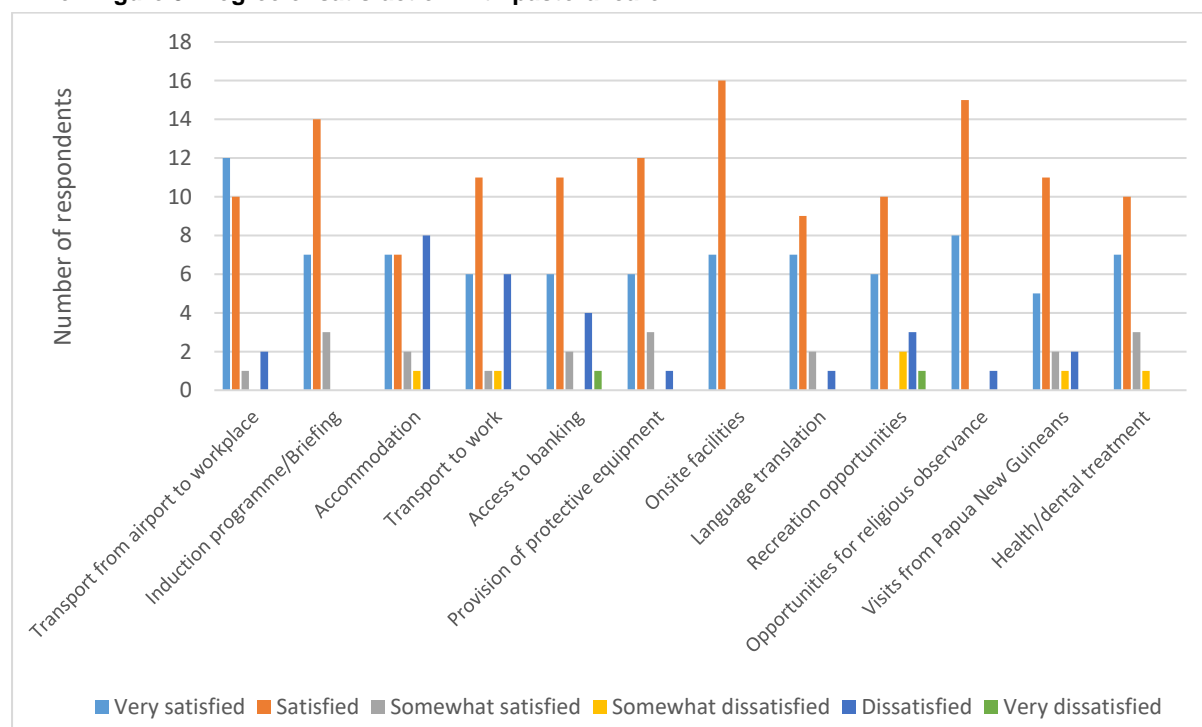
**Annex Figure 7: Channel of sending remittances**



**Annex Figure 8: Means of acquiring skills**



**Annex Figure 9: Degree of satisfaction with pastoral care**



**Annex Table 1: Household size, dependents and children of participants**

	Minimum	Maximum	Average (Mean)
Number of persons in household	1	15	7.8
Number of children in PNG	0	6	2.1
Number of dependents	0	15	6

**Annex Table 2: Main source of light in household**

	Number	Percentage
Candle/Battery Flashlights	1	4
Electricity from grid	18	69
Privately generated electricity / Solar	6	23
Kerosene/Spirit lamp	1	4

**Annex Table 3: Summary of pre-departure costs and payment source according to participants**

Expense item	Source of payment						Total
	Worker paid upfront	Workers paid later, deducted from pay	Employer paid	PNG Government paid	Expense not incurred	Don't know	
Passport	26	-	-	-	-	-	26
Australian visa	2	21	2	-	1	-	26
Police clearance	25	-	-	1	-	-	26
Medical clearance	23	-	2	-	1	-	26
Transport to POM	19		1	1	5	-	26
Accommodation in POM	15					-	26
Airfare to Australia	1	22	2			1	26
Pre-departure briefing	5	-	1	7	10	3	26

**Annex Table 4: Pre-departure costs, paid by seasonal worker**

	Cost	Validity
Passport	PGK 100 to 200	5 years
Visa for Australia	PGK 300 to 500	1 season
Police clearance	PGK 10	2 years
Medical clearance	PGK 910 to 970	2 years
Transport to POM	Variable	-
Accommodation, food and transport in POM	Variable	-
Return airfares to Australia	45% of airfare, approx. PGK 500	-

**Annex Table 5: Source of money for pre-departure expenses**

Money source	Number	Percentage
Own savings	23	88
Immediate family	16	62
Extended family	1	4
Church	0	0
Community	0	0
Bank loan	1	4
Informal money lender	0	0

**Annex Table 6: Major likes and dislikes about SWP experience**

Major likes	Number	Major dislikes	Number
<b>Related to work or income</b>		<b>Related to work or income</b>	
Income	11	Deductions from pay	9
New skills	7	Discrimination at workplace	4
Work place and culture at work	6	Taxation / denial of tax refund	4
Strong AUD	4	Pay/pay rate	3
Affordable prices	3	Working conditions	3
Living standard	3	Supervisor/boss	3
Superannuation	2		
Learning to save and budget	2		
<b>Related to social life</b>		<b>Related to social life</b>	
Friendliness of people	8	Accommodation	9
Cleanliness of place/environment	7	Weather	3
Experiencing / learning new attitude	5		
New friends	4		
New experience	3		
Own freedom and independence	2		

### **Annex Box 1: Challenges as expressed by participants**

A male fruit picker said: *"It is really a difficult task to do picking outside. In picking, we are paid according to the number of bins we fill. To walk in the sun and carry huge loads or bags of fruits for eight hours, six days a week, is really exhausting. It drains out energy and causes severe back aches. Picking is very tough."*

In picking, there was also some uncertainty about the piece rate. Edward told about a particular event: *"Normally we fill at least three bins a day. We were unaware that when we exceed three bins the rate per bin is reduced. There was an instance where some Papua New Guineans and backpackers realised this and began to fill a maximum of three bins. This was questioned by the farm manager who knew that we would usually fill more than three bins a day and were now only filling three. The farm manager questioned a Tongan worker who told him about the reduced rates for bins exceeding three. The Tongan was fired immediately by the farm manager."*

Mary expressed her discontent with the work conditions. She was given gloves and protective equipment but no earplugs: *"The noise [in the packing shed] was terrible but they had run out of earplugs and I didn't receive any.... There was also a strong gas smell. It made me sick and the other workers too. I complained about it".* Anna, who was hospitalised for three days recounted: *"The main challenge for me was that I had a shoulder problem and had to be hospitalized for 3 days which affected my pay.... The other challenge was with the supervisor. Sometimes he sent us home early for no reason and this affected the hours that we could work and our pay".*

## **Annex 2: Questionnaire with suggested changes**