

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

REGIONAL MEETING OF HEADS OF PLANNING AND HEADS OF STATISTICS (HOPS)

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 22–26 July 2013)

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Statistical Steering Committee (SSC)**

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**PREAMBLE**

- **Mindful** of the endorsement of the Regional Benchmarking Study Option 2 by CRGA and FEMM in October 2009 as the way forward guiding future statistical developments in the region and the recommendation for a stronger participation by member countries in the management oversight of regional statistical activities,
- **Recognizing** the Pacific Regional Statistics Implementation Plan (PARSIP) emphasis that the time lag of three years between Regional Conferences of Heads of Planning and Statistics is not suitable to effective ongoing monitoring of regional statistical activities and developments,
- Recognizing the importance of regional cooperation in the Pacific to best use our scarce resources,
- HOPS, at its meeting in Noumea, 12 – 16 July 2010, propose the establishment of a **Statistical Steering Committee (SSC)**, to monitor and direct regional statistical activities and developments.

**OBJECTIVES**

To provide guidance and direction in the strengthening of the National Statistical systems to produce and disseminate quality and timely statistics within the context of PAR-SIP by:

- i. Guiding the establishment and development of a framework to achieve the implementation and regular monitoring of PARSIP,
- ii. Endorsing common definitions and standards that will underpin a greater harmonization of statistical processes and outputs as mandated by the Pacific Plan, and
- iii. Providing guidance to the statistical activities undertaken by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, PFTAC and other statistical providers in the region.
- iv. To review the progress of implementation of the PARSIP, to consider and propose action to resolve implementation challenges including the periodic review and revisions to PAR-SIP based on operational experience.

## **OPERATING GOALS AND ACTIVITIES**

- i. Ensure that variations in countries' positions and statistical developments are well understood, in the context of a needs assessment or Gap analysis.
- ii. Initiate relevant, evidence-based actions which will ensure objectives and targets are met, where specified in the PARSIP.
- iii. Convene, as needs arise, technical working groups on particular topics involving experienced subject matter specialists from member states' national statistical systems, including recognized providers of official statistics, such as, but not limited to, other national statistical agencies and regional and international technical partners, operating for a fixed duration for the life of a specific project.
- iv. These actions will focus initially on priority statistical areas as spelled out in the Pacific Regional Statistics Implementation Plan (PARSIP), which comprise the following 6 broad strategic priority areas.
  - a. *Regional statistical infrastructures*
    - Classifications (Occupation, Industry, Imports and exports, consumer prices, disease, areas)
    - Statistical frameworks (Business, Population)
  - b. *Statistical systems and tools*
    - Minimize the range of systems and tools that have to be learned, maintained and integrated with other systems and tools
    - Advocate all partners to adopt the Pacific Island tools and systems in funded activity
  - c. *Recommend statistical system models that have particular relevance to the Pacific Island*
  - d. *Increase accessibility to administrative records*
  - e. *Exploitation of global and regional infrastructures*
  - f. *Training and development of specialist and operational staff*
- v. Engage with members of HOPS when agreement to a significant course of action is deemed necessary for undertaking specific actions proposed by SSC; this would normally only apply to proposed new additions to the PRSIP framework.
- vi. HOPS members, including major financial and technical partners, will be kept fully informed by a written report within 4 weeks of each Statistical Steering Committee meeting.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE STATISTICAL STEERING COMMITTEE**

Membership of the Statistical Steering Committee is open to Government or Chief Statisticians and representatives of key financial and technical partners. Initial membership shall comprise:

- 2 NSO representatives from each of the 3 Pacific islands sub-regions, with one member explicitly entrusted with representing the special needs of small island states statistical agencies;

- 2 representatives of the region's key development partners, one each representing key bilateral and multilateral agencies;
- 1 representative of the region's key technical partners, with the Chair of UNDAF Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group (currently UNFPA) representing an obvious choice;
- 1 representative from the University of the South Pacific, to ensure statistical training and education is adequately covered by the SSC.
- The Managers of SPC and PFTAC's Statistics Programs will be members *ex officio*, that is, they will have no voting rights.

The Committee may co-opt *ex-officio* members as appropriate.

The Steering Committee elects its own chair, who should be a member of the HOPS management structure (Chair, vice-chair) to ensure a close link to HOPS. The current Chair of HOPS 2010 will assume the position of interim chair of the Statistical Steering Committee.

### **SECRETARIAT**

The Secretariat for the Committee will be hosted by the Pacific Community's Statistics and Demography Programme, with PFTAC providing technical support and guidance in macroeconomic statistics.

### **TERM OF OFFICE**

The initial period will be for three years with effect from July 2010, and will be subject to review of both (i) its current terms of reference and (ii) for an extension for a further period of 3 years at the next HOPS meeting, scheduled for 2013, if the current triennial process is maintained. Rotation of the Chair and at least two heads of NSOs must take place at the end of the first 3-year term of office.

### **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

Meetings will be held twice yearly, once at SPC headquarters, and once in a member country. To ensure cost and time management efficiency, it is proposed that the meeting at SPC headquarters will take place in October, to coincide with the meeting of CRGA or its Ministerial conference, normally attended by most, if not all financial and technical partners, as well as USP.

### **FUNDING**

Funding for the work of the Committee will be sought from member countries, and also from regional and international organizations.

Project funding, where required for the operation of specific technical working groups, will be accommodated, where possible, by the Statistic and Demography's four year technical assistance work programme budget, SDP's 2010-2013.