

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

REGIONAL MEETING OF HEADS OF PLANNING AND HEADS OF STATISTICS (HOPS)
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 22–26 July 2013)

Session 3: Update on Statistics for Development Division (SDD) Training Activities since last 2010

(Document presented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This paper addresses the training provided by the SDD since the last HOPS in July 2010.

Key achievements

2. Since last HOPS in July 2010, 752 people have undertaken some form of training provided by SDD – 388 males, 341 females (with gender not stated in 23 cases).
3. This training has been mostly provided for staff within the *National Statistics Office (NSO)* (77%)
4. Persons from Fiji have received the most training (130 persons), followed by Samoa (83) and FSM (77). In terms of number of days of training received, FSM has received the most (774 days), followed closely by Samoa (711).
5. Four out of five training episodes (person receiving training) took place through sub-regional workshops (42% of all training received) or in-country on-the-job training (38%).
6. Trainings, especially sub-regional workshops, covered a wide range of topics including “CPI and ICP workshops”, “Vital Statistics”, “Trade workshops”, “Micro-data workshops”, PRISM joomla training”, “CSPro training”, “Labour statistics workshops” and “data scanning workshops”.

Main challenge faced

7. The decline in the number of in-country data analysis trainings which have been taking place in the region is of concern for SDD as it delivers its training services to its members. This training course is very popular with countries as it provides staff across the National Statistical Systems with basic skills to understand, analyse and report data appropriately.
8. Training impact could be improved with better pre-selection of training nominees – with training providers, especially for advanced statistical training, more pro-active in targeting likely candidates (spelling out technical pre-requirements), and NSOs more strategic in their nominations (outlining how staff are going to apply new skills gained).

Proposed way forward/Recommendations

9. For SDD to integrate data analysis and report writing workshops as an integral component to all SDD census and household survey technical assistance activities.
10. Develop more targeted training contracts with our members.

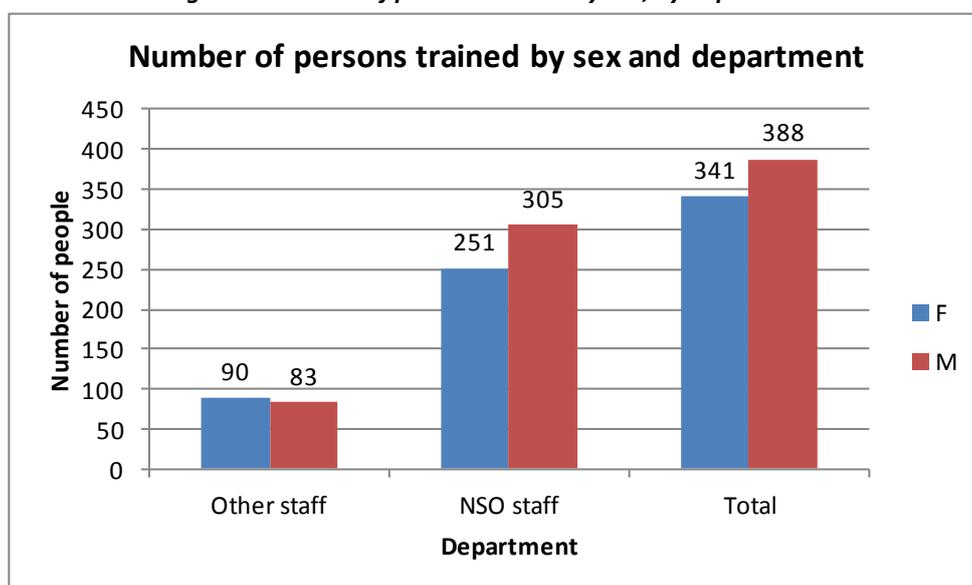
INTRODUCTION

1. In line with Objective 3 from the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy “PICTS have their own capacity or are accessing regional capacity to undertake agreed core and some specialists statistical functions”, the following paper provides an update of the training activities undertaken by SDD since the last HOPS meeting in July 2010. The data used to provide the summary in this paper was somewhat limited, but should still provide a good overall assessment of the training activities undertaken by the SDD in the last three years. Included in the paper will be the following sections:
 - a. Key achievements of the training activities, including breakdown by sex, country and type of training
 - b. Challenges encountered thus far
 - c. Future strategy from here on.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

2. Since the last HOPS in July 2010, a total of 752 persons have received some form of training from SDD. This figure is over-stated as some of these persons, especially staff within the NSOs, will have received training on more than one occasion.
3. Of these training opportunities, approximately 77 percent were received by staff within the NSO, whilst the remainders were received from persons from other government departments.
4. The breakdown by sex saw that 53 percent of the training recipients were male, whilst the remaining 47 percent were female. From the NSO, the sex breakdown is more in favor of males (55% compared to 45%), whereas from departments outside the NSO, more training has been provided for females (52% compared to 48%).

Figure 1: Number of persons trained by sex, by department



Note: The sex of 23 training recipients is not known, so they were omitted from this analysis

5. The following two pieces of analysis show firstly the number of persons trained by country, followed by the number of days training received by country. From this analysis it can be seen that Fiji clearly have the highest number of training recipients with 130 persons from Fiji receiving training since the last HOPS. This was followed by Samoa (83 persons) and FSM (77 persons). Most other countries had between 13 and 54 participants receiving training, whilst the French Territories received the least training with only 2-3 persons each receiving training in this period.

6. When the information is analysed by number of days of training received in Figure 3 below, it can be seen that FSM has received the largest amount of training days, followed by Samoa. For FSM this was largely due to a major census workshop conducted in 2011 in which 26 people attended for 4 weeks.

Figure 2: Number of people trained by country

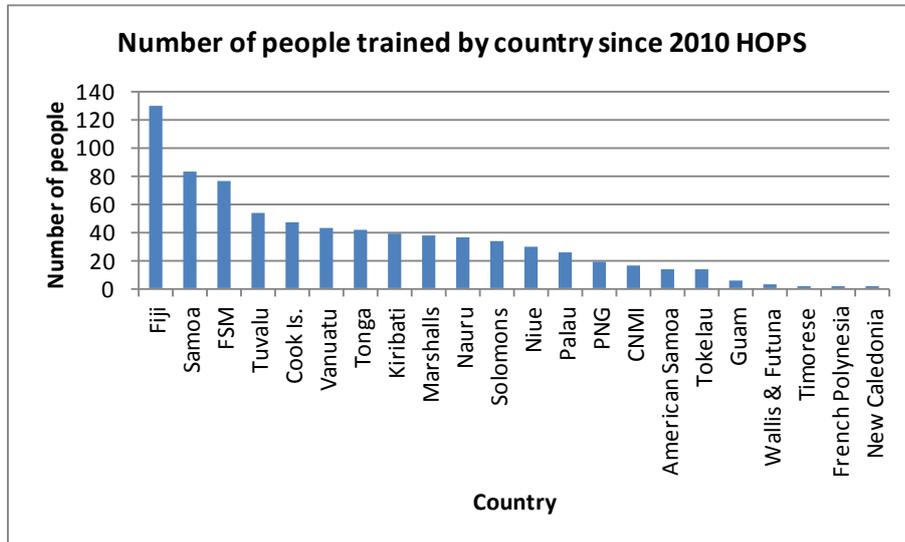


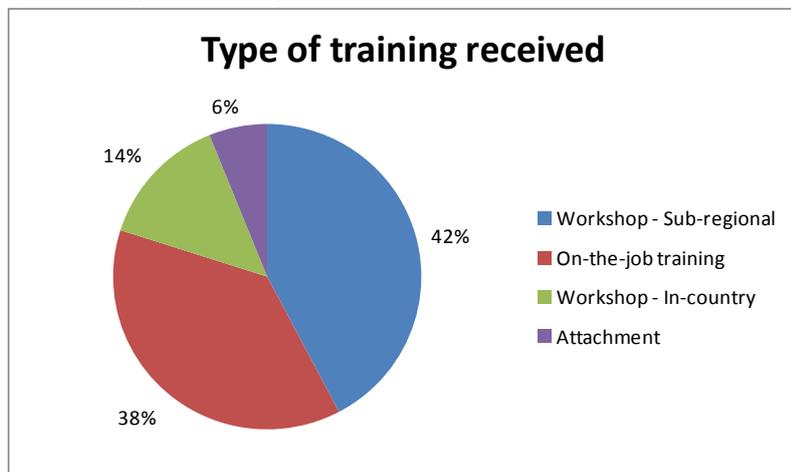
Figure 3: Number of person days received by country



7. Figure 4 illustrates four main types of training provided by SDD since the last HOPS in 2010.
- Workshops – sub-regional:* These workshop can be based anywhere, and involve inviting participants from a range of countries around the region
 - Workshops – in-country:* These workshops are held in the host-country and involve inviting participants from the host country only, often covering a range of departments
 - On-the-job training – in-country:* Involves SDD staff travelling in-country and providing a skill transfer through that particular technical assistance mission
 - Attachments (in Noumea, Pohnpei):* involves staff from countries coming to either Noumea or Pohnpei, to work with SDD subject matter specialists on specific tasks, usually related to joint production of census or survey reports.

8. As can be seen from Figure 4, the main type of training received from SDD was sub-regional workshops, accounting for 42 percent of the overall training. Not far behind this was on-the-job training which accounted for 38 percent. The amount of in-country training was down a little from where it normally is, largely due to the drop in the delivery of “data analysis and report writing” training courses, which have been a more significant part of SDD’s training delivery in the past.

Figure 4: Type of training received



9. One of the more pleasing aspects with the training taking place within the region is the range of topics being addressed, particularly at the sub-regional level. Some examples include:
- CPI and ICP workshops
 - Vital Statistics
 - Trade workshops
 - Micro data workshops
 - PRISM Joomla training
 - CSPRO training
 - Labour statistics workshops
 - Data scanning workshops.
10. More often new training needs are being identified and it’s encouraging to see these workshops being developed and offered to countries.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED THUS FAR WITH SDD TRAINING ACTIVITIES

11. The most noticeable aspect of the analysis above is the reduction of in-country trainings conducted in the region over the last 3 years, in particular data analysis and report writing workshops. Only two such workshops have been conducted in this period (Tonga and FSM), with an additional two workshops on census analysis for Solomons and Tuvalu. The data analysis and report writing training is a very popular training course with the countries, and a large reason for their decline is largely due to a lack of staffing resources within SDD.
12. As a plan to address this issue SDD need to place a stronger emphasis on the conduct of data analysis workshops at the completion of major survey activities within country (Census, HIES and DHS). This will ensure these skills continue to get developed by staff within the national statistical system, results are produced in a more timely manner, and disseminated via PRISM takes place more efficiently.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

13. As discussed earlier in the session 1 paper presented on the standardized HIES progress, once a series of pre-determined outputs have been identified for the HIES at the completion of the Nauru and Solomon Islands HIES, it is planned to be more pro-active in getting the Data Analysis and Report writing course up and running at the completion of each HIES from that point on. Participants will be selected based on their relevance to the HIES outputs, and small pre-determined projects will be assigned to each participant to assist in the production of as many HIES outputs as possible.
14. This approach has already been trialed for the FSM census with mixed results, but there is no reason why it can't work for the next round of census also. This strategy will not only improve the timeliness of survey outputs for the HIESs and Censuses, but also enable for much more data analysis courses to be conducted around the region, a vital and much requested skill of national statistical systems.

DISCUSSION POINTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

15. HOPS is requested to comment on the diversity of current training opportunities available to its members, and consider the following recommendations:
 - a. For SDD to integrate data analysis and report writing workshops as an integral component to all SDD census and household survey technical assistance activities.
 - b. Develop more targeted training contracts with our members.