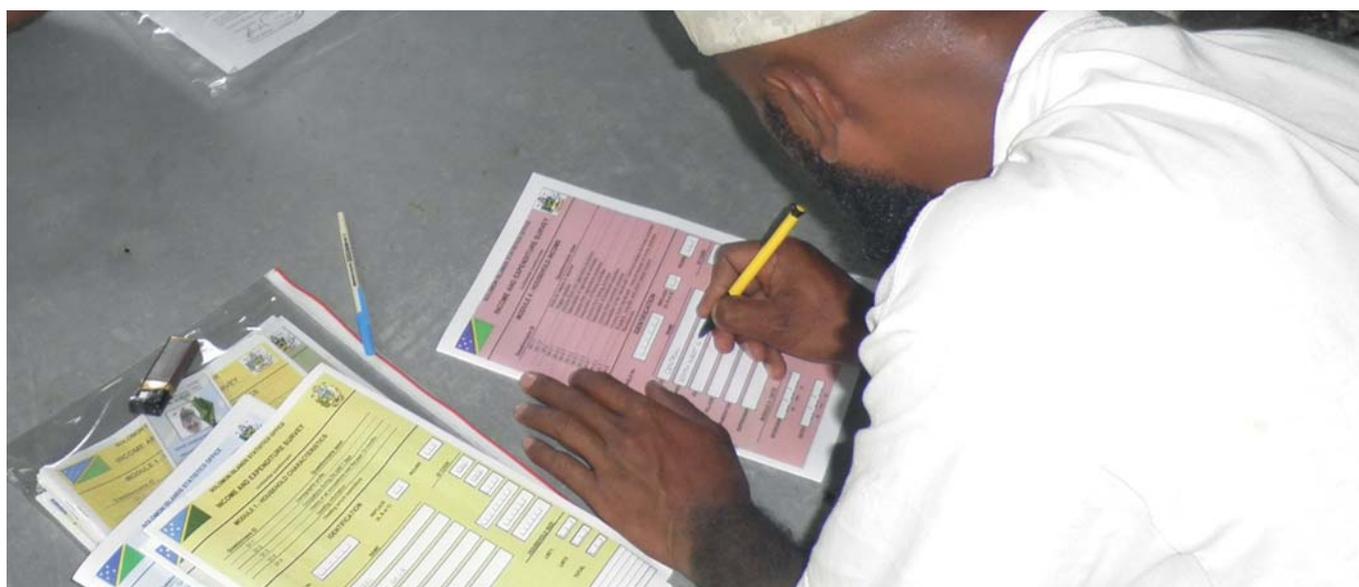




2020 World Round of Population and Housing Censuses, Pacific Island countries' census planning meeting



Pacific Census Commissioners and Government Statisticians met at the headquarters of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) end of July for an important Pacific Community planning meeting concerning the 2020 World Round of Population and Housing Censuses.

Countries around the world are urged by the United Nations to conduct at least one population and housing census in the decade spanning from 2015-2024, called the "2020 World Round", and to use internationally-adopted quality standards.

The meeting's main purpose was to review a proposed common set of core census and consider a greater use of technology to improve efficiency in data capture and dissemination.

This will address a request by Pacific Leaders and many regional and international data users for a greater harmonization of statistical classifications and systems, to support improved comparability of statistics between countries and the development of a core set of data across sectors.

Work on a core data set for the Pacific began several years ago with the establishment of the National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) database www.spc.int/nmdi, maintained by SPC, which contains over 200 development indicators, including all of the population-based demographic, economic and social indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



In his opening address, SPC Deputy Director-General, Cameron Diver, underlined the important link between improvements in the quality of census statistics and efficiency gains for Pacific Island nations.

"True comparability of core statistics between Pacific Island countries and a speedier release of this information for data users could translate into common data processing systems and tabulations plans," Mr Diver said.

"This process, combined with using technology to improve data collection and dissemination, could help achieve efficiency gains in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support for Pacific Island statistical systems," he said.

A senior statistician, Orlando Santo Monteiro from the National Statistical Institute of Cape Verde in Africa – the only Small Island Developing State to conduct an electronic census during the last census round – attended the meeting to share his country's experience with Pacific region peers.

Hosted by SPC's Statistics for Development Division, the meeting (from 27 to 31 July) was also attended by technical specialists from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Statistics New Zealand, the University of the South Pacific (USP), international partners like UNESCO, UNICEF and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Palau and Kiribati are the two Pacific Island nations conducting their national censuses this year.



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Useful links:

National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) database: www.spc.int/nmdi

