

## Statistics for Development Division (SDD)

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## SESSION 8 – SDD’S CONTRIBUTION TO STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS IN TYPSS PHASE II AND FUTURE PLANS FOR TYPSS PHASE III

*(Document presented by Secretariat)*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Statistical collections are an integral component of Phase II of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) and the Statistics for Development Division (SDD) of the Pacific Community (SPC) has played a key role in achieving TYPSS objectives relating to statistical collections. This Information Paper documents the major achievements of SDD’s Collection team over TYPSS Phase II, challenges and the way forward under TYPSS Phase III.
2. During TYPSS Phase II, SDD’s Collection Team comprised of eight full time employees. Despite the Collection Team’s name, the activities of the Collection Team contributed towards all phases of a statistical collection, from project planning through to data use, dissemination and drawing of policy implications.
3. The TYPSS Phase II objectives that the Collections Team contributed towards achieving include:
  - a. *Objective 1:* Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs) have the technical capacity (either in-house capacity or through timely accessible technical support), to manage and implement all core statistical collections, including key administrative databases, as required by national development plans, including national strategies for the development of statistics.
  - b. *Objective 2:* PICTs are producing the agreed core set of statistics across key sectors including but not restricted to economics, population, CRVS, education and health, as required by their national plans and agreed-upon regional and international reporting frameworks, with timely analysis and dissemination of results to national users.
  - c. *Objective 4:* National level statistic stakeholders are advised on an ongoing basis about emerging statistical tools and systems, processes for effective data analysis, communication and quality assurance and Pacific interaction and proposed responses to international statistical standards.
4. SDD’s Collection Team’s main achievements in terms of supporting TYPSS Phase II Objective 1 (technical support and building capacity in conducting statistical collections) are outlined below. The achievements are separated by: i) technical assistance to support PICTs conducting statistical collections; and ii) other statistical development initiatives.

## SDD'S COLLECTION TEAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT TO STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS

5. SDD provides technical assistance to support SPC's member countries to conduct national core statistical collections. The primary output from this activity is the preparation of a clean data set and a corresponding report. Whilst these outputs may seem to be limited given the associated investment required, the ultimate outcome is evidenced based decision making that results in the improvement of Pacific people's lives. Statistical collection data are used by policy makers and planners in multiple fields, including for SDG monitoring, social and economic planning and disaster risk management. These are the significant outputs that result from statistical collections.
6. SDD provides the following technical assistance to PICTs conducting statistical collections:
  - a. **Planning:** stakeholder engagement, collection planning and budgeting, and sample design.
  - b. **Cartography and household listing:** delineation of enumeration areas, household listing training (incl. use of GPS or tablets), delineation of EAs and production of field maps.
  - c. **Data capture:** questionnaire design, user engagement, selection of data capture technology and design of the data capture system.
  - d. **Field team training:** development of field schedule and questionnaire manuals, delivery of training on questionnaire completion, interview approaches, data verification checks and data entry and transfer.
  - e. **Field work management:** interim data quality assessment and field worker refresher training, monitoring of coverage during operations, financial monitoring support and achievement of collection project milestones.
  - f. **Data editing:** data concatenation and aggregation, recoding and encoding, quality assurance and tabulation.
  - g. **Analysis and reporting:** construction of aggregates and preparation of collection report;
  - h. **Collection documentation and preparation of the final data set:** collection documentation in the Pacific Data Catalogue, anonymization and preparation of final data set for dissemination.
  - i. **Data dissemination, use and capacity transfer:** preparation of thematic value added data dissemination products, technical notes and peer reviewed literature, geospatial dissemination (PopGIS), indicator population (National Minimum Development Indicators and Sustainable Development Goals) and capacity building of national statistics office in data use, interpretation and dissemination.

### A. Population and housing census (PHC)

7. During TYPSS Phase II, SDD's collection team provided technical assistance to the following PHC: Fiji (2017); Kiribati (2015); Niue (2017); Palau, incl. post enumeration survey (2015); Tokelau (2016); Tonga (2016); Tuvalu (2017); Vanuatu (2016); and Samoa (2016).

### Household income and expenditure survey (HIES)

8. During TYPSS Phase II, SDD provided technical assistance to the following HIES: Cook Islands (2016); Federated States of Micronesia (2014); French Polynesia (2016); Niue (2016); Palau (2014); Tokelau (2015); Tonga (2016); Tuvalu (2015). In addition to supporting implementation of the surveys in TYPSS Phase II, data processing and cleaning, and survey reporting, occurred for: Nauru (2012) and Solomon Islands (2013).

### Demographic and health surveys (DHS), multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) and Disability surveys (DIS)

9. During TYPSS Phase II, SDD supported implementation of, and provided technical assistance, to the following DHS: Solomon Islands (2015) and Kiribati (2017). SDD is currently providing support to Tonga upcoming 2018 Disability survey as part of partnership framework with UNICEF.

### ***Agricultural census/survey***

10. During TYPSS Phase II and in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the Land Resources Division (LRD) of SPC, SDD has provided technical assistance to the following agricultural collections: Tonga agricultural survey (2015); FSM agricultural census (2016); Solomon Islands agricultural survey (2017); Fiji Agriculture Quarterly Production Survey (2017); and Cooks Islands Agriculture Market Information System (2015).

### ***B. SDD's Collection Team support to other statistical development initiatives***

11. As mentioned, the Collection Team provides technical assistance to all components of a statistical collection, from planning through to data use and dissemination. In addition to this function, the Collection Team has contributed to an array of statistical development initiatives contributing to TYPSS Phase II objectives. These are described below.

### ***C. Sustainable development goals (SDG)***

12. SDD hosted the Pacific Headline Indicator workshop to negotiate and progress a Pacific region set of indicators from the global list, which were integrated into the 2030 Roadmap. SDD is a member of Pacific SDG Taskforce and Secretariat of Data Technical Working Group and is playing an ongoing role in the coordination of measurement and reporting of priority indicators.

### ***D. Adoption of new technologies, methods and classifications***

13. SDD, in collaboration with the World Bank and with support from the Statistical Institute for Asia the Pacific (SIAP) and funding sourced through the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GS), had built its technical capacity in computer assisted personal interview technology (CAPI) – using tables for data collection – and in the use of Stata econometric software to provide more transparent data processing and analysis with increased opportunity for sharing of data processing and analysis methods with technical partners. These technologies have been adopted in numerous PICTs.
14. To facilitate poverty and nutrition analysis using HIES data, SDD in collaboration with FAO and the University of Wollongong, has developed a comprehensive list of food commodities that are common to the Pacific Islands and classified these in accordance to the United Nations Statistics Division Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP). The use of the Pacific Consumption and Nutrition Database will increase the efficiency and accuracy of data capture and alleviate the significant burden of encoding commodity lists when preparing data sets for poverty and nutrition studies.
15. SDD, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), is trialling a new labour force module that accords to the review of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) for adoption as a resolution of the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). The trial will feedback information to ILO for future revision of labour force surveys and modules.
16. SDD hosted the Pacific Island countries 2020 round of census planning meeting in July 2015. A major output was the adoption of a common core set of census questions, including core and supplementary thematic modules, and development of a regionally standardised PHC questionnaire.

### ***E. Regional statistical capacity building***

17. SDD facilitated, or delivered, the following statistical capacity building initiatives:

- a. *Data use and dissemination*: SDD facilitated multiple trainings that built the capacity of NSOs and line ministries in the use, interpretation and dissemination of statistical products;
- b. *National data archive and microdata catalogue*: SDD, in collaboration with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century's (PARIS21), held a sub-regional training that enhanced capacity of NSOs to document and disseminate their data using the International Household Survey Network Metadata Editor and the National Data Archive catalogue.
- c. *South-south*: SDD facilitated numerous south-south initiatives.
- d. *Disability statistics*: in partnership with UNICEF and the Washington Group, SDD facilitated training of NSOs and line ministries in the compilation and use of disability statistics.
- e. *Use of administrative data*: SDD contributed to regional workshops in analysis and reporting vital statistics and education statistics, including assessment of data completeness and coverage.
- f. *QGIS (mapping software)*: SDD conducted two QGIS workshops and various in-country training to assist with geospatial data collection and dissemination activities.
- g. *CAPI / Stata*: SDD, in collaboration with the World Bank and SIAP with funding support from GS, held a regional workshop that built capacity of NSOs and line natural resources ministries in: i) the use of Survey Solutions software to support the implementation of CAPI collections; and ii) the use of Stata econometric software for data processing and analysis.

#### F. Population projections

18. Mortality and fertility direct and indirect estimates have been derived from census and vitals collections, and assumptions from this fed into the 2016 revision of PICT population projections. Data dissemination products produced include the 2016 Population Poster, and the Population Projections by PICT spreadsheet. Country population estimates have been used for indicators that required population denominators, such as education participation and birth and death rates, as well as for monitoring growth rates.

#### G. Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics

19. SDD, in partnership with FAO, has developed P-SPAFS, which is a which is a ten-year plan that aims to guide the development of agricultural and fisheries statistics in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and to address unprecedented data demand for monitoring of SDGs. The plan will increase the quality of evidence-based policymaking through collaborative efforts of national governments and the donor community.

### CHALLENGES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

20. This component focuses solely on statistical collections and the main challenges – past, present and future – surrounding meeting TYPSS Phase II objectives and perceived future challenges in statistical collections in the Pacific Region.
21. During TYPSS Phase II, the main challenges in achieving TYPSS objective 1, 2 and 4 are summarised below:
  - a. Under resourced NSOs and high staff turnover resulting in loss of institutional memory and capacity;
  - b. Lag between statistical collections (often 10 years or more) resulting in limited ability of NSO to specialise and retain capacity in specific collections;
  - c. Rapid technological and methodological evolution and continuous changes in international standards and classifications requiring continual adaptation of system, methods and instruments;

- d. Acknowledging the significant advances in the quality and availability of administrative data, there's still a lot of work to be done before it can replace core collections;
  - e. Data dissemination and use is hampered by an inefficient memorandum of understanding process that is burdensome to the NSO and data user;
  - f. Some collections not adopting regionally standardised or international best practice and classifications resulting in implementation of inefficient and non-comparable collections;
  - g. Optimised and integrated collection schedules are often not adhered to resulting in an inability to plan and coordinate partners in the provision of technical assistance; and
  - h. Lack of statistical collection plans that engage partners and delineate technical assistance provision.
22. These challenges provide significant justification for SDD to maintain capacity in statistical collections.
23. The current and future challenges in statistical collections are summarised below:
- a. Unprecedented demand for disaggregated statistics under the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, which are heavily dependent on census and survey;
  - b. SDD's reduced investment in Statistical Collections resulting in capacity gaps and overloading of already strained resources;
  - c. Multiple statistical collections planned (40+ in the next 5-years that are known of);
  - d. Call for regionally standardised and approved methods (by the proposed Methods Board); and
  - e. Continued technological and methodological advances, exemplified by the review of ISCE, current revision of COICOP and the planned HIES experiment requiring strong technical capacity supporting regional statistical collections.

## WAY FORWARD

24. As a result of recent reviews of SDD, the Collections Team (now to be called the Census and Survey Technical Support) team will be made up of four full time employees, consisting of: a) one Collection Methods & Processes Advisor; two Data Processing & Systems Advisors; and one Economic Statistics & Microdata Specialist. Subject to securing funding, a Collection Methods & Processes Officer role will be established to specifically partner with UNICEF in disability related survey and data analytical work.
25. With funding support through the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building project, a short-term Data Curator role will be established for a period of 18 to 24 months. This role will have very specific functions that will promote data liberalisation and associated policy development, and data acquisition, anonymization, documentation and metadata publication, which is a new function within SDD and one that will be highly complementary to increased data dissemination and curation.
26. In 2018, CSTC will have reduced human resources resulting in a greater need for prioritisation and partner engagement. There will be a refocus towards coordination of statistical collections and improving systems, processes and methods. CSTC will continue to provide technical support – as CSTC's core function – for PICTs conducting PHC and HIES. It will also continue to support Disability Survey, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Disability Survey, Agriculture Census and Labour Force Survey via partnership and on a cost-recovery basis.
27. Despite this reduced human resource capacity and the challenges presented above, and in addition to continued provision of technical assistance to SPC's member countries in statistical collections, there are a number of exciting projects and statistical developments planned in the next 3-years. These are summarised below.

#### A. Partnerships in statistical collections

28. SDD has formal arrangements or plans to partner with international organisations in the conducting and development of statistical collections in the coming years, including:
- a. *ILO*: SDD has entered into an memorandum of understanding (MOU) with ILO with the objective to:  
i) improve analysis of existing labour force (LF) data; ii) improve collection of LF data; strengthen capacity of PICs to conduct LF surveys; and iii) increase compilation, documentation and sharing of LF data.
  - b. *UNICEF*: SDD is progressing an agreement with UNICEF that will: i) support analysis of disability statistics; ii) improve collection of disability-related data; iii) support PICs to undertake MICS; and iv) populate disability-related indicators.
  - c. *World Bank*: see below.
  - d. *FAO*: as mentioned above, P-SPAFS has been developed and will form a framework to guide collaboration between FAO and SPC in building regional statistical capacity pertaining to agriculture, fisheries, food security and nutrition.
  - e. *UNFPA*: current discussions are underway in regards to partnering in the delivery of technical assistance in PHC and DHS.
  - f. *Academia*: SDD works closely with multiple academic institutions in the use of data for research and to draw policy implications for the benefit of the Pacific.

#### B. Improving Data Dissemination and Use in Pacific Islands Countries

29. The World Bank, through the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building, is funding and overseeing a SDD implemented project that will lead to improved documentation and preservation of data sets, increased data use and dissemination through harmonisation and more significant data production through improved sample design and methods. The project has three components:
- a. Establishment of the Pacific Community Data Archive;
  - b. Standardization of survey and census datasets (ex-post harmonization); and
  - c. Development of an optimized sampling strategy.

#### C. Household income and expenditure survey methodological experiment

30. SDD, in collaboration with the World Bank, FAO and ILO, will conduct a HIES experiment in the Marshall Islands, which will test the following:
- a. The implication of moving from paper-based to tablet-based collections on HIES data users, including those for poverty, national accounts and consumer price index;
  - b. The implication of moving from collecting food acquisition data via a diary to using a recall-based collection method;
  - c. New modules, including a food away from home, labour force, non-farm enterprise, shocks, disability, use value of assets and non-standard units of measurement.
31. The results of the experiment will guide the future recommended regional HIES methodology and will give consideration to identifying methods that product high quality data at a minimum cost.

#### D. Pathways project

32. Pathways is a HIES data use project being implemented by SPC in collaboration with WorldFish the University of Wollongong and FAO, administered by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and with funding support from the Australian Government. The project aims to, among other fisheries management related areas, used HIES data to estimate per capita apparent consumption

estimated of fish and seafood, prevalence of undernourishment and macro-and-micro nutrient availability estimates. The outcome of this research is to derive policies in support of improved food security in the region.

33. NSOs are gratefully acknowledged for giving permission to use HIES data for this work.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

34. Heads of Statistics and Planning are recommended to note the activities conducted by the Collections Team during TYPSS Phase II, the challenges and the way forward.

35. Heads of Statistics and Planning are invited to acknowledge the significant financial support provided by donors, particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.