SESSION 7 – SUPPORTING STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS THROUGH COORDINATED PARTNERSHIPS AND A 5-YEAR PLAN

(Document presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) are highly dependent on household-based statistical collections, such as censuses and surveys, to generate development statistics to guide evidence-based policy formation and evaluation. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — and through regional, national and sectoral-specific policy frameworks, such as the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway and the Pacific Regionalism Framework — there is an unprecedented demand for timely and reliable statistics.

2. In the absence of alternative, reliable data sources, the demand for disaggregated population data – for example, by sex, age and geospatial – is highly dependent on national statistical collections. For example, 95 of the indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), distributed among 14 of the 17 goals, require high-quality disaggregated population data generated from censuses. And, of the 231 SDG indicators, 71 are household-based and mainly informed through survey data. It is, therefore, essential that statistical systems are well planned, resourced and sufficiently robust to respond to the challenge of meeting these diverse data demands in a sustainable way.

3. Despite significant progress throughout the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) in a multitude of aspects relating to national statistical collections, many PICTs conduct unplanned statistical collections that are often driven by funding rather than following a planned collection cycle. This results in an inefficient allocation of resources and potentially undermines data quality and comparability. Furthermore, conducting unplanned statistical collections creates challenges for technical assistance providers because they require urgent reallocation of resources, and it limits the opportunity to plan, mobilise resources, and coordinate technical assistance activities among partner agencies. To avoid this, there is a need for a statistical collection coordinating mechanism that aligns collection activities conducted by PICTs with work plans and funding cycles of technical assistance providers and donors.

4. This Working Paper was prepared by the Pacific Community in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and proposes the:

a. establishment of partnerships with technical assistance providers in the provision of well-coordinated and planned technical support to PICTs conducting national statistical collections; and

b. preparation of a comprehensive five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections, which will serve as a mechanism to: i) coordinate technical assistance; ii) define partnerships and delineate contributions by technical assistance providers; iii) facilitate planning for the national statistics office and technical assistance providers; and iv) serve as a platform for resource mobilisation and donor coordination.

5. This paper highlights the benefit of adopting optimised and integrated 10-year national collection schedules, and makes the recommendation that the five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections gives due consideration to the efficiency gained from adhering to such a collection cycle.

6. This paper notes positive progress in the continuation of existing, and the formation of new, partnerships in the provision of technical and financial assistance to statistical collections in the Pacific Islands region. It also acknowledges the benefit of increased coordination among development partners through the strategic delivery of technical assistance that leverages technical partner comparative advantages, and the use of agreed on statistical collection plans to facilitate coordination among national statistics offices and technical and financial partners.

7. Heads of Planning and Statistics are invited to:

- endorse the recommendation for coordinated partnership among development partners (technical assistance providers and donors) to support the next five years of national statistical collections in the Pacific Islands region;

- note the efficiency gained by adopting optimised statistical collection cycles; and

- endorse the proposal to prepare a five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections that defines SPC members' collection schedule and associated technical assistance provision, and identifies gaps and potential funding sources to support resource mobilisation.

SUPPORTING STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS THROUGH COORDINATED PARTNERSHIPS AND A 5-YEAR PLAN

(Document prepared by the Pacific Community, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund)

PURPOSE

8. The purpose of this paper is to:

   a. recommend increased coordinated partnerships among technical assistance providers and donors to support the next five years of national statistical collections in the Pacific Islands region;

   b. acknowledge the benefit of increased coordination among development partners through the strategic delivery of technical assistance that leverages technical partner comparative advantages, and the use of agreed on statistical collection plans to facilitate coordination among national statistics offices and technical and financial partners;

   c. note the efficiency gained by adopting optimised integrated statistical collection cycles;

   d. recommend that a comprehensive five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections be prepared, which defines collection schedules and associated technical assistance provision, and identifies funding sources and gaps to support resource mobilisation; and

   e. note the progress made to date in conceptualising such a plan and funding proposal.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

9. Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) are highly dependent on household-based statistical collections, such as censuses and surveys, to generate development statistics to guide evidence-based policy formation and evaluation. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and through regional, national and sectoral-specific policy frameworks, such as the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway and the Pacific Regionalism Framework – there is an unprecedented demand for timely and reliable statistics.

10. In the absence of alternative reliable data sources, the demand for disaggregated population data – for example, by sex, age and geospatial – is highly dependent on national statistical collections. For example, 95 of the indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), distributed among 14 of the 17 goals, require high-quality disaggregated population data generated from censuses. And of the 231 SGD indicators, 71 are household-based and mainly informed through survey data. Timely and reliable statistical information is crucial for the benefit of society and the economy as a whole – not only in policy-making and the evaluation of performance – but also in directing economic and social activities and providing valuable data and evidence for analysts, researchers, civil society and the general public. It is, therefore, essential that statistical systems are well planned, resourced and sufficiently robust to respond to the challenge of meeting these diverse data demands in a sustainable way.

11. Despite significant progress made throughout the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) in a multitude of aspects relating to national statistical collections, many PICTs conduct unplanned statistical collections that are often driven by funding rather than following a planned collection cycle. This results in an inefficient allocation of resources and potentially undermines data quality and comparability. Furthermore, conducting unplanned statistical collections creates challenges for technical assistance providers because they require urgent reallocation of resources, and it limits the opportunity to plan, mobilise resources and coordinate technical assistance activities among partners. To avoid this, there is a need for a statistical collection coordinating mechanism that aligns collection activities conducted by PICTs with work plans and funding cycles of technical assistance providers and donors.

12. TYPSS gives high priority to ensuring that high-quality data, conforming to international standards, are collected on a timely basis. TYPSS's objectives relating to data collection activities include coordinated data collection technical support, and standardised tools, methods, systems and processes.

13. The TYPSS Mid-Term Evaluation (2016) recommends that the Statistics for Development Division (SDD) of the Pacific Community (SPC) coordinates technical partners, donors and member countries in the region, in addition to continuing its role as a technical assistance provider. The 13th meeting of the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee (PSSC) (2016) – TYPSS's governing committee – adopted the recommendation that SDD be the coordinator for all technical support provided within the framework of TYPSS.

14. In response to the TYPSS Mid-Term Evaluation, recommendations adopted by PSSC-13 and recommendations made within SDD's Performance Improvement Framework (2016), SPC's role as system leader and coordinator is reflected in SDD's 2018 to 2020 Business Plan.

15. In recognition of the importance of national statistical collections and the challenges of mobilising resources to support implementing and coordinating technical assistance provision, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), on behalf of various agencies of the United Nations (UN) and in collaboration with SDD, developed a concept note 'Support for 2020 Round of Census and DHS as an Evidence-base to Monitor National Development Priorities and SDGs in the Pacific' (ref. Appendix 1). This Working Paper is written to complement the concept note by recommending increased coordinated partnerships in the delivery of technical assistance to support statistical collections and the formation of a five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections.

16. In consideration of SDD's role as system leader and coordinator, this Working Paper is written to seek support from Heads of Statistics and Planning (HOPS) for increased coordination among development partners in the delivery of technical assistance to support the implementation of statistical collections and for a comprehensive Regional Plan for Statistical Collections to be developed. SDD recognises the value of partnerships, and this Working Paper reflects SDD's desire for improved coordination among technical partners, donors and SPC members. Establishing a Regional Plan for Statistical Collections will facilitate fund raising and resource mobilisation and improve planning and coordination among parties, which will serve to meet TYPSS's objectives of coordinated data collection technical support and standardised tools, methods, systems and processes. It is expected that this will ultimately serve to improve the quality, efficiency and timeliness of producing statistical outputs. This will be realised through a coordinated regional technical assistance programme, and supported by an agreed on framework of methods, systems, tools and processes that are 'fit for purpose' for both the member country and the survey or census being undertaken, and meets the multiple demands for timely and high quality data.

FORMING COORDINATED COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

17. Integral to the success of a Regional Plan for Statistical Collections is gaining commitment by SPC's members, donors and development partners to the plan. Gaining commitment is dependent on demonstrating synergies that can be achieved through increased collaboration among national statistics offices (NSOs), technical partners and donors. This section of this Working Paper documents:

    a. the benefit of providing technical support to statistical collections through coordinated partnerships;

    b. the scope of partnerships in statistical collections;

    c. examples of collaborative partnerships during TYPSS Phase II;

    d. the service proposition of technical development partners; and

    e. SDD's capacity to provide technical assistance to collections.

A. The benefits

18. The benefit of providing technical support to statistical collections through coordinated partnerships are described below.

    a. Technical assistance providers to Pacific NSOs each have unique and complementary competencies, and partnering in statistical collections allows for exploitation of these.

    b. Coordination and partnership provides an opportunity for the application of best practices – approved by the Pacific Regional Statistical Methods Board – which ensures that data outputs meet the specifications of data users.

    c. Efficiency can be gained through technical partners specialising in certain aspects of the statistical value chain. For example, one partner may specialise in collection planning and questionnaire design, while another may focus on more technical aspects, such as data capture and processing. Specialisation leads to economies of scale, especially where regionally standardised instruments are adopted.

    d. Coordination reduces the potential for inefficient allocation of resources often realised through duplication of activities or multiple players investing in competing regional statistical infrastructure.

    e. Coordination allows for planning and allocation of resources towards pre-agreed on technical assistance needs and the opportunity to collectively mobilise resources where gaps are identified.

    f. Partnership provides opportunity to access resources that would otherwise not be available, such as technical expertise through UN development partners.

    g. The small island developing states of the Pacific are unique in the sense that they are widely geographically dispersed and have extremely small populations. Statistical capacity of these states is limited and the provision of technical assistance is expensive. SDD has achieved efficiency through recognising similarities among Pacific Island populations and has demonstrated success in adopting and implementing regionally standardised methods and instruments. This achieves efficiency in SDD's service proposition and improves data quality and comparability. The proposal for improved collaboration and partnership seeks recognition of the significant opportunity presented for international organisations to work with SDD to achieve our mutual goal of increasing statistical capacity in the Pacific Islands region.

B. Scope of statistical collections

19. It is recognised that there is ample opportunity for SDD to play a central role in coordinating statistical collections and that SDD has an objective in its business plan to work with other divisions of SPC to

identify areas where sectoral data collection and dissemination can be strengthened through coordination and partnership. It is also noted that SDD plays a central role in coordinating the compilation and use of administrative data. Noting this, the scope of the five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections will be limited to the following collections:

a. population and housing censuses;

b. household income and expenditure surveys;

c. demographic and health surveys;

d. multiple indicator cluster survey;

e. disability survey;

f. agricultural censuses and labour force surveys; and

g. labour force surveys.

C. Examples of effective coordination and partnerships

20. In this section, we provide examples of positive steps towards establishing and enhancing coordination among technical partners. Many of these partnerships have occurred through the realisation of synergies achieved through partnership and some are formalised and others are not. It is hoped that formal partnerships and statistical collection coordination mechanisms can be achieved through a five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections.

21. UNFPA and UNICEF have played a central role in the preparation of this document and the appended concept note (ref: Appendix 1), and they are key partners of SDD in all aspects associated with population and housing census, demographic and health surveys, multiple indicator cluster survey and disability surveys. Other notable technical partners in statistical collections include: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in conducting agricultural collections; the International Labour Organization (ILO) in conducting labour force surveys; and the World Bank in conducting household income and expenditure surveys (HIES) and supporting the adoption of statistical infrastructures and methodologies.

22. Significant progress has already been made in formalising partnership agreements with FAO, through the preparation of the Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics (ref: Working Paper 7), and ILO, through the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding to facilitate collaboration between the ILO and SPC in labour statistics. Drafting of a multi-year partnership cooperation agreement with UNICEF is underway, which will formalise the well-established partnership between UNICEF and SDD in conducting demographic and health, multiple indicator cluster and disability surveys.

23. Collaboration with the World Bank has been highly engaging, covering a multitude of aspects relating to statistical collections. The World Bank had built the capacity of NSOs and SPC in the use of Survey Solutions software, which has facilitated the implementation of computer assisted personal interview (CAPI)-based collections in the region. Complementary to this, the World Bank has built regional capacity in the use of Stata econometric software for more transparent and efficient data processing and analysis. The World Bank is a key partner in the planned HIES experiment (ref: Information Paper 6), which will guide future HIES methods and is an important donor and fund raiser for conducting HIESs in the region. The World Bank, through the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building, is also funding and overseeing an SDD-implemented project that will lead to improved documentation and preservation of datasets, increased data use and dissemination through harmonisation, and more significant data production through improved sample design and methods (ref: Information Paper 6).

24. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) and the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC) have all made significant technical contributions to the development of statistics in the Pacific Islands region and are recognised as data users – a key component in the formation of partnerships surrounding statistical collections. Partnerships are not limited to just collection activities, but can be partnerships for each component of the statistical value chain.

25. In addition to the formation of partnerships with technical agencies, executing a Regional Plan for Statistical Collections will be dependent on sustained engagement with the donor community. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in particular, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Asian Development Bank are gratefully recognised for their generous bilateral and multilateral funding, which has been integral to implementing TYPSS. The proposed five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections will focus on bringing together NSOs, technical and financial partners.

D. *Service proposition of technical partners in statistical collections*

26. Table 1 outlines the main phases of conducting a statistical collection and, by collection, identifies areas where capacity exists among technical assistance providers. It is noted that the NSO implementing the collection is integral to each phase and that consultation with, and capacity building of, the NSO and relevant line ministries is a critical aspect of all phases in a statistical collection.

27. There are a number of overlaps where more than one organisation can provide technical assistance to a single phase of a statistical collection and this is demonstrative of the need for good coordination and delegation and delineation of technical service provision to each collection.

28. Based on the numerous stakeholders involved in statistical collections, the Regional Plan for Statistical Collections will define stakeholder engagement, establish tools to facilitate coordination, and allow for the identification of opportunities and constraints, including resource mobilisation.

29. It is recommended that partnerships in statistical collections take note of the efficiency gained in the production of comparable and quality statistics through regional standardisation of methods and instruments. The Pacific Regional Statistical Methods Board (ref: Working paper 3) and partners are encouraged to build on progress made in regards to regional standardisation.

Table 1: Service proposition of technical assistance providers in different phases of a statistical collection

	PHC	HIES	DHS*	MICS*	Disability*	Agriculture*	LFS*
Collection design, budgeting and planning	UNFPA, SDD, ABS, SNZ	SDD, WB	UNFPA, UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	FAO, SDD	ILO, SDD
Questionnaire design and user engagement	UNFPA, SDD, ABS, SNZ	SDD, WB	UNFPA, UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD, WG	FAO, SDD	ILO, SDD
Collection cartography and household listing	SDD, UNFPA	SDD, WB	SDD, UNFPA, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, FAO	SDD, ILO
Selection of data capture and processing technology	SDD, UNFPA	SDD, WB	SDD, UNFPA, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, FAO	SDD, ILO
Field work training and management	SDD, UNFPA	SDD, WB	UNFPA, UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD, WG	FAO, SDD	ILO, SDD
Data processing and cleaning	SDD, UNFPA	SDD, WB	SDD, UNFPA, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, UNICEF	SDD, FAO	SDD, ILO
Secondary data assurance	UNFPA, SDD, ABS, SNZ	WB, SDD	UNFPA, UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD, WG	FAO, SDD	ILO, SDD
Data archiving and anonymisation	SDD	SDD	SDD	SDD	SDD	SDD	SDD
Data analysis, dissemination and use	UNFPA, SDD, ABS, SNZ	SDD, WB, PFTAC, ABS	UNFPA, UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD	UNICEF, SDD, WG	FAO, SDD	ILO, SDD

* indicates that the Statistics for Development Division's services are provided on a cost-recovery basis

The order of technical partner proposes the leader for the activity for within each statistical collection.

ABS= Australian Bureau of Statistics, FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization, ILO = International Labour Organization, PFTAC = Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Center, PHC = population and housing census, SDD = Statistics for Development Division, SNZ = Statistics New Zealand, UNFPA = United Nations Development Fund, UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund, WB = World Bank, WG = Washington Group

E. SDD's technical assistance services to support statistical collections

30. In reference to HOPS5 Information Papers 6 (SDD Data Collection) and 10 (SDD Draft Business Plan), SDD has changed its strategy in terms of technical support in statistical collections that it provides SPC members. The new approach limits SDD's core service proposition to two collections: population and housing censuses; and household income and expenditure surveys. Any technical support provided to collections that are not PHC or HIES (for example, disability surveys, DHSs, agriculture censuses or surveys, and labour force surveys), will be through partnerships and on a cost-recovery basis.

31. The coordination and delivery of statistical support remains a core component of SDD's work programme, however SDD will more actively undertake a leadership and coordination role with NSOs, technical partners and donors to ensure cohesive integrated regional statistical collection planning in order to facilitate more efficient resource mobilisation. In addition to coordination, a key role of SDD will be establishing common tools, methods and standards.

32. Noting SDD's shift in strategy, technical support to collections remains a key service and, in addition to the role of collection coordination and methods, SDD's service proposition in terms of providing technical support services to SPC members to conduct statistical collections is outlined below:

    a. Census and/or survey design, budgeting (including defining technological and human resource needs), procurement and preparation of implementation plan.

    b. Preparation of training and/or testing schedules, and training materials, and delivery of training in all aspects of conducting a statistical collection.

    c. Supporting cartography and conducting the household listing.

    d. Design and implementing paper and computer-assisted data capture technology, primarily using CSPro and Survey Solutions, respectively.

    e. Supporting NSOs in field work management and conducting interim data quality checks.

    f. Data processing, quality control and preparation of final datasets.

    g. Data archiving (including policy, acquisition, quality checks, documentation, anonymisation, dissemination, preservation and promotion of use) and survey documentation within the SPC-hosted Pacific Data Archive.

    h. Data dissemination through existing platforms and noting SDD's increased strategic focus on data dissemination (ref: Working Paper 5).

33. SPC's membership differs from that of UN agencies, and SDD's technical assistance to statistical collections is extended to all 22 PICTs.

34. SDD's role as system leader in statistical collections will ensure that all technical partners providing technical support to national statistics collections adopt agreed on standardised methods, systems and processes as endorsed by the Pacific Regional Statistical Methods Board (ref: Working Paper 3).

2018 TO 2022 STATISTICAL COLLECTION SCHEDULE

35. Table 2 shows the planned major national statistical collections for SPC member countries over the coming five years (2018–2022), which will form the basis for the design of the Regional Plan for Statistical Collections. The plan, however, will be designed over seven years with the last two years (2023–2024) dedicated to post-enumeration support (e.g. data processing, reporting and dissemination) for collections that finish in 2022.

36. It is noted that not all collections in Table 2 are resourced and that the required technical support has yet to be defined. It is also noted that the collection schedule presented in Table 2 differs from the TYPSS Calendar of Statistical Events (2016–2020)[1], which demonstrates the need for coordination and leadership so as to facilitate planning and resource mobilisation to support statistical collections.

37. The TYPSS PICTs Support Plan (2016–2020)[2] is an example of a coordinating mechanism that can be used to update parties on the status of planned collection and to identify collaborative opportunities and need for resource mobilisation. Such a document, however, needs to be regularly updated for it to remain useful. SDD, as system leader and its coordination function, is recommended to take on the role of maintaining the calendar of major statistical collections as well as developing and maintaining coordination mechanisms in support of the Regional Plan for Statistical Collections.

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[1] http://typss.org/documents/

[2] http://typss.org/documents/

5th Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics (HOPS)
Working Paper 5 – p. 12
HOPS 2017
Heads of Planning and Statistics

Table 2: Calendar of national statistical collections, 2017–2023 [to be updated on 13 November 2017]

PICT	Collection	Last completed	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
American Samoa (ASM)	Census	2010							
American Samoa (ASM)	HIES	2015							
American Samoa (ASM)	DHS/MISC/Disability								
American Samoa (ASM)	Other								
CNMI (MNP)	Census	2010							
CNMI (MNP)	HIES								
CNMI (MNP)	DHS/MISC/Disability								
CNMI (MNP)	Other								
Cook Islands (COK)	Census	2016					CEN		
Cook Islands (COK)	HIES	2015/16							
Cook Islands (COK)	DHS/MISC/Disability				DHS				
Cook Islands (COK)	Other								
Fiji (FJI)	Census	2017	CEN						
Fiji (FJI)	HIES	2013							
Fiji (FJI)	DHS/MISC/Disability					DHS			
Fiji (FJI)	Other								
French Polynesia (PYF)	Census	2012							
French Polynesia (PYF)	HIES	2000							
French Polynesia (PYF)	DHS/MISC/Disability								
French Polynesia (PYF)	Other								
FSM (FSM)	Census	2010				CEN			
FSM (FSM)	HIES	2014			HIES				
FSM (FSM)	DHS/MISC/Disability			DHS					
FSM (FSM)	Other								
Guam (GUM)	Census	2010							
Guam (GUM)	HIES								
Guam (GUM)	DHS/MISC/Disability								
Guam (GUM)	Other								
Kiribati (KIR)	Census	2015				CEN			
Kiribati (KIR)	HIES	2006		HIES					
Kiribati (KIR)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2009	DHS						
Kiribati (KIR)	Other								
Nauru (NRU)	Census	2012		CEN				CEN	
Nauru (NRU)	HIES	2012							
Nauru (NRU)	DHS/MISC/Disability			DHS					
Nauru (NRU)	Other								
New Caledonia (NCL)	Census	2014							
New Caledonia (NCL)	HIES	2008							
New Caledonia (NCL)	DHS/MISC/Disability								
New Caledonia (NCL)	Other								
Niue (NIU)	Census	2016							
Niue (NIU)	HIES	2015/16							
Niue (NIU)	DHS/MISC/Disability				DHS				
Niue (NIU)	Other								
Palau (PLW)	Census	2015				CEN			
Palau (PLW)	HIES	2014							
Palau (PLW)	DHS/MISC/Disability							DHS	
Palau (PLW)	Other								
PNG (PNG)	Census	2011				CEN			
PNG (PNG)	HIES	2008							
PNG (PNG)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2016							
PNG (PNG)	Other								
RMI (MHL)	Census	2011			CEN				
RMI (MHL)	HIES	2002		HIES					
RMI (MHL)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2007				DHS			
RMI (MHL)	Other								
Samoa (WSM)	Census	2016					CEN		
Samoa (WSM)	HIES	2013		HIES					
Samoa (WSM)	DHS/MISC/Disability					DHS			
Samoa (WSM)	Other		LFS						
Solomon islands (SLB)	Census	2009			CEN				
Solomon islands (SLB)	HIES	2012/13							
Solomon islands (SLB)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2015					DISAB		
Solomon islands (SLB)	Other		AGRIC	LFS					
Tokelau (TOK)	Census	2016							
Tokelau (TOK)	HIES	2015/16							
Tokelau (TOK)	DHS/MISC/Disability					DHS			
Tokelau (TOK)	Other								
Tonga (TON)	Census	2016					CEN		
Tonga (TON)	HIES	2015/16					CEN		
Tonga (TON)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2012		DISAB	DHS				
Tonga (TON)	Other		STEP/LFS						
Tuvalu (TUV)	Census	2017	CEN					CEN	
Tuvalu (TUV)	HIES	2015/16							
Tuvalu (TUV)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2007			DHS				
Tuvalu (TUV)	Other								
Vanuatu (VUT)	Census	2016					CEN		
Vanuatu (VUT)	HIES	2012		HIES					
Vanuatu (VUT)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2013							DHS
Vanuatu (VUT)	Other								
Wallis & Futuna (WLF)	Census	2013							
Wallis & Futuna (WLF)	HIES	2005		HIES					
Wallis & Futuna (WLF)	DHS/MISC/Disability	2014							
Wallis & Futuna (WLF)	Other								

38. The calendar of collections presented in Table 3 demonstrates that efficient and integrated statistical collection cycles are not always adhered to. As mentioned above, collections are often initiated by development partners or driven by funding availability, rather than by a well-planned schedule of statistical collections. This is by no means the error of the beneficiary (i.e. SPC member countries), it is a function of a lack of statistical system leadership and coordination among technical assistance providers and donors. Figure 1 presents an integrated 10-year collection cycle and work plan that is considered to be efficient and takes advantage of master sampling frames derived from censuses.

39. The advantages of adopting such a collection cycle are:

   a. A cost-effective approach that achieves economies of scale through one-off investment in certain activities or goods for the collection cycle, such a conducting the household listing or purchasing tablets for data capture, rather than investing in a collection-by-collection basis. This will reduce the per unit (marginal) cost as fixed costs will be spread over an increased number of collections.

   b. It allows for the establishment of core enumeration teams, or collection specialists within NSOs, who benefit from regular employment and who specialise in statistical collections, which will improve data quality and reduce the requirement for repetitive training before each collection. For example, if a core team becomes familiar with a particular data capture system, even if the questionnaire changes, there would be a reduced need for training on the use of the technology and data transfer.

   c. The use of a master sampling frame in a structured collection cycle allows for linking of datasets through the use of common household and/or individual identifiers, which presents a significant opportunity for exploiting various components of datasets to make more targeted and informed policy interventions.

   d. A fixed schedule of collections allows for all stakeholders to coordinate and plan their contribution to the collection. This is inclusive of: NSOs and line ministries mobilising resources and establishing work plans; technical assistance providers to coordinate the provision of technical assistance, define roles and establish work plans and associated budgets; donors who may have an appetite for investing in a structured statistical collection cycle, rather than in *ad hoc* and less efficient stand-alone collections; and data users who can plan their work around expected data release dates.

   e. A fixed collection cycle allows for a modulated approach to collections, whereby specific modules can be added to or removed from different collections as needed. This allows for regular updating of key indicators over time or for the reduction in questionnaire size when modules can be removed as it's been recently collected.
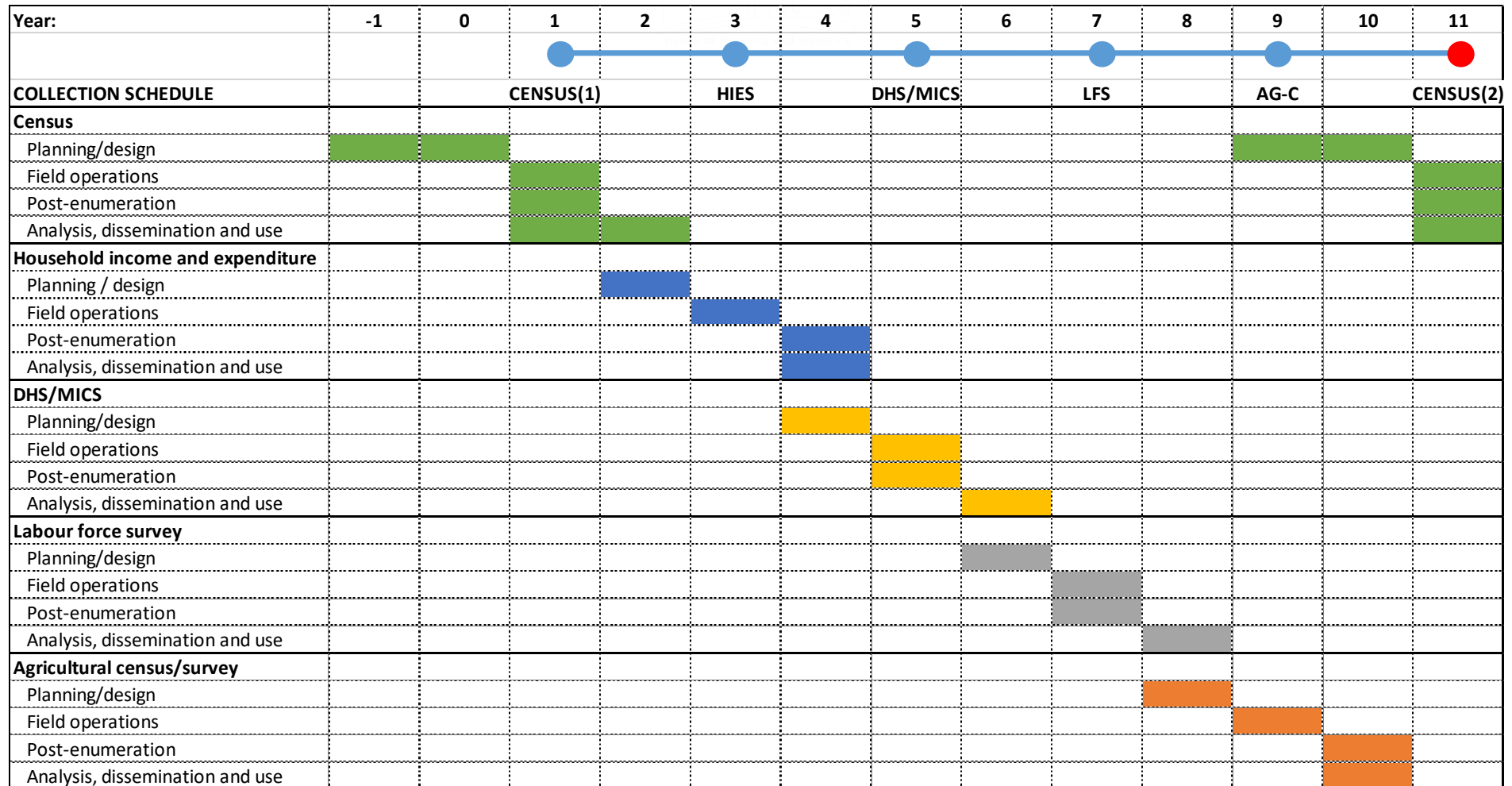
Year:	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
COLLECTION SCHEDULE			CENSUS(1)		HIES		DHS/MICS		LFS		AG-C		CENSUS(2)
Census													
Planning/design													
Field operations													
Post-enumeration													
Analysis, dissemination and use													
Household income and expenditure													
Planning / design													
Field operations													
Post-enumeration													
Analysis, dissemination and use													
DHS/MICS													
Planning/design													
Field operations													
Post-enumeration													
Analysis, dissemination and use													
Labour force survey													
Planning/design													
Field operations													
Post-enumeration													
Analysis, dissemination and use													
Agricultural census/survey													
Planning/design													
Field operations													
Post-enumeration													
Analysis, dissemination and use													

Figure 1. Example of an integrated and optimised collection schedule

RECOMMENDATIONS

40. Heads of Planning and Statistics are invited to:

    a. endorse the recommendation for coordinated partnership among development partners (technical assistance providers and donors) to support the next five years of national statistical collections in the Pacific Islands region;

    b. note the efficiency gained by adopting optimised statistical collection cycles; and

    c. endorse the proposal to prepare a five-year Regional Plan for Statistical Collections that defines an SPC member collection schedule and associated technical assistance provision, and identifies gaps and potential funding sources to support resource mobilisation.

APPENDIX 1: UNITED NATIONS–PACIFIC COMMUNITY CONCEPT NOTE

Support for the 2020 round of censuses and demographic and health surveys as an evidence-base to monitor national development priorities and Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific	
Duration	Seven years (2018–2024)
Countries	Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (14)
Expected Results	▪ Methodologies used in censuses and demographic and health surveys, aligned with international standards ▪ Use of technology particularly georeferenced data and use of tablets by all Pacific Island countries and territories ▪ Population and development data available for monitoring regionally prioritised Sustainable Development Goals and United Nations Pacific Strategy as well as providing baselines for effective humanitarian response ▪ Policy-oriented data products ▪ Strengthened capacity to use evidence among policy-makers and decision-makers ▪ Increased public availability of data to end users
Beneficiaries	national statistics offices, line ministries, development and/or humanitarian partners
Budget gap	USD 12.48 m

BACKGROUND

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require countries to adapt SDGs to their national context and priorities while ensuring that no one is left behind in its aspiration for inclusive sustained growth, respect for human rights, and ensuring universal access to basic social services. This global policy creates a huge implementation burden on small Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTS), which in many cases are financially and technically constrained. Furthermore, in order for countries to achieve these laudable goals, a strong results framework must be in place, and the development of this framework will rely heavily on data to inform national and sectoral policy development and decision-making. Additionally, baselines need to be established and monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs must be made.

> SDGs using population data:
> ✓ 14 of the 17 goals
> ✓ 95 of the 230 indicators
>
> Example SDG health indicators provided by censuses and demographic and health surveys:
> ✓ Maternal mortality
> ✓ Neonatal mortality
> ✓ Under-five mortality
> ✓ Adolescent birth rate
> ✓ Skilled birth attendance
> ✓ Family planning needs satisfied.

Ninety-five of the SDG indicators, distributed among 14 of the 17 goals require population data disaggregated by size, sex, age, disabilities and ideally by geographical areas and socioeconomic groups, as well as other relevant characteristics. Thus, the demand for high-quality population data that identifies the most vulnerable, is intensified. Of the 231 SGD indicators, 71 are household-based and available mainly through surveys. While the comprehensive inventory of data is currently being worked on for the Pacific, with ongoing methodological work on some indicators, demographic and health (DHS) surveys can potentially collect up to 69 of the 71 household-based indicators.

Population data must be analysed within the context of the dynamics that affect sex and age structure, and geographical distribution, and this includes access to reproductive health, gender equality and women's empowerment as well as opportunities for young people to realise their full potential. Migration, urbanisation, and mortality and morbidity patterns are the results of and determinants of population dynamics. Population and housing censuses (PHCs) and DHSs are still key to filling the population data gaps in the Pacific where administrative data – particularly in the social sectors that provide services to women,

youth, the aging and disabled – need to be strengthened. PHC data provide selected socioeconomic indicators that can be disaggregated by gender and small geographic areas, thus facilitating the targeting of vulnerable groups in programme work, particularly in the humanitarian context. In developing countries, the population data required as the denominator for the estimation of most indicators are sourced from the census or projections based on censuses. The DHS complements the census by providing key health indicators, which further advances the understanding of population trends in developing countries. By adding modules on domestic violence and disability, valuable additional information to identify vulnerabilities can be obtained.

The Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy Phase 2 has four out of five objectives within which this proposed regional partnership for technical assistance falls. Specifically, the proposed partnership falls under Objective 1, which addresses data collection that includes financial and technical support to population and housing censuses. Objective 2 is related to production of agreed on core statistics and which includes the production of SDG indicators and other core statistics. Objective 4 addresses the standardisation of systems and tools, including standard census questionnaires and processing systems. Reporting on progress for the proposed partnership would be addressed under Objective 5, where the process of the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee and Heads of Planning and Statistics are covered.

While investments in population-based data such as censuses and DHSs may, at first sight, appear to be expensive, poor development decisions – including responses in humanitarian situations based on poor data quality – can, in the long run, be much more costly.

PROPOSED PROGRAMME

F. Rationale

Table I shows the date for which a census and DHS (for countries that have already expressed an interest in a DHS) is scheduled: 2018 DHSs in Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu; 2019 DHS in Samoa; 2020 DHSs in Solomon Islands and Tonga; 2019 censuses in the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; 2020 censuses in FSM, Kiribati and Palau; 2021 censuses in Cook Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Tokelau and Tonga; and in 2022 censuses in Niue and Tuvalu. While PICTs have a long tradition of census taking, and an interest in conducting DHSs, they have needed varying levels of support, ranging from specialised technical support to extensive financial and implementation support throughout the process. Hence, it is important that PICTs be supported to ensure the timely availability of high-quality population data from PHCs and DHSs, and the analysis, dissemination and use of the resulting data. In parallel, support needs to be provided to strengthening administrative information systems in social sectors such as health, education and CRVS, for sustainable routine information collection.   Eventually, it is expected that there will be less reliance on PHCs and DHSs for selected indicators. One way of doing this in a more efficient and cost-effective manner is to increase partnership and collaboration among technical agencies working in the Pacific. Many of the United Nations agencies based in the Pacific are involved in various initiatives in support of national data collection efforts.

> **Advanced planning ensures efficient and effective use of resources, and results in timely and high-quality data.**
>
> Advantages of a coherent approach among development agencies to census and demographic and health survey implementation:
>
> ✓ Responds to framework of regionalisation
>
> ✓ Facilitates comparative analyses.
>
> ✓ Encourages South-South and triangular cooperation
>
> ✓ Promotes regional level sharing of knowledge and good practices.

Among the UN agencies, UNFPA is recognised as the lead agency in the provision of technical support to census implementation and DHSs. Other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNESCAP and WHO, have strong technical expertise with health surveys among which is the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) led by UNICEF, and the domestic violence research led by WHO. Partnerships with other UN agencies extend

access to technical support and resources from the wider UN system in this region and globally. SPC, which is the technical and scientific arm of the integration movement in the Pacific, has been very active in providing technical support to statistics, including censuses in the Pacific Islands region. Samoa and Fiji are members of the Inter-agency Expert Group (IAEG) on the SDG Monitoring Framework, and collectively have a wealth of experience to share with other PICTs. Although at varying levels of statistical capacity, NSOs in the region do have specific strengths and experiences to share. Thus, the preparation of this concept note has been led by UNFPA in close collaboration with UNICEF and SPC, with the intention to ensure further engagement of the wider statistical community in the Pacific, including NSOs and other development partners building on each partner's comparative advantage in data collection, analysis, dissemination and utilisation. The initiative seeks to provide support to PICTs for the 2020 round of PHCs and 2018–2022 of DHSs, with a focus on Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Marshal Islands, FSM, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Niue, Palau and Tokelau.

Table 1: Schedule of planned population and housing censuses and demographic and health surveys for 2017–2022.

Year / Activity	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Census	Fiji, Niue (mini) Tuvalu (mini)		Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu	Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG)	Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga	Nauru, Tuvalu
DHS	PNG	Kiribati, FSM	Fiji, Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue	Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga	Palau, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	
Other (e.g. HIES) TBD	Agriculture survey (Solomon Islands), HIES (Marshall Islands), labour force survey (Samoa), disability survey (Tonga)	HIES (PNG, Vanuatu, Samoa) labour force survey (Solomon Islands)	HIES (Kiribati, FSM)			

G. Description

This concept note is designed to ensure that robust and disaggregated population data are available across PICTs. It proposes a coherent approach among all involved agencies to ensure that each PICT receives the necessary financial, operational and technical support to enable it to successfully carry out the 2020 round of PHCs and the 2018–2022 round of DHSs, while simultaneously strengthening their hospital information system (HIS) for more routine reporting of key health indicators. The initiative will be realised through partnerships among UN agencies, regional development partners and NSOs in accordance with each agencies' data interest and comparative advantage in the data collection process. Although the necessary support will be provided for the preparatory and implementation phases of PHCs and

> **Data needs satisfied:**
>
> ✓ Population data available for calculation of a wide range of SDG indicators
>
> ✓ Baselines established for country prioritized SDGs
>
> ✓ Progress measured
>
> ✓ Disaggregated population data available for effective humanitarian response.

DHSs, and to overall strengthening of the HIS, to ensure that high-quality data are collected, the focus of this initiative will be to provide support to the analyses, dissemination and utilisation of the information acquired from such activities up until 2024, which coincides with the official date of completion of the 2020 round of censuses. The overall goal of this proposal is to complement the technical resources available at the country level for each PICT. It assumes the commitment of the participating governments to provide the support needed to NSOs and ministries of health, which traditionally have the operational responsibilities. The joint undertaking should also provide a coordinated approach and enable Pacific stakeholders in PHC and DHS to identify synergies, to achieve economies of scale and to avoid duplication of efforts, thereby contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of national and regional processes and a successful outcome in these three activities. It is generally accepted that PICTs have many commonalties, hence it should not be particularly challenging to take a regional approach in the areas of methodology, technology, training, procurement of equipment and services, and implementation. The analytical information derived subsequently should be comparable at the regional level and common approaches can be taken to ensure dissemination and utilisation.

H. Programme duration: January 2018–December 2024

It is proposed that the duration of this activity be a minimum of seven years to ensure that post-enumeration support is provided to countries conducting their census in 2022. However, the aim is that each country release, on a timely basis, its data in relation to its individual census date to ensure relevance to users. Countries should aim to have their population reports released within one year of the enumeration date and analytical products within specified reasonable timeframes, ideally within two years of completion of the PHC and/or DHS fieldwork.

I. Target countries

The 14 countries and territories covered by both the UN system and SPC will be included in this initiative: Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, RMI, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Countries will be supported according to capacity gaps.

J. Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries will be NSOs, which are responsible for implementing PHCs and DHSs, and ministries of health with oversight of the HIS. Intermediate beneficiaries will be policy-makers and programme managers in line ministries, and development and humanitarian agencies. The ultimate beneficiaries will be the most vulnerable who will benefit through strong evidence-based programmes.

JOINT PROGRAM RESULTS

A. Objective

The general objective of the project is to produce management tools for evidence-based policy development and decision-making, including targeted response to vulnerable populations during humanitarian response, in the form of relevant, reliable and timely scientific analysis and data dissemination products and accessible online data. In this way, this initiative will make a contribution to sustainable development in PICTs and the quality of life of their people.

B. Outcome

National development plans, including humanitarian response plans and sectoral strategies, reflect evidence-based targets designed to reach the furthest behind.

C. Outputs

1. Methodologies used in censuses and DHSs aligned with international standards.

2. Use of technology, particularly georeferenced data and use of tablets, by all PICTS.

3. Population and demographic data available for monitoring regionally prioritised SDGs and the UN Pacific Strategy, as well as for providing baselines for effective humanitarian responses.

4. Policy-oriented data products.

5. Strengthened capacity in use of evidence among policy- and decision-makers.

6. Increased public availability of data to end users.

Unpacking OUTPUT 4:

✓ Support user-producer workshops and consultations on data dissemination

✓ Support NSOs' development of services for advanced analysis upon request for users

✓ Link data sources to support access to information that is theme-oriented rather than source-oriented

Unpacking OUTPUT 6:

✓ Promote the use of available technologies for dissemination.

PARTNERS AND COORDINATION

The initiative will be led by UNFPA in very close collaboration with UNICEF and SPC. These agencies will play a coordinating role among development agencies, including the wider UN system, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand, PARIS21, development partners (e.g. Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and New Zealand Ministry of Finance and Trade), and other donors, national statistical agencies and line ministries with data collection responsibilities.

Four broad areas of support can be readily identified: design/preparatory, field operations, post-enumeration phase, and data analysis, dissemination and use. Specific activities can be itemized within each broad area. As a first step these would need to be refined and aligned with country strengths and capacity gaps and countries grouped accordingly to maximise efficiencies. Activities will be classified into regional and/or national activities and an overall timeline for the implementation of these activities developed. It would be preferable for bilateral and/or multi-lateral partners to fund common needs or activities at the regional level. However, they would also have the option of funding national-level activities, if that is their preference. The work plan will be structured in such a way as to start off with critical preparatory activities as soon as possible. Monitoring mechanisms, communication mechanisms, evaluation plan and disbursement plan will be formulated for the overall work plan.

INDICATIVE BUDGET

The below provides indicative costs. When developing the full proposal, costs will be disaggregated at the country level by census/DHS component which will provide Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Ministry of Finance and Trade, European Union, Asian Development Bank and other donors with options on funding approaches.

Table 2: Gap analysis (in US dollars)

Country (Census/DHS)	Total estimated cost[1]	Country contribution[2]	UN Pacific contribution [3]	SPC contribution	Total available	Gap
Census	21.57	12.94	2.56	0.63	16.12	5.44
DHS	13.76	3.44	3.28	-	6.72	7.04
TOTAL	35.32	16.38	5.84	0.63	22.84	12.48

[1] Based on recent average per capita cost, using approximate 2019 population estimates of each country.
[2] Based on average percentage of total cost historically financed by country, around 60% for census and 25% for DHS
[3] Including only from the United Nations Population Fun