

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rationale

The Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) is a regional framework for mobilising resources for statistical capacity development and support, through priority setting and coordination. TYPSS is being implemented in three phases, and the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned this mid term evaluation of Phase II to assess progress and inform the design of Phase III.

Previous evaluations and reviews have highlighted that while progress has been achieved in improving statistical capacity and quality, this progress has been hampered by poor coordination, resource constraints and limited governance and accountability for implementation of the TYPSS.

Progress

This mid term evaluation of Phase II suggests that there continues to be improvement in capacity, particularly through support for major statistical collections, assistance in development of a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in selected Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) and targeted technical assistance.

At the technical and activity level the TYPSS has been effective, particularly in supporting data collection and dissemination across the Region. However, at the strategic level, the issues previously identified remain, and are impeding progress in the implementation of the TYPSS. For this reason, the analysis in this report focuses on the strategic level issues, rather than technical aspects of TYPSS implementation.

The full analysis of progress has been constrained by the limited availability of monitoring data, which is one of the strategic issues impacting the TYPSS and which is a key focus in the ensuing analysis.

Future Directions

The intent of the TYPSS Phase II included strengthening the leadership and governance role of the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee (PSSC), improving coordination, improved monitoring and reporting, differentiating support, shifting the focus from the National Statistical Organisation (NSO) to the National Statistical System (NSS), prioritising NSDS implementation, supporting the utilisation of technology, responding to emerging data needs and improving analytical capacity. This strategic intent remains relevant for TYPSS Phase III and in some cases is now more urgent, although this will have resource implications. Based on our evaluation, Sustineo recommends the following design principles and priorities that **in particular** should inform consideration of the TYPSS Phase III design.

- **Adopt sustainable approaches to the development of statistical capacity in the Region** – enhance education and training systems so they are linked to a clearly defined capability framework that guides the strengthening of individual, organisational, national and regional capacity.
- **Strengthen governance** – drive implementation and ensure accountability for the achievement of the TYPSS objectives.
- **Delineate between governance and implementation** – reflect this clearly in the terms of reference, roles and responsibilities for all parts of the system.
- **Adopt a staged approach** – identify short, medium and long term regional and national priorities and targets (a TYPSS Strategic Implementation Plan or Roadmap that sets the broad vision for the next ten years and beyond the end of Phase III) with annual priorities for the next three years.

- **Clearly differentiate between regional and national activities** – demonstrate how TYPSS supports capacity at a national level compared to efforts at the regional level.
- **Provide individualised and differentiated capacity development and support / supplementation** – clarify the approach to support or supplementation provided to statistical systems that reflects national capacity, context and need.
- **Develop clear, measurable and achievable objectives for the remaining three years of the strategy** – the short timeframe remaining demands that realistic priorities are agreed, which can be achieved with the available resources.
- **Ensure closer monitoring of progress** – develop more effective ways to track and report progress.
- **Improve coordination** – among all actors across the TYPSS.
- **Promote South-South cooperation** – build on existing examples and successes to harness expertise and experience in PICTs to support and share with other PICTs.
- **Develop the strategy for Phase III with the needs for the next ten years in mind** – the short term priorities should be guided by a broad vision for the Region’s statistical system over the next ten years.

1.1 Recommended Strategies

A Strategic Approach to Implementation

Understanding and Prioritising Capacity Needs and Gaps

The planning and implementation of TYPSS statistical development and support activities should be underpinned by a consolidated understanding of national capacities and needs across the Region, including data needs, in order to inform targeting and prioritisation of an individualised program of support for each PICT, as well as regional activities.

Recommendation 1

That assessments of the capacity of PICTs be consolidated to support prioritisation of capacity support and development activities, and linked to the TYPSS implementation and monitoring processes in order measure and benchmark capacity development and inform prioritisation and targeting of support activities.

Differentiating Regional and National Approaches

The design and scheduling of support activities for individual PICTs should be underpinned by a support model that identifies the range of national and regional support activities to be delivered and how they can be differentiated across PICTs to meet individualised needs, for example through simplifying or staging the support activity or process.

Recommendation 2

That the provision of TYPSS statistical development and support activities be underpinned by a support model that articulates the types of regional and national activities and approaches to individualising and differentiating delivery for each PICT.

Developing the TYPSS Roadmap

A TYPSS Strategic Implementation Plan or Roadmap is needed to support annual work planning and should be informed by a consolidated view of capacity assessment discussed previously and be linked to the TYPSS monitoring processes.

Recommendation 3

That implementation of the TYPSS be supported by a TYPSS Roadmap that identifies goals, targets and activities for each PICT and for the Region over the short, medium and long term.

Strengthening Governance and Monitoring

Governance to Drive and Monitor Implementation

The role of PSSC should be more focused on strategy setting, oversight and monitoring of implementation progress and accountability, and the governance structure strengthened to support this. A future governance model for TYPSS should include:

- PSSC performing the role of a TYPSS governance ‘board’ (rather than a representative body), responsible for setting, monitoring and adjusting TYPSS implementation
- a separate TYPSS Partner Forum to facilitate information sharing and mutual support
- expert / task groups such as the Expert Working Groups, a Methods Board etc.

Recommendation 4

That PSSC, in strengthening its governance arrangements, should adopt elements of an independent board governance model and should establish a Partner Forum (both physical and virtual) separate from PSSC.

Measuring Progress and Performance

The recently developed Monitoring Framework and process for the collection and reporting of progress and performance data needs to be finalised and implemented to support PSSC’s governance role.

Recommendation 5

That a systematic and routine approach to progress and performance monitoring and reporting of TYPSS activities, which is linked to the TYPSS Roadmap (and based on national priorities set through NSDS processes) be adopted, resourced, and supported by NSOs and other TYPSS partners.

Supporting Implementation

Confirm and resource SDD as the ‘implementation arm’ of TYPSS as it repositions towards a strategy development, coordination and performance measurement role.

Recommendation 6

That SDD’s role as the implementation arm of TYPSS be strengthened and appropriately resourced with a greater focus on strategy development, coordination and planning and brokering support across donors and development partners.

Harnessing and Mobilising Expert Advice and Assistance

Establish clear structures and mechanisms to engage TYPSS partners and mobilise expert and specialist statistical advice.

Prioritising the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

While the NSDS process is effective and valued by PICTs, full implementation across the Pacific has not yet been achieved and this needs to be a priority for the TYPSS.

Recommendation 7

Recognising that the development and implementation of NSDS by all PICTs underpins the TYPSS regional strategy and is a priority for the remainder of the TYPSS term, opportunities for additional support to PICTs to develop their NSDS be considered as a priority.

Supporting Data Production, Use and Dissemination

In adopting a differentiated approach to support, reflecting varying national capacity, needs and context, there is a need for expert statistical advice and assistance to develop more appropriate and scaled-down approaches to support small PICTs, which can be facilitated by harnessing expert statistical agencies through the establishment of a Methods Board.

Recommendation 8

That a regional Methods Board be established, under the TYPSS and supported by SDD, to provide expert advice and support on statistical methodological approaches that address specific NSO data production needs.

Strengthening the Approach to Developing Individual Capabilities

As there is a significant investment in staff training across the Region through both time and course costs, and for some PICTs there are significant statistical workforce challenges, the approach to learning and development needs to be underpinned by a more strategic and coherent approach.

It is appropriate then that the TYPSS be supported by a Capability Development Framework identifying pathways and opportunities for developing statistical capabilities through formal and informal learning and development with accreditation pathways, and linked to pre-employment training.

Recommendation 9

That the TYPSS be underpinned by a Capability Development Framework that informs the provision of individual learning and development opportunities.