

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

REGIONAL MEETING OF HEADS OF PLANNING AND HEADS OF STATISTICS (HOPS)

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 22–26 July 2013)

*Future directions for evidence-based decision making in the Pacific*

**INDICATORS FOR MONITORING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

(Document prepared by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)

**PURPOSE**

1. In the six years since 2007 when the Human Development Programme (HDP) first presented its statistical information needs to the HOPS<sup>1</sup> it is timely to reflect on the achievements made in the areas of statistics for informed policy and decision making for gender, culture and youth and how these could be improved.

**BACKGROUND**

2. HDP's mandate is to assist Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) with the design and delivery of social policy, programmes and services. It does this through promoting an integrated approach to human and social development; mainstreaming gender equality, youth and culture in development and governance policy; improving the knowledge and information base for human development approaches; and strengthening partnerships and networks with community-based organisations and civil society to strengthen their role in human development policy and processes. Programme components include: policy advice, training and capacity building, technical assistance, research, partnership and network building; and complementary advocacy, communication and information approaches.

3. In 2007 the newly formed HDP introduced National Statistics Offices (NSOs) and National Planning Offices (NPOs) to its statistical information requirements and specifically the Gender Statistics Framework which was endorsed and supported. Work on collecting and compiling gender statistics and drafting an analytical evidence based 'gender profile' began in the Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu. At the 2010 HOPS the statistics required for the cultural sector were outlined<sup>2</sup> which have been developed and elaborated on in The Regional Culture Strategy 2010 – 2020 which contains a summary of indicators and activities for each of the 10 goals in the strategy.

4. As a result of the economic crisis and rapid socio-demographic changes, interest in 'social' statistics and 'well-being' indicators has been revived globally. Statistics are being used to determine the extent to

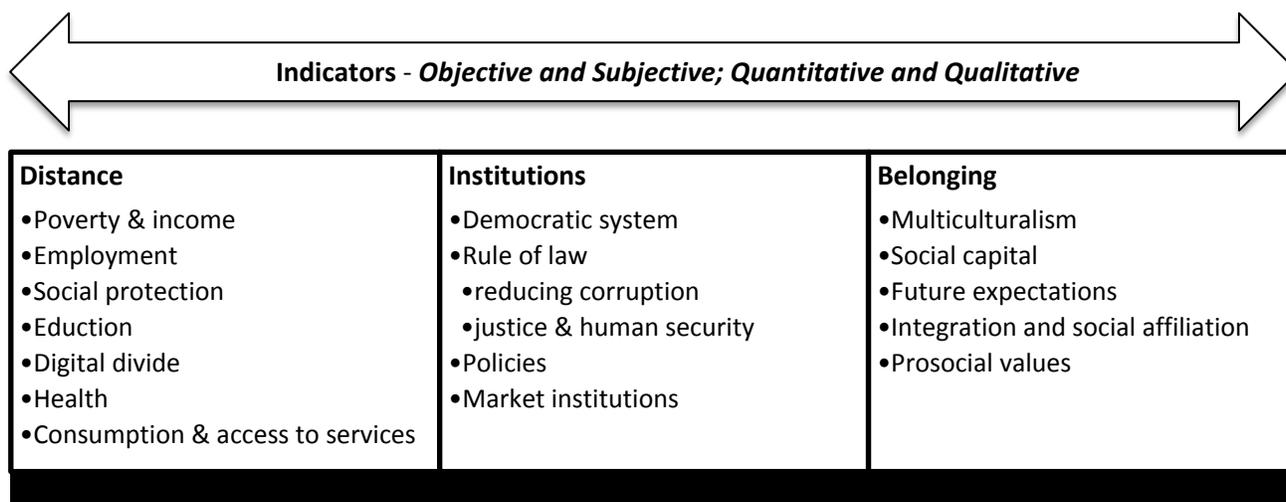
---

<sup>1</sup> SPC/HOPS 2007/Working Paper 6.1

<sup>2</sup> SPC/HOPS 2010/Information Paper 11.

which a person possesses the physical, social, and personal resources to identify and achieve personal aspirations, satisfy needs, and cope with the environment. Social indicator frameworks that were established in many countries in the 1970's and 1980's are no longer effective to measure increasingly complex social issues in areas of newly emerging social problems and progress of social welfare as examples. Statistical indicators and frameworks are now based around "pressure-state-response" models with multiple dimensions and components beyond purely quantitative statistics. Figure 1 illustrates this approach with the subject areas for statistical indicators to measure social cohesion as an example of how complex statistical demands have become.

**Figure 1: Possible components and dimensions of a set of social cohesion indicators**



5. In sum, the demand for statistics for informed social policy development and review is unprecedented. On the demand side social policy agencies are not well informed enough about the available statistics and the available indicators which could be used to monitor policy interventions. On the supply side NSOs are grappling with increasingly complex requests for statistical information with mixed progress and many users with unmet need for statistics and unsatisfied demand.

6. The HDP provided input to the mid-term review of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) through a paper looking at the TYPSS contribution and effectiveness to improved gender and culture statistics in the region and how these could be scaled up. The review noted Statistics for Development Division's (SDD's) limited technical resources to meet the demands for gender and culture statistics and analysis from its existing household surveys and census data, let alone a framework such as Figure 1. Arguably this is not the role of SDD as this is far removed from their mandate to support national statistics and planning offices. Many PICT gender and culture focal points are marginalised in their own national statistical priority setting and are barely able to articulate their statistical needs, much less know where to get the information, organise it, and analyse it and interpret it. The summary of recommendations from the review paper is in Annex 1.

7. Four distinct examples of the slow progress made for improving social statistics are disconcerting in what they reveal in the rift between the supply and the demand for statistical information for social policy and reporting:

- a. In its concluding comments on the review of Pacific Island Country (PIC) reports (initial and periodic) for the past 10 years, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) has consistently called for wider coverage of statistical information to support the narrative and that the statistics in the report need to be timely;
- b. Many PICs have now completed two progress reports towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Very few adhered to the revised reporting guidelines which suggested that reports include, amongst other analysis of progress, “inequality analysis (by geographic region, rural/urban location, gender or socioeconomic groups) in both initial levels of achievement against particular targets, as well as the trends on progress.”<sup>3</sup>
- c. The lack of informed discussion and debate about sensitive issues relating to custom and tradition, violence, suicide, the erosion of social protection systems (traditional and state paid cash-transfers), the burden of unpaid work and so on.
- d. The 2013 Regional MDG Tracking Report focus chapter is gender equality and empowering women and highlights the lack of data for post secondary education, labour markets and productivity rates, unpaid work, sexual harassment, the inadequacy of ‘sex of household head’ in gender analysis; although the chapter notes that progress has been made in other areas such as demographic and health surveys.

8. Considerable resources, effort and expertise are required to collect information about specific policy issues for gender and culture, and this is the obvious reason for this schism. However in this situation where do social sector policy analysts turn to get assistance for their statistical information needs? The blend of statistical and policy expertise required is not available from any of the regional organisations and is at best provided through donor funded projects. For example sexual and gender based violence statistics are now available for some countries, based on the collaborative efforts of SPC, UNFPA and WHO with the complex analysis required completed by consultants who invariably produce lengthy and technical reports which are not policy responsive so the data collected is not used in a meaningful way for policy development or cost-benefit analysis for different interventions and strategies and so on. In these areas it is very difficult to say where the work of the NSO with SPC support ends and realistically with the lack of analytical skills in the social sector considerable training and technical assistance will be required, much less resources.

9. The process for the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) offers social policy makers an entry into the statistical decision making and resource allocation process, but they have to be savvy enough to engage in the lengthy review process, make their voice heard amongst the other demands and gain entry into the prioritised list of statistical activities for the next 10 years. This is where experts from

---

<sup>3</sup> UNDG “Addendum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Guidance Note on Country Reporting on the Millennium Development Goals”, November 2009.

SPC need to assist PICTs in developing statistical standards and methods for the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics about gender equality, social cohesion, cultural capital and so on.

#### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

10. The meeting is invited to comment on the role of statistics and planning agencies to:
  - a. address unmet needs of social sector agencies in government and civil society for timely, reliable and user-friendly statistical information (quantitative and qualitative) for informed decision making, policy development and advocacy activities and how SPC could improve capacity in this area;
  - b. meet specific information and reporting needs pertaining to the monitoring of human development (particularly in the areas of gender equality and youth and other vulnerable groups as well as culture) and address national, regional and international reporting requirements which are now annual;
  - c. develop human capacity in social development agencies, to compile, maintain and utilize social databases for ongoing monitoring and reporting activities in their sector;
  - d. assist in the analysis of data and effective dissemination of information pertaining to sensitive issues such as access to and control over resources (including hardship and poverty), violence against women, adequacy of social transfers and welfare systems, social cohesion and well-being and the sexual abuse of children and youth.

Annex 1:

## **Contribution and effectiveness to improved gender and culture statistics in the region**

### **Review of Phase 1 (2011 – 2014) Action Plan of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy**

#### **Executive Summary**

The first phase of the Action Plan of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) from 2011 to 2014 is extremely ambitious in its focus to develop region wide approaches and solutions to statistical collections, methodologies and knowledge management to assist the alignment of statistical outputs with policy monitoring and meeting reporting requirements. It undertakes to assist Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) to produce survey outputs within six to 12 months after completion of household surveys and 12 to 18 months after Census enumeration.

Substantial progress has been achieved through the collaborative efforts of the Statistics and Demography Program (SDP), National Statistics Offices (NSOs), governments, and international technical partners and donors. Existing objectives and outputs for household surveys, more effective use of administrative data and economic statistics must be sustained while other activities in strategic areas are scaled up.

The collection of statistics for policy monitoring frameworks for gender and culture is one such strategic area where activities must be scaled up. Currently the SDP does not have sufficient technical resources to meet the statistical demands for gender and culture statistics and analysis from its household surveys and census data. Statistical indicators measuring impacts are increasingly part of national gender and culture policy frameworks but the quantitative and qualitative information required is not available. The SDP does not have the resources to assist national focal points conduct the in-country work required to collect and compile such information.

Gender and culture statistics are a sub-discipline of social statistics; and it is unreasonable to assume that the existing expertise in the SDP can meet PICT needs for gender and culture statistics. Arguably nor should they as this is far removed from their mandate to support national statistics and planning offices. Many PICT gender and culture focal points are marginalised in their own national statistical priority setting and are barely able to articulate their statistical needs, much less know where to get the information, organise it, and analyse it and interpret it.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **1. Create a new social statistician position**

SDP secure funding for a social statistician to be outsourced to the Human Development Programme (HDP) with sufficient resources for in country training and technical assistance.

##### **2. Review the Pacific Islands Model Population and Housing Form**

Gender and culture statistics experts review The Pacific Islands Model Population and Housing Form to ensure that best practice is incorporated into the guide. All major survey outputs, including Census, at

the minimum, present sex disaggregated data with separate sections containing analysis of relevant gender and culture topics.

3. Review PICT outputs

The SPC needs to assist PICTs to review their household and census survey 10-year program, to ensure that the supply of statistical information meets demand.

4. Assist PICTs develop strategic plans for statistics

The SPC needs to assist all PICTs to develop national strategies for the development of statistics with engagement from gender and culture focal points.

5. Develop and implement NDMI standards include all sex disaggregated indicators in gender and update culture indicators

The SDP create a guide for NMDI indicators and document the updating process building on the current meta data available, the periodicity of updating, quality control checks used.

6. NMDI website queries for gender return all population based and other relevant indicators as sex disaggregated.

7. The NMDI culture theme indicators to be updated from the 2010 round of censuses.

8. Regional harmonisation and infrastructure to meet needs for gender and culture statistics

The SDP needs to intensify its work on implementing regional standards, classifications and frameworks which should incorporate the recommendations of gender and culture statistics experts.