

Pacific Community
Statistics for Development Division

Strategic Plan 2015 – 2017

1 Introduction

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is an international organisation that provides technical and policy advice and assistance, training and research services to its Pacific Island members. SPC works in a wide range of sectors with the aim of achieving three development outcomes – sustainable economic development, sustainable natural resource management and development, and sustainable human and social development. SPC's work programme is determined by its members, and all regional initiatives aim to support members' national policies and plans.

The Statistics for Development Division (SDD) is the youngest of SPC's seven thematic divisions. It was established in November 2012 as an outcome of SPC's internal reform process, with the 2012 Independent External Review recommending that, in view of the important role of statistics in policy development and investment decisions, the Statistics for Development Programme (SDP) should be made a stand-alone division of SPC. This recommendation was endorsed by SPC's governing body, the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA), at its meeting in November 2012.

SDD's work is currently organised around three core functions:

Statistical collections

This area comprises provision of technical assistance and professional capacity development to support a regular programme of population and housing censuses and household surveys in Pacific Island member countries.

Our technical support covers all aspects of the census and survey cycle, from questionnaire design and preparation of census cartography, to training of field staff, data processing, tabulation, analysis, and reporting and dissemination of results. Without dedicated technical support of this nature, most member countries would struggle to carry out such major collections. This service is often referred to as a *regional public good*, given both the quality of service provided and the fact that SPC is the only dedicated provider.

Sector statistics

The bulk of SDD's sector work focuses on economic and social statistics, with other thematic statistical work covered by other SPC divisions. We have a shared work programme with many of these divisions, including with programmes focusing on agriculture, gender, energy and transport statistics.

Current priority areas in economic statistics focus on trade and business statistics and prices, with other areas such as national accounts and government finance statistics addressed by colleagues from PFTAC (Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre) and ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

The priority focus in social statistics is on demographic, educational and vital statistics. This area includes associated collection and information management systems, such as civil registration and education management information systems.

Data dissemination

SDD's third core function is ensuring the accessibility of available statistical data and information. This work involves creating multiple products targeting different user needs. Products include printed material in the form of statistical tables and reports, thematic analyses, population atlases, posters and infographics, and web-based information dissemination, e.g.:

- The *Pacific Regional Management information System* (PRISM) is a popular portal through which users can access national statistical offices' websites and databases, and SPC-produced regional tables and analytical reports (www.spc.int/prism).

- The National Minimum Development Indicator (NMDI) database contains 200+ statistical indicators across a broad range of themes (www.spc.int/nmd), including all population-based MDG indicators (www.spc.int/mdg). This will be gradually replaced by a Sustainable Development Indicator (SDG) folder, once the final set of SDG indicators become available in the first half of 2016.

2 Setting the scene – Pacific Statistics Strategy Action Plan, Phase 1, 2011–2014

Since 2011, programme activities have been guided by the *Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPPS) 2011–2020*, which was endorsed as a long-term strategic plan for the development of statistics across the Pacific Island region by the region’s key statistical stakeholders, i.e. the Second Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics in July 2010 (the meeting is held every three years), the annual Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and the biennial Conference of the Pacific Community in November 2009.

Development of the ten-year regional strategy was initiated by SPC following the call from Pacific leaders in the Pacific Plan (2005) for an ‘upgrade and extension of country and regional statistical information systems and databases across all sectors’, including greater harmonisation of statistical systems, standards and classifications. Its development was also informed by the *Regional Statistical Benchmarking Study* that was initiated by Forum Economic Ministers and jointly commissioned by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and SPC in 2008–2009. The study highlighted key data gaps requiring both immediate and medium to long-term attention. Given strong political support from the region’s Forum Economic Ministers and SPC’s own conference in late 2009, which re-emphasised the need for a regional approach to promote statistical development, SPC commissioned the development of a long-term regional strategy.

The resulting TYPPS provided a framework for improving the range, timeliness and quality of official statistics through statistical compilation and analysis, national statistical planning, donor coordination and better resource utilisation. It also recognised the importance of strategic sequencing of statistical development initiatives in three phases: 2011–2014, 2015–2017 and 2018–2020.

Following endorsement of TYPPS, SDD developed its strategic plan for 2011–2014. The plan had the advantages of being nested in a comprehensive and long-term regional strategy for the development of statistics, and of addressing core recommendations contained in the Pacific Plan’s Strategic Objective 12.4, which spelt out immediate statistical priorities.

The Pacific Plan had a pragmatic focus on plugging key data gaps and developing common statistical systems and standards, while the focus of Phase 1 of TYPPS was on ‘*actions that can be taken early which will influence future decision-making*’ (e.g. develop/formalise processes for governance of the regional statistical infrastructure; regular release of statistics), and ‘*activities that need to be put in place in the first phase of this ten-year plan*’ (e.g. develop a technology base for official statistical activity in Pacific Island countries; complete the 2010 round of population censuses, with a priority on using region-wide systems and tools). Together, the Pacific Plan and TYPPS provided solid **strategic guidance** and **political relevance** for the development of SDD’s 2011–2014 strategic plan.

Key achievements of TYPPS Phase 1

The mid-term review of TYPPS Phase-1 highlighted many achievements involving not only the work of SPC with individual countries, but also that of bilateral and multilateral development partners, with most of these partners being current members of the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee (PSSC).

Key highlights of SPC’s statistical activities, development, leadership, and technical collaboration with other partners included:

- improved statistical capacity in several countries, as illustrated by their growing capacity to undertake regular core collections, process and tabulate data, and disseminate results, as well as formulate long-term strategies for statistical development;
- greater availability of, and better access to a broad range of national and regional data through SPC's PRISM website (www.spc.int/prism) and the NMDI database (www.spc.int/nmdi), which was developed as a direct response to the call by Pacific leaders for a core set of statistics and indicators across sectors;
- improvements in data quality, timeliness and added value, with greater disaggregation of population-referenced statistics and indicators by gender and other socio-economic dimensions, and at different levels of geography.

These successes were possible thanks to the commitment by countries to a more regular programme of statistical collection, and **increased financial support from development partners for their efforts**. Without this commitment and support, the 15 Pacific Island countries and six territories targeted under TYPSS would not have achieved 100% census coverage during the 2010 world round of censuses. Similarly, nine countries would not have been able to complete a Demography and Health Survey (DHS – 4 countries) or Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES – 5 countries) between 2011 and 2014, thus generating the statistical data needed to measure and report on their progress towards achieving both national and international (MDGs) development goals.

Two other developments have contributed to building statistical capacity – improved partner coordination, and sharing of skills and resources.

- The positive impact of **improved partner coordination** is illustrated at two levels: (1) regular contact, improved communication and better coordination of statistical development and activities undertaken by various agencies; and (2) inter-agency technical collaboration, as illustrated by the highly successful work of the Brisbane Accord Group¹ in raising the profile, and starting to improve the quality, of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) across the region.
- Sharing of skills and resources across the region has increased, including through **South-South technical assistance implemented by SPC**. NSOs have provided technical support to other NSOs, either in collaboration with an SPC staff member or through stand-alone visits. For example, Vanuatu statisticians provided expertise to the Cook Islands and Solomon Islands on scanning of census data; Samoa assisted Tuvalu by providing management support for census field work, and assisted Niue in the compilation of their national accounts; and Fiji provided in-country technical advisory support to several countries to improve their business registers, and hosted professional attachments with the Fiji Bureau of Statistics.

3. Pacific context: priorities and challenges

In mid-2012, the Statistics for Development Division signaled its intention to undertake a mid-term review of its TYPPS Phase-1 implementation to seek independent advice on progress made and modifications that might be required to remain on track to achieve its Phase-1 deliverables. The review was undertaken in early 2013, and at the request of PSSC its coverage was extended to include the contributions of other agencies to Phase-1 implementation. It involved extensive consultation with national, regional and international stakeholders, including statisticians and thematic subject matter specialists (e.g. demographers, economists, epidemiologists, public health specialists) representing the views of data producers and analysts and national policy-makers and

¹ The **Brisbane Accord Group** is a consortium of technical agencies (ABS, SPC, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO), universities (Fiji National University, University of Queensland, UNSW, QUT) and professional networks (Pacific Health Information Network, Pacific Civil Registrars Network), working in collaboration with each other and with countries in implementing the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan (2011–2014).

planners, and with regional and international development specialists representing key data users. The review's findings, including its 12 recommendations (Annex 1) were submitted to the May 2013 PSSC meeting for discussion and endorsement, and were subsequently presented to the Third Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics in July 2013.

The review served its immediate purpose very well, providing the desired operational feedback to SDD to help guide its successful completion of Phase-1 implementation. It also provided rich feedback on ongoing challenges and emerging priorities requiring attention during Phase-2 implementation, thus serving as an early assessment of stakeholder views, and their needs and aspirations for statistical developments and outcomes. Four broad themes emerged.

Statistical development: less *ad hoc*, more strategic engagement

Pacific Island governments and national statistical offices emphasised that a **national strategy for statistics** (such as a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics – NSDS) is essential for guiding national statistical capacity development. In this regard, a national strategy must be country owned and driven by national priorities. It must build on accountable and transparent partnerships; maximize efficient utilisation of resources; focus on common systems and standards; be innovative and leverage off change; include a commitment to excellence and quality; and have clear and achievable outcomes.

At the core of developing such national strategies is the need to **move towards a broader focus, from National Statistical Offices (NSO) to National Statistical Systems (NSS)**. This move recognises that better integrated and coordinated systems are required to improve statistical production and use of statistics. It also recognises that to make real progress, NSSs need to engage regularly with data users to ensure statistical collections and outputs support policy analysis and planning, monitoring and reporting of policy performance and development progress, and measurement of results. At the end of 2014, four countries had completed their NSDS and there were two 'works-in-progress', underlining the importance of stepped-up efforts in this area during Phase-2.

The move to strategic rather than ad hoc engagement also extends to the way statistical development assistance is delivered, with good coordination and communication with and between development partners and countries essential to achieve results. While SPC and other development partners have made important contributions to progress in statistical development, greater coordination is necessary to reduce duplication and ensure that resources are utilised effectively, are aligned with national priorities and encourage synergies. The Brisbane Accord Group provides a model for such coordination in the area of CRVS. Unfortunately, this collaborative spirit is not emulated in other areas, where there is continued 'going it alone' by some, ignoring agreements on existing governance structures.

Statistical collections: consolidate, diversify, add value

Real progress has been made in the collection of core statistics through censuses and household surveys, as previously highlighted, but the preoccupation with plugging existing data gaps, identified as a top priority by both the regional benchmarking study and Phase-1 of the TYPSS, meant less attention was paid to improving data use and developing sustainable collection systems. Addressing this challenge will require a careful balance between consolidating existing core collections and stepping up efforts to improve administrative databases and associated management information systems to lay the foundation for sustainable ongoing collection of key economic, social and demographic statistics that provide real-time statistical information for data users. It will also require concerted efforts to 'bring data to the users'.

Diversification means statistical producers must look beyond the conventional menu of statistics that they provide. For NSOs, the menu includes demographic, economic and social statistics, and for line

ministries, such as education and health, the standard fare is descriptive statistics with a focus on service delivery. In the case of education, this means statistics on children in school and teachers per classroom, but not on access to learning materials and quality of education. A similar scenario applies in health where there is little emphasis on statistics that can inform policy and improvements in health care, such as accurate and timely data on morbidity and cause of death.

More effort is also required to accurately benchmark new or recently acknowledged development challenges, such as climate change and disaster risk, or cross-sectoral topics such as food security and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In the case of climate change and disaster risk, relevant statistics and collection methods lie outside official systems, and most agencies responsible for these 'sectors' do not have well-developed statistical and information management capacities. In regard to food security and NCDs, given their multi-sectoral nature, development of appropriate indicators and regular collection of relevant statistics will require more effective coordination and collaboration within existing work plans and budgets.

Statistical outputs: improved accessibility and use

Diversification of data collection, with administrative databases and associated management information systems, is meant to complement not replace all censuses and surveys. The value of diversification in getting data out to users in accessible forms needs to be promoted more strongly. One-page briefs with simple charts and graphics, and a text box describing what these data mean for policy, work well for policy-makers and the media, whereas a comprehensive analytical report is more useful for subject-matter specialists. Spatial analysis and the use of maps are very powerful means of getting a message across if the message has spatial connotations, e.g. to show pockets of poverty or the outbreak and spread of a disease, or document spatial imbalances in access to infrastructure and services. Some users prefer receiving specific information through a live presentation at a data user seminar or policy dialogue, or through an audio-visual presentation. Other audiences prefer data at their fingertips, e.g. through web-based access to aggregated data (ready-made tabulations), or even unit-record databases. It is necessary to know your audience and develop a dissemination strategy for each major group.

Statistical governance: improved coordination and accountability

Most development reviews, assessment reports, situation analyses and evaluations have highlighted marked improvements in statistical coordination, communication and collaboration on the ground since the development of the TYPSS, and the establishment of the PSSC in 2011, which provides the governance structure for monitoring TYPSS implementation. At the same time, there are numerous recommendations on areas that can be improved, which should resonate with most, if not all members.

As with most governance structures of this nature, PSSC is not compliance-based but relies on goodwill, with all members subscribing to the committee's or working group's rules of engagement. Critical to the success of such entities are a shared vision, balanced membership, willingness to leave agency flags outside the room, and tangible contributions from everyone to the work of the group. Members of the Brisbane Accord Group embrace these principles in monitoring and coordinating implementation of the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan, and themselves implementing components of the plan, which illustrates the working of an effective governance structure.

Emergence of a regional consensus – Independent design of TYPPS Phase-2

Following adoption of the review and its recommendations by the Third Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics in July 2013, PSSC at its meeting in early December 2013 set the planning process in place to help shape the final design of TYPPS Phase-2 (2015–2017). As recommended by the mid-term review, PSSC commissioned an independent design team to

undertake the task of designing the ‘follow-on activities of TYPSS for all technical assistance providers’.

The design of Phase-2 priorities was a comprehensive and inclusive process involving extensive consultations with all PSSC members at a *Theory of Change* workshop in May 2014, followed by further discussions with national, regional and international stakeholders. A final Phase-2 Design Report was reviewed and endorsed by PSSC at its ninth meeting in October 2014. The report contained five strategic objectives (Annex 2) in support of the vision for TYPSS Phase-2 articulated throughout the stakeholder consultations: *‘A core set of statistics that informs the development of all Pacific Island countries and territories, supports regional benefits and is respected and utilised in global reporting’*.

4. SPC response - Development of the SDD Strategic Plan 2015–2017

As in 2010, when its Strategic Plan 2011–2014 was aligned with Phase-1 of TYPSS, SDD’s Strategic Plan 2015–2017 acknowledges the regional consensus on the strategic and operational priorities for Phase-2. The vision and objectives of the plan align with those of the independent design to ensure its strategic concordance, political legitimacy and relevance (Annex 3).

The Strategic Plan also fits with SPC’s own corporate strategic and operational priorities, where SDD is recognised for playing two critical roles:

- Its regional lead role in providing technical support and capacity building to Pacific Island countries’ national statistical systems to enable evidence-based planning and policy development and assist countries to achieve and report on their desired development outcomes;
- Its contribution to achieving SPC-wide cross-divisional and multi-sectoral development outcomes.

Both roles include providing technical support for sector-specific statistical benchmarking; assisting colleagues in other technical divisions define accurate baselines from which to embark on specific development activities; and advising on/providing suitable indicators to monitor development progress and ultimately account for results.

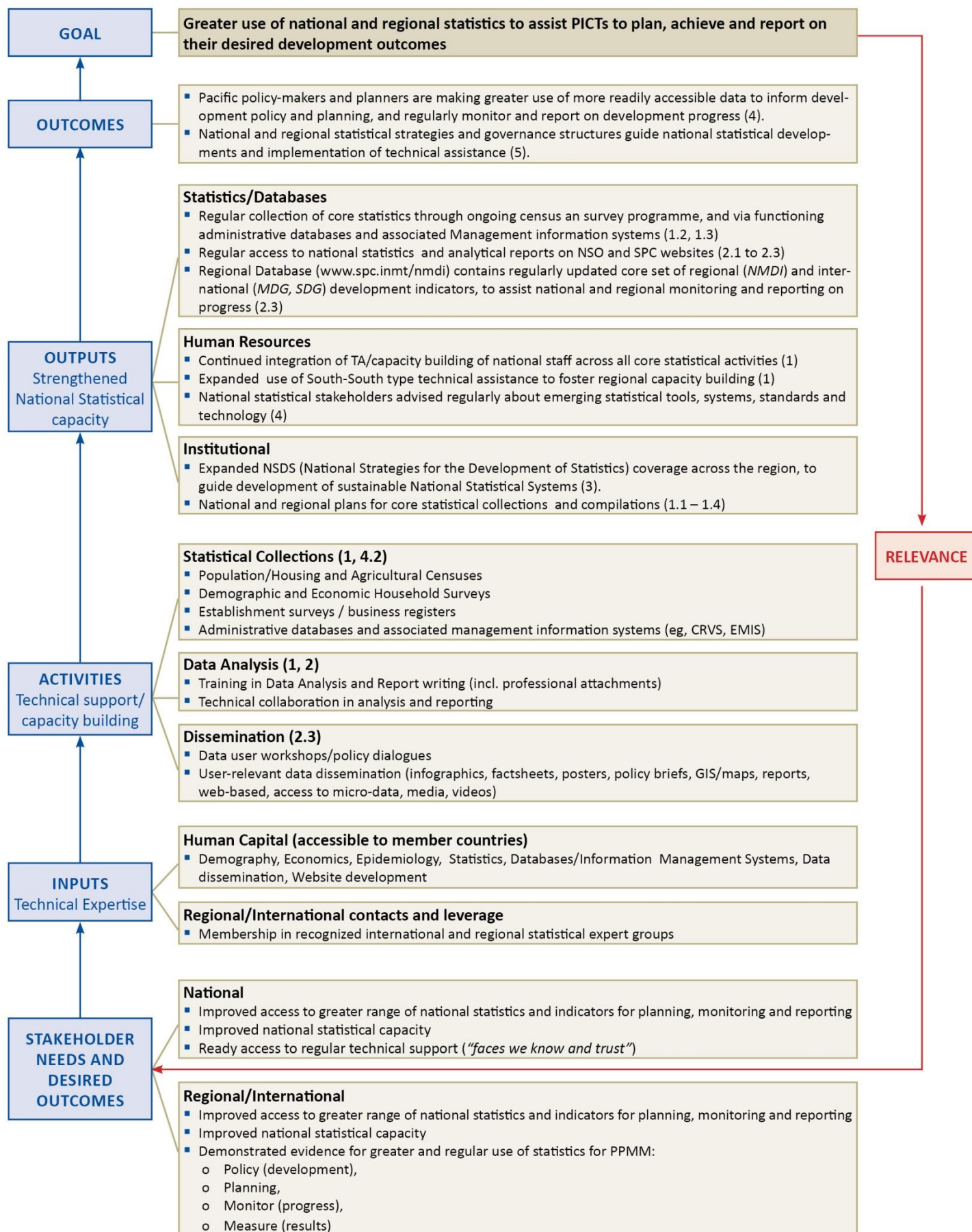
In addition, SDD’s recognised professional expertise in demography, economics, epidemiology and statistics, and technical expertise in population and agricultural censuses, household and establishment surveys, administrative databases and associated management information systems, GIS and data visualisation, enable it to add value through high-end analytical contributions across SPC’s technical divisions.

Representing a bottom-up planning approach, the 2015–2017 SDD Strategic Plan is anchored in stakeholder needs and agreed-on desired outcomes, as expressed in the comprehensive stakeholder consultations associated with the Phase-1 mid-term review and the Phase-2 independent design process. These needs and outcomes are illustrated in the diagram below in the boxes labelled Outcomes and Stakeholder Needs and Desired Outcomes, which differentiate national and regional aspirations from those of international stakeholders.

Complementing the independent design vision of developing and maintaining *‘a core set of statistics that inform development’*, the vision or goal of the SDD Strategic Plan is to achieve **‘greater use of national and regional statistics’** to assist countries to plan, achieve and report on their desired development outcomes. The SDD Strategic Plan describes the various inputs and activities provided to contribute to strengthening statistical capacity, which is an essential pre-condition to achieving the desired outcomes². A more detailed description of the strategic objectives, outputs, purpose and partnerships, activities, results and monitoring frameworks is contained in Annexes 3–5.

² Numbers in brackets refer to Strategic Plan objectives.

**Statistics for Development Division
Strategic Plan 2015-2017 Program Logic**



5. Risk analysis

Despite the many achievements of Phase-1, the **gains are reversible and possibly not sustainable in all cases**. Not surprisingly, statistical achievements and success go hand-in-hand with the recognition accorded to statistics, to national statistical agencies and national statistical systems by their respective governments, and by their development partners' investment in statistical activities and development. Countries that have taken significant steps or have continued building on existing capacities are also those where NSOs have solid budgetary support from their governments, allowing them to undertake core collections on a regular basis. But these countries are in the minority, with most Pacific Island countries and territories struggling to self-finance a HIES or DHS every 5 years, and some also having to rely on external financial support to conduct their population and housing census, which in all countries is mandated by law.

Continued and scaled-up support from national governments and from development partners, on a bilateral (to countries) and regional basis (to SPC, for example), is **critical to maintain the momentum, sustain early achievements**, and implement the recommended developments during Phase-2. This support entails, first and foremost, greater attention to building and maintaining core administrative databases and associated management information systems that will provide countries and partners with ongoing, real-time access to major development planning and policy-relevant data and information. At present, these data are only available from costly household surveys, which are carried out, at best, at 5-yearly intervals – a time lag that is clearly not conducive to effective monitoring of development implementation and progress. A priority concern will be up-scaled development of:

- effective civil registration systems to accurately capture births, deaths and cause of death;
- education and health management information systems; and
- sustainable collection/recording of core economic data (prices, trade statistics, revenue/ tax receipts).

An additional unknown risk, in terms of quantifying its potential impact on Phase-2 implementation by SPC and other development partners, are likely **substantial additional demands** for data collection and indicator development to assist countries in monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Considering the widespread human and financial capacity constraints experienced by most NSOs and NSSs across the Pacific region, particularly in the smaller Pacific Island states, and the additional volume of data required, the challenge will be daunting for most, if not all countries transitioning from the MDG to the SDG agenda, noting that:

- the number of goals has more than doubled, from 8 to 17;
- the number of targets has increased eightfold, from 21 to 169;
the number of indicators, at the time of preparing this document, has increased fivefold, from 60 to around 300, with the final number of indicators to be confirmed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2016.

This huge increase in targets and proposed indicators will require massive additional global financial support over and above current commitments, first and foremost to enable implementation at the national level, plus **dedicated additional financing for data collection, indicator development and regular monitoring of SDG progress**. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015 in Addis Ababa provided a first reality check on the global implementability of the SDG agenda, with confirmed pledges for additional financial support falling short of what many development experts had indicated would be required for sustainable data collections to monitor implementation of the SDG agenda.

Should additional demands for statistical collections and indicator development under the post-2015 development agenda become a priority for member countries that cannot be addressed under the current Strategic Plan framework and within the current total funding envelope, some strategic

priorities and associated activities will have to be revisited in consultation with countries and our respective development and financial partners.

6. Results and key performance indicators

Appendices 5 and 6 outline the proposed monitoring framework for the SDD Strategic Plan 2015–2017. **Appendix 5** contains two tables describing the SDD Strategic Plan Results Framework: Table-1 outlines various quantitative indicators, qualitative evidence, and information sources linked to each of the 5 Strategic Plan objectives (Table-1); with Table-2 providing a link to the SPC Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 Results framework. Complementing these higher-end results indicators, **Appendix 6** provides a summary of activity level output and performance indicators to help monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of SDD operations.

Measuring key results requires different sets of impact or outcome indicators. The World Bank's **Statistical Capacity Indicator**, a simple composite indicator based on country scores on methodology, source data and periodicity of collecting specific statistics, is a widely used outcome (results) indicator, focusing on data producers and statistical collections. It provides solid evidence on a specific aspect of statistical capacity, and we plan to use this indicator (and sub-indicators) for this purpose. Having said this, its name is misleading, lending itself to frequent abuse as it does not account for other key aspects of statistical capacity, such as:

- **human capacity**, to analyze data, and understand the implications for policy;
- **use of data**, for the purpose for which it was ostensibly collected (inform policy and planning, monitor progress, account for results).
- **institutional capacity**, both in enabling and preventing the collection and use of data, including the need for adequate financial resources and political will in relation to evidence-informed policy development and planning.

Against the backdrop of the post-2015 international development agenda and ongoing negotiations on a final set of core indicators, efforts are currently underway by various actors, under the umbrella of the *Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century* (PARIS21), to develop a more comprehensive and robust indicator that accounts for all three key dimensions of statistical capacity, i.e.:

- capacity to collect statistics
- human capacity to value add (analyze) and use
- institutional capacity to enable both.

Such an indicator, at both the composite and subcomponent level, will provide a more realistic picture of gains made, and where ongoing and future interventions are most needed.

7. Partnerships

The development of TYPSS represents a major advance for statistical development in the region, and the same can be said of its joint implementation by Pacific Island countries and territories and the regional and international partners working with SPC. These include ABS; the Asian Development Bank (ADB); PFTAC-IMF; PARIS21; Statistics New Zealand (SNZ); University of the South Pacific (USP); World Bank; UN agencies including ILO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, UN ESCAP, UN SIAP and WHO; other universities (Fiji National University, University of Queensland, UNSW, QUT); and various professional networks (Pacific Health Information Network and Pacific Civil Registrars Network) working with SPC to improve CRVS across the Pacific region.

PSSC will play an important role in ensuring efficient and effective delivery of technical assistance and statistical capacity building by all partners. This role includes support for collaboration by multiple partners where they can add more value than individual providers, as in the case of CRVS

and the Brisbane Accord Group, and for coordination that avoids duplication and increases transparency and accountability. The committee will be assisted in its efforts by an independent, full-time secretariat/TYPPS coordination unit from 2015 onwards.

SPC, like other technical partners, welcomes the growing collaboration between technical agencies across many statistical sectors (e.g. economic statistics, censuses, CRVS, education). With statistics and statistical development gaining recognition as a development objective in its own right in recent years, the field is becoming more crowded and better coordination is imperative. As the oldest and largest provider of technical assistance and capacity building in statistics to Pacific Island countries and territories, SPC will play an active leadership role alongside other PSSC members, will actively contribute to the development of a three-year work plan for the PSSC secretariat/TYPPS coordination unit, and will participate in regular PSSC meetings and associated technical working groups.

ANNEXES

1. Recommendations by the Phase-1 independent mid-term review
2. Phase-2 Independent Design Report Strategic Objectives
3. SDD Strategic Plan 2015-2017 Strategic Objectives, Outputs, Purpose and Partnerships
4. SDD Strategic Plan 2015-2017 Activities, and budget
5. SDD Strategic Plan 2015-2017 Results Framework (Focus on linkages to SPC Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 Results framework)

Some explanatory notes:

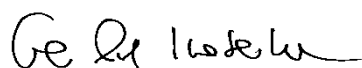
The 2015 – 2017 SDD Strategic Plan was developed in line with the spirit of the *TYPSS Phase-2 Independent Design Document*. All five SDD Strategic plan objectives mirror those reflected in the Independent Design Team document. Annexes 3, 4 and 6 are revised updates of the spreadsheet tables provided to DFAT in December 2014, entitled *Pacific Statistics Strategy Action Plan, Phase-2*, to enable DFAT to provide 2015 bridging funds to SDD, pending finalisation of the SDD 2015–2017 Strategic Plan.

Delays in plan finalization were due to parallel developments of the SPC Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020, to which all new divisional strategic plans (including their results frameworks) were meant to be aligned. This plan was completed in October this year, and endorsed by the 9th Conference of the Pacific Community, 4 - 5 November 2015, in Niue.

The 2016 – 2017 Budget is based on actual activity costs. While they exceed the forecasted allocation by DFAT for the 2016 and 2017, we felt it was both prudent and responsible to flag with DFAT, as our principal partner in implementing TYPSS, actual activity costs. This will allow me as SDD Director to actively pursue additional funding to allow plan implementation as it stands, or make the hard decision to “contract” or dispense of some services, should full implementation in 2017 not be possible.

Monitoring and Results Frame work

The Monitoring framework for the TYPSS Phase-1 Strategic Action Plan, 2011 – 2014, which was jointly developed with DFAT and an experienced M&E consultant in 2010-11, focused largely on SDD activity level output and performance indicators. We have designed a similar monitoring framework for the SDD Strategic Plan, 2015 – 2017 (Annex-6.) To ensure it not only addresses the core objectives developed by an independent design team in 2014, but is in synch with SPC’s very own Corporate Plan, 2016 – 2020, we developed a parallel *SDD Strategic Plan 2015-2017 Results Framework Results* (Annex-5), that establishes clear linkages to the *SPC Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 Results framework*, as illustrated in common outcome (results) indicators.



Director, Statistics for Development Division
Noumea, 14 December 2015

Annex-1:

Recommendations from the Mid-term Review of Pacific Statistics Strategy Action Plan Phase-1

(Source: Review report presented to, and endorsed by the 3rd Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics, Noumea July, 2013)

Lessons and recommendations of the review team for future support include:

Lesson 1. TYPSS has generated considerable capacity development. Implementation of a program such as TYPSS, which contains numerous objectives, many countries and a number of TA providers, is a complex undertaking. The improvement in capacity, which was commented upon to the review mission and has been measured using the World Bank capacity, index is a substantial achievement and should be commended.

Lesson 2. TYPSS structure remains relevant. The six objectives of TYPSS and priority of economic, vital, education and health statistics remain relevant to statistical capacity development in the Pacific. The overall structure of the program was positively viewed by those interviewed during the review mission.

Lesson 3. TYPSS focus has been on survey collections and core statistics. Much of the effort in the first phase of the program has centred on census, DHS and HIES collections, along with core statistics. This focus is appropriate as there was a paucity of data in the region. With improved capacity in NSO collection capacity, less emphasis could be placed on Objective 1.

Recommendation 1. TYPSS's overall structure and objectives should be maintained. The overall structure of TYPSS and its prioritisation of sectors remain relevant. The addition of new thematic areas – such as gender, climate change, food security, disaster risk, disability, and environmental-economic accounting should be considered as part of each individual country's NSDS priority setting.

Recommendation 2. PSSC should endorse an increased TYPSS focus on capacity to generate demand for official statistics. The planned focus of the 2015-2017 phase was to complete region-wide statistical systems, which includes fostering demand for official statistics through improved advocacy and communication. Greater emphasis should be placed on these activities in TYPSS.

Recommendation 3. PSSC should endorse an increased TYPSS focus on data analysis and dissemination. With increasing availability of data there is greater need to improve the skills of national statisticians in data analysis and dissemination. ABS, StatsNZ (Victoria University), UN and SPC have experience in data analysis and dissemination training and mentoring which should be provided across the region. Completion of the skills audit will provide guidance for longer term training needs. Where possible, training should be accredited with the cooperation of training institutions such as USP.

Lesson 4. Limited National Statistical Plan Development. NSDS development was an objective of the TYPSS first phase with one country so far developing a plan. The NSDS process is more inclusive than traditional NSO-centric statistical master plan development and provides a means for national stakeholders to articulate and prioritise statistical needs.

Lesson 5. Limited Quantitative M&E Reporting. Measurement to date has largely concentrated on individual providers (SPC, PFTAC, UN, ABS) and countries describing TYPSS outputs and inputs.

SPC has defined and quantified inputs in terms of staff time committed in each country, along with output (description of activities) and some outcome achievements. Greater reporting of progress is required from countries.

Recommendation 4. The PSSC should identify NSDS development as a major priority. Countries must clearly identify the need for better scheduling timing and scale of required intensity assistance. National statistical development strategies (NSDS) are critical for NSOs to assess reporting requirements and provide a road map for statistical system development.

Recommendation 5. All TA Providers and countries should improve M&E reporting. The reporting framework and template should be enhanced to quantify inputs by country/objective, and allow for strategic monitoring of expenditures by country/program, along with outputs and results/outcomes. Reporting should be against time-bound action plans. The first priority for measuring outcomes is associated with tracking the benefits of training and technical assistance. Training assessment and surveys of participants should be used to determine the outcomes of these activities.

Lesson 6. The PSSC could more adequately report progress, endorse standards and coordinate activities. The PSSC has provided a valuable forum for countries, providers and donors to discuss TYPSS implementation. The forum could be improved with the presentation of more in-depth progress data. Coordination would be improved with the PSSC supporting a real-time activity calendar and a second phase with time-bound activities. Terms of reference for the PSSC are relatively broad and could be strengthened with guidelines for endorsement and technical work group functions.

Recommendation 6. PSSC engage a part-time coordinator. A part-time coordinator should be initially engaged to help collate country and TA provider M&E data, assist with PSSC reporting and sustaining a real-time online calendar of regional statistics activities.

Recommendation 7. The PSSC should develop guidelines for endorsing definitions and standards, along with technical working group operations. Objectives of the PSSC include ‘endorsing common definitions and standards that will underpin a greater harmonization of statistical processes’ [and] convening ‘technical working groups on particular topics involving experienced subject matter specialists’, however the nature of these processes is unclear to the review team.

Recommendation 8. Donors provide PSSC members with communications support. PSSC members represent multiple countries and face difficulties in collating data for meetings, as e-mails are often not answered. Communications funds should be provided so counterparts can be readily contacted and PSSC reporting improved.

Recommendation 9. The PSSC should review its TORs to coincide with the upcoming HOPS meeting in July 2013. A review of the TORs, with increased member input, will allow members to decide the best role for the PSSC, the preferred method of operation, membership, and the approach to the next phase of steering and monitoring TYPSS implementation.

Lesson 7. TYPSS Phase-1 design was sound and based on benchmarking and implementation studies. The formulation of TYPSS was based on a number of program preparatory studies, and the experience of key technical assistance providers.

Lesson 8. TYPSS has reduced the transactions costs associated with collections and continuity of funding helped sustain provider capacity. Significant lumpy costs are associated with collections, which PICTs cannot entirely finance. Securing funding for collections and technical assistance has been a time consuming exercise for NSOs, which has been made more manageable with the longer-term financing and predictability of TYPSS. Longer-term financing has also increased capacity in technical agencies. An example is in civil registration and vital statistics area, where funding for the Health Information Systems Knowledge Hub at the University of Queensland is about to cease.

Recommendation 10. PSSC should endorse an Independent Phase-2 design. An independent design team should be commissioned by the PSSC to design the follow-on activities of TYPSS for all TA providers. Activities should be aligned under current objectives and scheduled using Gantt charts on a quarterly timeframe. Indicators for tracking inputs, outputs and outcomes need to be quantifiable and specified in the M&E framework. The proposed design would be presented to the PSSC for endorsement.

Recommendation 11. Donors should provide longer term rolling funding. Longer term, more predictable funding – such as rolling budgets would assist planning and improve the longer-term performance of the TYPSS.

Recommendation 12. Donors should sustain the civil registration and vital statistics program. The capacity developed for vital statistics should be sustained through continued funding for BAG activities under the UQ Health Information Systems Knowledge Hub, with a stronger focus on developing an integrated health information system for the prevention and control of NCDs, amongst others.

Annex-2:

TYPSS Phase-2 Independent Design Report Strategic Objectives

1. Pacific island countries and territories 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.
2. Pacific island countries and territories 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
3. All countries and territories have in place some form of national statistics strategy or plan in line with their national development strategies.
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.
5. National and regional statistics governance is functioning effectively.
 - i. TA inputs are in line with country and territory priorities, transparent to all stakeholders and are delivered efficiently across the region.
 - ii. Pacific leaders receive recommendations about priorities for statistical collections at national and regional level with accompanying data about resource and technology requirements
 - iii. TYPSS phase 2 operates in a coordinated and efficient manner with the best use being made of available technical assistance and informed progress assessment being made available to PSSC.