

## **10<sup>th</sup> Pacific Statistics Steering Committee Meeting**

**Novotel Hotel, Nadi, Fiji**

**25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

### **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND KEY DECISIONS**

The Pacific Statistics Steering Committee met on 27 and 28 May 2015 in Nadi, Fiji Islands. The Meeting was attended by Heads and representatives of statistics from Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Guam, Nauru, New Zealand, Tokelau and Vanuatu. Representatives of Planning Departments Palau, Papua New Guinea and Samoa also participated. Development Partners in attendance were from Asian Development Bank, Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre, Pacific Community, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, University of the South Pacific and the World Bank.

The Meeting welcomed the newly appointed TYPSS Coordinator, Ms Karen Punivalu, who will commence duties on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2015.

#### **Update on TYPSS progress during 2014 year**

Participants were appraised of the key highlights and achievements for 2014 that included:

- During Phase 1 of TYPSS, 15 PICTs targeted under TYPSS, have completed at least one census including its report as well as a comprehensive demographic analysis; 4 have completed DHS Surveys and 5 PICTs have completed HIES;
- Through the Brisbane Accord, a number of agencies collaboratively have raised the importance of Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) which includes a growing regional commitment to improve CRVS;
- An increase in the sharing of skills and resources through South South Cooperation over the year;
- Improved timeliness in the production of national accounts;
- Enhanced partner coordination and cooperation.

#### **Governance arrangements**

The meeting discussed the need to further clarify governance arrangements for the PSSC in order to further advocate the recognition of statistics as a key area for managing development results. They recognised a proposal from Pacific Statisticians and tasked the TYPSS coordinator to expand on this proposal and bring a paper to the November meeting. The paper would provide for clear roles and responsibilities for the various groupings and make clearer linkages between them and the various regional forums such as the Forum Economic Ministers meetings, and other sectoral meetings.

## **TWG IT - progress and plans**

PSSC acknowledged the work of the working group and noted progress made in identifying key issues of internet connection, power reliability and backups/disaster recovery in the work of NSOs in the Pacific. The TWG further recommended use of common software, mobile internet/cloud, development of ICT planning documents, enhancing training and capacity building opportunities and enabling legislation as necessary to advance implementation of TYPSS. The meeting agreed that NSOs review existing legislation that enables the vision of PICTs to produce more timely and high-quality statistics, through improved coordination, effective sharing and dissemination via the technological solutions in the region's digital society. PSSC endorsed the TORs for the TWG – IT.

## **TWG Administrative Data - progress and plans**

PSSC noted the goal of the TWG Administrative Data to provide advice and recommendations on administrative data use and matters such as standards, priorities for investment in systems and possibilities for shared infrastructure, development of ICT skills, and modalities for south-south cooperation. PSSC endorsed the TORs for the TWG Administrative Data.

## **TWG Pacific Surveys Future - progress and plans**

PSSC recognised that current approaches to survey practises was not sustainable with increasing cost constraints and welcomed the approach proposed by the TWG in considering innovative approaches to be adopted. Consideration of hybrids would be helpful in ensuring cost – effective and sustainable survey approaches. PSSC endorsed the TORs of the TWG – Pacific Survey futures and the workplan presented.

## **TWG data utilisation – proposal**

PSSC welcomed the TORs provide by the TWG and noted that its vision was for all PICT official statistics users effectively access and maximize use of statistical data to meet policy, research, and management decisions with adequate resources. PSSC endorsed the TORs for the TWG – Data Utilisation.

## **TYPSS Coordination and prioritisation**

Acknowledging that the objectives of the TYPSS Phase 2 objectives remain relevant, the PSSC agreed to the following actions:

- Tasked the TWGs to consider the collection of data in the areas of gender, climate change, food security, disaster risk, disability and environment as necessary and urged the NSOs to communicate with sectors that are collecting data to include these in their statistical collections;
- Requested the coordination unit to work with USP and the TWGs to identify skills gaps drawing on the previous work of SPC SDD and NSO national capacity assessments;
- Increase efforts to improving monitoring and evaluation in a simplified manner to demonstrate results and highlight key achievement in implementation of TYPSS;
- Incorporate into the Coordinator's workplan for the first six months collation of country and TA provider M & E data, improved PSSC reporting; and sustaining a real-time online calendar of regional statistics activities;

- Tasked the TWGs to make recommendations to PSSC common definitions and standards in their areas of responsibilities;
- Develop a paper on governance arrangements based on the discussions during the session on governance

PSSC recognised and commended all development partners for their continued support and commitment to the implementation of TYPSS.

### **South-south engagement**

The Meeting noted a number of opportunities that have been provided for South South technical assistance in the areas of Education Management Information Systems, international merchandise trade statistics, data analysis and report writing, business statistics, DHS training, and CRVS.

Participants agreed to continue further opportunities for south south cooperation bearing in mind pressures these may place on NSOs already limited capacity.

### **PSSC Communications**

PSSC discussed the importance of communicating the work of statistics and improving advocacy for statistics and agreed that a systematic approach should be taken to engage non PSSC member NSOs during the period between HOPs meetings. They further recognised the need to communicate the work of the PSSC with other regional fora such as the Forum Economic Ministers as well as those of Health and education ministers. They noted further opportunities arise through the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and its associated working groups. The meeting agreed to the following actions:

- PFTAC and SPC to incorporate a report of the work of PSSC to FEMM with support from the Coordinator;
- That presentations to such meetings be made by the PSSC Chair supported by the TYPSS Coordinator;
- Tasked the Coordinator to work with the Chair to develop a comprehensive paper on the intent of the agenda item.

### **Statistical training – progress**

PSSC welcomed progress made in building official statistics user capability in the Pacific by Statistics New Zealand and the enhancement of the University of the South Pacific's official statistics programme. The meeting congratulated USP on being one of the few institutions globally that offers a programme in official statistics.

### **Subject reviews Sustainable development indicators**

PSSC noted the implications of the Sustainable Development Goals/targets and indicators which currently stand at 17 goals, 169 targets, and 320+ indicators on monitoring, TYPSS implementation, NSOs and their development partners. They recognised the ongoing work of the interagency technical experts group to reducing the number of targets and indicators that all countries can commit to for global monitoring. The Pacific work in this area is supported by key technical divisions of SPC, PIFS and SPREP supported by interdisciplinary/CROP working groups.

## **PSSC Endorsement of Pacific Statistics standards and classifications**

Recognising that Standards and standardised approaches are a powerful tool to promote data integration and efficiency, and noting that as the overarching body tasked with oversight of the implementation of TYPSS, PSSC agreed that it has the authority to recommend appropriate statistical standards for use in the Pacific region. They further agreed that standards will be 'provisionally endorsed' by the PSSC, with final endorsement by HOPS.

PSSC agreed that proposals for Pacific statistical standards can be submitted by any PSSC member for consideration at least two months in advance of the meeting. A standard will be 'provisionally endorsed' by PSSC on agreement by consensus of PSSC members.

PSSC tasked the TWGs to bring forward appropriate proposals for standards that should be developed in consultation with members.

## **Financing Statistics in the Pacific**

Acknowledging that financial resources are necessary to the implementation of the TYPSS, PSSC sought to identify available resources required to support NSOs and TA providers for statistics work. PSSC tasked the TYPSS Coordinator to develop a paper that provided a snapshot of what is provided collectively and nationally, which would provide information on financing gaps building on work already carried out by SPC. The paper should consider categorisation of funding and how it is spent.

In the context, of Financing for Development, a shorter intent paper to be provided by SPC SDD to financial partners that are members of PSSC for their input prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference on FfD.

## **Meeting dates, place, agenda PSSC 11**

PSSC agreed to meet during 3<sup>rd</sup> week of November 2015 in Nadi or Port Vila tbc. Agreed programme and agenda items include:

- Day 1 Pacific Planners and Statisticians
- Day 2 Technical Working Groups
- Day 3 & 4 PSSC
  - Report from TYPSS Coordinator on Work Plan
    - Consolidated list of where we are at for Phase 1 and 2
  - Governance Arrangements
  - Technical Working Group Reports
    - TWG IT
    - TWT Data Utilisation
    - TWG Administrative Records
    - TWG Pacific Surveys Futures
  - Pacific Statistics Standards and Classifications

- Communications Strategy for PSSC
  - Including reporting to FEMM and other regional fora, such as CROP Executives and CROP Working Groups, health and education ministerials
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Financing for Statistics in the Pacific