

2019 Pacific Statistics Standing Committee Meeting (PSSC) Noumea, 30 to 31 October 2019

Agenda Item 6.

Establishing the Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility to Resource Core Statistical Collections in the Pacific Region, 2019 to 2023

Prepared by: Michael Sharp (SPC), Stanley Gwavuya (UNICEF) and Sandra Paredez (UNFPA)

Background

The paper titled “Establishing the Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility to Resource Core Statistical Collections in the Pacific Region, 2019 to 2023” was presented to the 2nd Donor and Development Partner Group meeting that was held in Fiji in May 2019. The paper was authored by SPC, UNICEF and UNFPA and is a response to recommendation made by the 5th conference of Heads of Planning Statistics (HOPS) which: i) endorsed the recommendation for partnership program among development partners (technical assistance providers and donors) to support the Five-Year Data Collection Plan; ii) noted the efficiencies that can be gained by adopting optimized statistical collection cycles; and iii) endorsed the proposal to further develop the Five-Year Data Collection Plan by confirming members’ collection schedules and potential funding sources and gaps enabling the mobilization of resources. Following HOPS, the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM), held in 2019, reaffirmed their support for additional and sufficient funding commitments to meet the target of USD 224 million [incl. PNG] for the conduct of core statistical collections in the 5-year programme from 2019 to 2023 in order to provide the necessary data required for reporting under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The paper proposes the establishment of a Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility, which is to be used to fill in-country and technical support resource gaps, which pose a risk for Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) to not achieve their [census and survey schedule](#). The implication of under resourced censuses and surveys is that data will not be produced, which undermines opportunity to make evidence-based policy and to monitor development through indicator frameworks, or it jeopardizes the opportunity to produce high-quality and timely data that inevitably hinders data use. The paper, including comprehensive annexes on census and multiple indicator cluster surveys, is appended herewith.

Results

The key points of the paper are:

- i. The suite of core national statistical collections conducted in the Pacific region contribute data to report against 63 of the sub-set of 132 Pacific Sustainable Development Goal targets (48 percent). PICTs are scheduled to conduct 81 statistical collections over the period of 2019 to 2023. The urgency to produce up-to-date statistics – sourced from national censuses and surveys – puts enormous strain on the limited human and financial resources of PICT national statistical agencies and their technical development partners. To measure progress, at least two data points are required by 2030 and it is unlikely that this will be realized unless urgent action and sustained investment is made in to the Pacific statistical system.
- ii. Statistical development in the Pacific region is guided by the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy and supported by a robust governance framework. Technical and financial support is made

available to PICTs from, among others, national Governments, Pacific Community (SPC), UN Agencies (including UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO and ILO), the World Bank, MFAT and DFAT. National statistical systems in the Small Island States of the Pacific region are heavily dependent on external technical and financial support. There is need for additional resources to be provided to national and regional statistical stakeholders to ensure that high quality data are produced to guide and monitor economic and social development and to meet national and international reporting obligations.

- iii. The establishment of a Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility will support PICTs to fill statistical collection budget gaps and to provide additional resources to technical partners to support PICTs to produce high quality and timely data. Without this facility, there is an immediate risk that PICTs will not achieve their statistical collection aspirations and therefore they will not meet their reporting requirements and evidence based policy and planning efforts will be hampered as a result of lack of up-to-date data. In addition, without a financing facility, there's a risk of producing low-quality and slow to-be-released data undermining the general vision of national and regional statistical systems and generally constraining data user access to, and use of, timely and quality data.
- iv. The proposed establishment of the financing facility (and the partnership approach for delivery of technical assistance) aligns with TYPSS Phase 3 (Objectives 1 and 2), FEMM's endorsement for financing of the 5-year statistical collection plan and HOPS approval in relation to delivery of technical assistance in partnership and further developing and financing of the 5-year statistical collection plan. Additionally, the statistical methodologies that will be implemented under the statistical collections facility will have been reviewed and approved by the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB), the recently established methodological review board.
- v. There's scope to increase efficiency in the conduct of statistical collections in the Pacific region through: i) financing a logical order of statistical collections; ii) aligning PICTs collection schedules; iii) standardizing instruments and methodologies; and iv) partnership approaches to technical assistance (incl. South-South).
- vi. The total budget gap for successfully achieving the 2019 to 2023 statistical collections programme has been estimated as being between USD 40 million to USD 45 million. For the 5-year period, the budget gap consists of USD 28.1 million to USD 33.2 million for in-country statistical collection related costs and USD \$11.9 million for technical support.

Conclusion and recommendation

There's enormous demand for, and dependence on, data produced through the core suite of national statistical collections, however national and regional statistical systems are under resourced. Insufficient resources pose a great risk to PICTs generating high quality and timely data, which undermines data users' access to, and use of, data for shaping targeted policy and for general monitoring and planning purposes. To fill these gaps, and to leverage the regional statistics governance system and take advantage of efficiencies that can be gained through regional approaches to statistical development in the Pacific region, it is proposed that a statistical collections financing facility is established to fill resource gaps that exist in PICTs and among technical assistance providers.

PSSC is invited to:

- i. Workshop the proposed facility and make recommendation on the proposed facility and operational and governance aspects to PSSC;
- ii. Endorse the proposal for the establishment of the Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility; and
- iii. Discuss strategies for resource mobilization and next steps.

Annex

Sharp et al (2019) Establishing the Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility to Resource Core Statistical Collections in the Pacific Region, 2019 to 2023. Donor and Development Partner Group meeting, May 2019, Denarau, Fiji.