CENSUS OUTPUTS / USE

1. BACKGROUND

Much of the content of this paper is sourced from Working Paper 8 of UNFPA-SPC Regional Workshop Reviewing the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the Pacific, Noumea, New Caledonia, 21–25 May 2012. Working Paper 8 of May 2012 contained a lot of information, particularly on census products and services, from the UN Principles and Recommendations (P&R) Revision 2. Reference is also made of the Principles and Recommendations Revision 3, which retained almost all of the content of P&R Revision 2.

Further reference is made to the external review of TYPSS Phase 1 (2011-2014) which had identified further analysis of data, and related statistical product development and use as a gap in Phase 1 implementation; and recommended improvement in Phase 2 (2015-2017). It is hoped that increased census product and services development, and use in the 2020 round of censuses would contribute to minimise this perceived gap.

In this paper, we summarise the main issues presented in the above Paper 8 of the 2010 Round Census Review Meeting in May 2012. It goes on to summarise census products recommended in the P&R Revision 2 and those produced in the Pacific during the 2010 round censuses; it then highlights the census information gap. The paper concludes with a summary list of recommendations of the 2010 Round Census Review for consideration in the 2020 round product planning and development.

2. THE INFORMATION NEEDS

With the rapid development of information and communication technologies, census data users have an increasing interest in a broad range of data products and services from the census offices that meet specific information needs. Furthermore, the increasing availability and accessibility of computers and related technologies with internet connections, some data users increasingly prefer to obtain soft copies of census products or online downloading rather than in printed form. However, there are still many users in the Pacific who would prefer to receive census results in printed form. The high cost of producing census products in various formats, for example, printed, in computer media or online, as well as the skills (of both users and producers) required for such undertaking restricts Pacific countries in the choice of census products development and subsequent dissemination.

In addition, some data users need specialized products that the census offices do not produce as part of the general census product development. In such cases, census offices provide the specialised requests direct to users (upon request), usually on a cost reimbursement basis or just free. As noted above, consultation with data users is usually recommended prior to deciding the type of services and products that may be required by different data users – even then, many data users in the Pacific do not know

what their data needs are which makes it difficult for census offices to develop relevant data products and services.

Therefore, understanding the information needs and producing the products to meet such needs are important to make census relevant to information needs of the government and of the other users. Knowing the information needs of users then leads to developing information packages and making them accessible which can be realised in a number of ways. For example, tabulations required by only a few users, such as certain government offices or specialized research organizations can be supplied in unpublished form (that is to say, unpublished hard copy tables or tabulations in soft copy). Some data may not be tabulated until they are specifically required by users.

Further, computers and internet provides the opportunity to produce a greater number and a wider variety of tabulations than was the case with census tabulation procedures in the 1980 and 1990 round of censuses. As is commonly noted, data stored in the census databases represent a rich source of information, which allows fast and relatively inexpensive production of additional tables or related products as they are requested. Online access or dissemination of such census information greatly contributes to expanding census data user base and thus the increased demand for census data. However, it is also important to inform users about possible data errors as part of the product development process. Similarly, confidentiality issues need to be addressed and appropriate safeguards established during the census product development process and related dissemination.

3. SUGGESTED CENSUS PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS COMPARED TO THOSE PRODUCED IN THE 2010 CENSUS ROUND

In this Section of the paper, we summarise a list of key census products suggested under the *UN Principles and Recommendations For Population and Housing Censuses Revision 2 (and 3).*

P & R Revision 2 (and 3)	Produced from Pacific censuses - 2010
(i) Provisional results **(a)** Products based on new census questions	Many countries produced this Some countries produced this
(ii) Basic tabulations	All countries produced this
(iii) Metadata	Some countries produced this
(iv) Thematic analytical reports	Most countries produce demographic analysis but no other thematic reports
(v) Other reports (eg. census dictionary)	None produce this – dictionaries are now produced as part of Metadata/NADA
(vi) Procedural report One of the most important reports in any census publication programme is the *administrative report (sometimes called census director's report in some countries)* (a) Methodological reports	Not many countries produced this Not all countries produced this…
(vii) Basic mapping	Many countries produced this
(viii) Thematic mapping	Few countries produced this

(ix)   Interactive digital outputs
     (a)   Geographic information systems
 	
     (b)   Data cube
Data cube's on-line analytical processing capabilities enable analysts and managers to gain insight into various situation analysis through a wide variety of views of data organized to reflect its multidimensional nature. It gives insight into data through fast, consistent, interactive access to a wide variety of possible views of information. It is used to summarize, consolidate, view, apply formulae to, and synthesize data according to multiple dimensions.
 	
     (c)   REDATAM
Redatam is an acronym for REtrieval of DATa for small Areas by Microcomputer.
	
	PopGIS 1 and PopGIS 2 for a selected countries; a few use DevInfo based products
	
	Data cube not used…
	
	A few countries (two?) developed REDATAM based products

(x) General interest products and special user reports	
(a) Posters One of the most common ways to disseminate census information consists of publishing posters highlighting key facts such as: How many are we? Where do we live? and summarizing a profile for the major administrative divisions or islands of a country.	A few have produced posters
(b) Brochures Professionally designed brochures are another way to disseminate basic census data. These brochures should be written in a very easy and comprehensible language indicating the demographic profile of the country illustrated with suitable graphics and explanatory material.	These are not commonly developed in the Pacific – a few have developed factsheets for surveys but not for censuses.
(c) Special user reports Information generated by a census is by definition of use to a wide range of users with a wide range of statistical expertise.	Not commonly developed
(d) Videos The use of graphics such as charts or maps included on videotape; compact disc (CD) or digital video disc (DVD) format are media useful to promote the story behind the numbers and thus increase use of census data.	Not common in the Pacific
(e) Instructional materials Instructional materials in an easy to understand form can be prepared for the general public, indicating the advantages and limitations of census data. Such material can often form the basis of information campaigns as part of the advocacy material for the next census.	Not common in the Pacific

4. CENSUS PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS AFTER THE 2020 ROUND OF CENSUSES

The challenge for many NSOs or census offices in the Pacific is to create the demand for census data products that are relevant to user needs and are user friendly. But from the above review it can be seen that there are a few products that are commonly produced, which are not quite attractive (looks) or very user friendly for many potential census data users. These include:

- Provisional results – many countries have produced these products

- Basic tabulations - many countries have produced these products

- Lengthy analytical reports - many countries have produced main census reports, demographic reports, reports on specific socio-economic topics, population topics

- **The definition of development indicators** – many countries have produced summary list of indicators extracted from thematic census reports which do not link to particular policy needs.

The challenge for the Pacific is to consider developing data products that are short and simple and that carry key development messages or behavioural change information which would lead to creating user demand for such census products. The following products have the potential for creating demand for census results if they are specifically linked to policies and plans of users:

- **The definition of development indicators** – that are linked to national development strategies, sector strategies/planning documents, regional or global reporting requirements (MDG/CEDAW) or new emerging reporting/monitoring priority areas (climate change and food security).

- Basic statistical maps

- Thematic map – development indicators on maps would potentially create demand

- In-depth studies using unit record data (subject to users accessing edited data sets)

- Interactive digital outputs – like GIS Applications, data cubs or REDATAM

- Metadata - will add a lot of value to all other products, many advanced users will appreciate information about the input data used in producing the above products.

- Develop and maintain national data archives (NADA)

_____