

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

1. Introduction/Project Description

The Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands (PACSTAT) project has an overall development objective to improve the quality of welfare data collection and accessibility to comparable welfare data in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

To achieve this objective, the project will consist of three components:

- 1) to support the administration of the Pacific Statistics Methods Board and the dissemination of its recommendations;
- 2) to strengthen SPC's Statistics for Development Division's (SDD) ability to play a "statistical system leader" role and provide technical assistance on data collection methods; and
- 3) to promote context-appropriate innovation in the region.

Component 1: Pacific Statistics Methods Board

Supporting the running of the PSMB will significantly accelerate the identification and adoption of improved methods by NSOs in the PICs. The PSMB is seen to be a vital component in the new regional statistics governance framework recommended by the 2017 HOPS meeting. The PSMB is tasked with undertaking literature reviews and field experiments to test the viability of new statistical methods in the Pacific context, as well as making recommendations to NSOs based on the results. This approach has benefits to the region on several levels:

- i. it introduces a culture of academic rigor in the process of statistical innovations while remaining mindful of the local context and the need for local credibility,
- ii. it promotes harmonisation in the Pacific region by replacing bilateral recommendations from development partners – which can sometimes clash with one another – with a more streamlined process, and
- iii. it shifts the burden of investment in experimentation from resource-constrained NSOs to a regional body with higher capacity, which also introduces economies of scale.

Component 2: Institutional Strengthening and Implementation Support

The second component of activities will support SPC-SDD in its transition to a regional knowledge producer and a leader in the dissemination of data. To fulfil its mission of strengthening access to and use of development statistics in policy development, SPC-SDD would benefit from expanded analytical capacity, provided through the recruitment of the two long-term consultants (and a third medium-term consultant). In addition, this component includes funding for existing SPC staff to support the technical and administrative implementation of the project as well as funding to strengthen SPC-SDD's ability to provide remote training to NSOs and other office related costs essential to the administration of the project.

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Component 3: Alternative data collection methods

The project will support experiments in alternative data collection methods. There are several innovations in data collection that could potentially reduce the costs and complexity of collecting socioeconomic data in PICs, particularly by addressing the vast geography and sparse population constraints to traditional data collection. SPC-SDD will work with NSOs in IDA-eligible beneficiary countries, as agreed with the World Bank, to trial alternative data collection methods, based on what is deemed appropriate and most impactful for the specific contexts.

The project will run from July 2020 to June 2025. Most people working on the project will be based in Noumea, but travel to selected PICs will also be involved. The ESCP noted that the project has been assessed as having low risks.

2. Brief Summary of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

The project is in its early stages, nevertheless some stakeholder engagement has already occurred in the course of normal SPC work:

- i. The PSMB has been established since 2018 and many of the SPC Technical Staff who will work on the project have had dealings with the PSMB,
- ii. The identification of areas for research and for in-country experiments will be influenced by previous discussions with countries and development partners.

SPC-SDD has provided technical support, including in-country technical assistance and training, to all PICs since the 1990s. SPC-SDD has extensive experience in the conduct of large statistical activities in PICs, including leading the technical support in the conduct of national censuses and household surveys. SPC-SDD also has conducted in-country experimental research for statistics development and has conducted and coordinated numerous regional statistics governance, development and research initiatives. SPC-SDD is the lead implementing agency of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (2011 to 2020) and it currently provides technical support in statistical collections, economic statistics, technology, governance and training, as well as coordination of donors and development partners. SPC-SDD has extensive experience in the management of consultants, both remote and in-country. SPC-SDD has conducted numerous international and local workshops, meetings, trainings and events across the Pacific.

Acknowledging that the world is not usual resulting from COVID-19, the above described activities engage stakeholders from groups, such as:

- i. Government: Ministers, Government Statisticians, Senior Government Officials, Statistics Officers; Ministry of Finance and the National Statistics Office is the focal point, but we encourage cross-sector and cross-theme approaches to statistics development.
- ii. Statistics Governance: we report to the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting annually; we are secretariat to the meetings of Heads of Planning and Statistics, the Pacific Statistics Standing Committee, the Pacific Statistics Methods Board and the Donor and Development Partner Group; we engage in national statistics development strategies and other regional strategies, including TYPSS.
- iii. Coordination: we work with numerous donors and development partners, including international organisations, UN Agencies and donors; we coordinate technical assistance and we collaborate and have financial exchange with donors and partners on a regular basis.
- iv. Training: we provide training to government employees from the national statistics office and

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

other ministries; we also provide training to NSO-employed enumerators who are hired to implement census, survey and experimentation activities.

- v. General public: statistics are a public good that are produced to better people's lives and for economic and social development, among other areas; the general public are engaged through the provision of information, such as through census and survey, and the intention is that they benefit through data-informed policy and planning.
- vi. Private sector: we engage contractors – businesses and individuals – regularly for general and technical purposes.

3. Stakeholder identification and analysis

The key stakeholders to the project are identified as:

1. General Public who may be engaged as respondents to statistical collection exercises, or beneficiaries of data driven policy and planning initiatives; and noting Local Workers and 'in-country contractors'.
2. The Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB),
3. SPC members and Ministries of PICs, particularly National Statistics Offices (NSOs),
4. SPC employees, SDD generally and consultants to the Project

The stakeholders to the project are generally identified as being similar to those who have previously engaged by SPC-SDD. The project is designed to strengthen statistical capacity and improve statistics governance and knowledge. These activities are likely to require ongoing engagement with those identified stakeholders in 'Previous Stakeholder Engagement'. Much of the project will, as such, be business as usual for SPC-SDD.

There are no identified conflicts of interest, or other interested parties.

3.1. Affected parties

The General Public is most likely affected, but it is with the positive intention of producing statistics for economic and social development. In terms of the General Public, it is possible that PACSTAT will undertake an activity that requires household survey in one form or another. This will be a burden to the respondent, however the data are intended to be used with positive intentions for various population groups, including women, children and the poor. There is a risk of individual disclosure, which will be managed in accordance to the policies and protocols of the Pacific Data Hub – Microdata Library; the project will also contribute to alleviating the risk of individual disclosure through researching innovative ways to anonymize microdata to maximize their use.

PSMB will be affected in two ways. Firstly, there will be improved administration of PSMB, which will ensure meeting quorum is met and that all aspects relating to the timeliness of the meeting in terms of call for proposals, circulation of papers and communication and dissemination of PSMB recommendation. Secondly, there will be an increased flow of work for PSMB, which will increase workload of PSMB, but this serves statistics development purposes, with an intended positive outcome.

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

All NSOs will have improved access to information and technical assistance as a result of the project. Beneficiary Countries – and particularly the NSO – who agree to be involved in Innovative Experiments (which would be on a voluntary basis and guided by the conditions of the Partnership Agreement (ref: Annex 7 to the POM)) may be negatively impacted initially because of the work involved in being part of the experiments, but should see significant positive benefits from the results of the experiments. Via sub-grants under the project, the project may provide employment opportunities in Beneficiary Countries, which will likely be in the form of the NSO employing Local Workers to conduct project activities, or through procurement of firms or individuals.

SPC employees, and SDD, will benefit from increased resources in areas relating to poverty statistics and statistical innovation. There will be an additional work load on SDD (and SPC) to manage the project and to allocate resources for technical input, however this project will give sustained capacity – in the form of 2.5 FTEs for 4.5 years and funding for project activities – while will also be complementary to SDD's ongoing work so efficiency will be gained. SDD employees will also have increased access to technical resources and the project has an objective to strengthen the capacity of SDD staff in poverty assessment, and statistics and economics generally.

Consultants to the project may include: 3 long-term consultants (Statistics Advisor, Welfare Economist, Harmonisation Advisor) who will be engaged for 3+ years; multiple individual consultants (perhaps 20 or more) who will be engaged in accordance to the Financing Agreement.

3.2. Other interested parties

Notable other stakeholders are private contractors (individuals or firms), who may be engaged in project activities, directly by SPC, or through the Sub-Granting procedures described in the POM and which would be subject to the procurement requirements of the Financing Agreement.

All PICs are interested parties because of the potential for significant improvements to data collection efficiency and reduced costs of data collection in the future. The project will help to produce data to improve well being of PICs.

The statistical innovation component of the project will contribute to knowledge of statistical innovation globally, particularly in SIDS, but at a general global scale. Several African and Asian countries face similar data collection issues to those in PICs, so results from this project may also assist them in the longer term. For example, if this project enables the development of an alternative data collection methodology that reduces the costs and complexity of collecting socioeconomic data, then many countries may be able to use the methodology or adapt it to their own conditions.

Development partners and donors will also have more data collection options available to assist countries. It is likely that opportunities for the project to collaborate with other 'PACSTAT sister projects' in Kiribati and Tonga, and other statistics development stakeholders, such as World Bank and academia, and other stakeholders in the Pacific Statistics System, such as [FEMM](#), [HOPS](#), [PSSC](#) and [DDPG](#).

3.3. Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups

The project has not identified any disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups who will be negatively impacted by the project. In the longer term, households and individuals will have less respondent burden imposed on them, and disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals will benefit along with others.

The overall development objective of the project is to “improve the quality of welfare data collection and accessibility to comparable welfare data in the Pacific Island Countries”. Based on the Theory of Change (ref: PAD), the project will improve quality and efficiency in the production of welfare statistics, which are used in

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

policy and planning applications to improve the lives of those who are living in poverty.

Additionally, the project will compile gender indicators, which aim to serve to be used with the general intention of alleviating poverty and inequality for women and other marginalized populations.

3.4. Summary of project stakeholder needs

Stakeholder needs by Project Component are identified below.

Component 1

- The Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB) is comprised of 8 members and a varying number of observers. The project will largely be business as usual for PSMB. PACSTAT is already a standing agenda item for meetings of PSMB and the project will not have any adverse impact on PSMB. The project is likely to improve the administration of PSMB and communication/dissemination of results. The main change to PSMB is the requirement for PSMB to commission and/or select research. It will be important that PSMB is given enough time in advance of each meeting to review proposals for commissioned work or to review results of commissioned work.
- Individual Consultants will be contracted to conduct the PSMB commissioned work (i.e., desk-top research). The consultants will be contracted according to the procurement guidelines and the associated terms and conditions for individual consultants, including the grievance mechanism.
- Representatives of National Statistics Offices of the Pacific will be the main stakeholders when it comes to dissemination of PSMB recommendations (whether it be recommendation based on PSMB-commissioned work, or other). Their representatives will receive communication and they will also be invited to participate in capacity-building initiatives (trainings, discussions, circulation of papers). If required and when possible, participants may need to travel to training, workshop or meeting events.
- The Long-Term Consultant – the Statistics Advisor – will be mostly responsible for activities under Component 1, including administration and technical support to PSMB, administration and technical support to PSMB commissioned work, and in the communication and development and delivery of training on new statistical methods.

Component 2

- Externally, there are three main stakeholders to this component. Stakeholders 1 and 2 are the Long/Medium-Term Consultants – the Welfare Economist and the Harmonisation Advisor – who will mainly be responsible for technical aspects and communication and development and delivery of capacity building initiatives relating to the production and use of data required in poverty analysis. The third stakeholder group is representatives from National Statistics Offices, who will be invited to capacity-building initiatives, which cover areas ranging from training in the collection of data required to support welfare statistics through to producing harmonised gender-disaggregated welfare statistics.
- Internally, SDD is a main stakeholder to this component. SDD will benefit from the training delivered by the three Long/Medium-Term Consultants. SDD will also benefit from the upgrade to its video conference and meeting room facilities. Several SDD staff will make a technical contribution to the project.

Component 3

- Component 3 will include the following stakeholders: PSMB, Welfare Economist, Statistics Advisor,

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

SDD, NSOs, individual consultants, firms, and the general public. As the nature of the experiments is yet to be defined, an ESCP review will occur during the preparation of a Research Proposal, which is to be written for every experiment. As per the POM, the preparation of the Research Proposal calls for a ESCP review, so Stakeholder Engagement risk will be assessed separately for each experiment to be conducted, which will be at least 4.

4. Stakeholder Engagement Program

As mentioned above, many of the identified stakeholders – including the General Public, PSMB, Ministries and NSOs – and already engaged by SDD in its normal work program.

4.1. Purpose and timing of stakeholder engagement program

General Public

The General Public is likely to be engaged for the following two main purposes. Firstly, the General Public may be engaged to participate in the Project's Innovative Experiment activities, which may select households or persons to respond to a survey, which is to help to produce data to form policy and to plan to alleviate poverty and to improve the efficiency of data production to inform welfare. Secondly, the General Public will be engaged as beneficiaries of project data driven policy and planning, with the ultimate purpose of alleviating poverty. The data-centric nature of the Project ultimately aims to produce data to improve the welfare of the population.

In terms of participation in Innovative Experiments of the Project, the General Public – most likely from a few selected PICs – will be directly engaged when the Innovative Experiments are conducted, which will be from 2022 to 2025. In saying this, the General Public will continue to be indirectly engaged, in the sense of being beneficiaries of data-driven policy, on an ongoing continued basis.

The Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB)

The PSMB is a significant stakeholder in the project and there will be regular communication between PSMB and SDD, who provide secretariat services to the PSMB. The PSMB will be engaged for a number of purposes, including:

- Input into the selection of PSMB Commissioned Work, and review of research to form a recommendation for NSOs of the Pacific region;
- Ongoing input into Project-related statistics methodological development matters; and
- Input into the selection of Innovative Experiments, and review of research to form a recommendation for NSOs of the Pacific region.

The Project is a standing agenda item for all meetings (virtual and/or face-to-face) of PSMB, which occur at least twice per year for around 2 to 4 days in total.

SPC members and Ministries of PICs, particularly National Statistics Offices (NSOs)

The initial engagement with Governments of PICs (i.e., Ministries and NSOs) other stakeholders will be to inform them of the project and to seek their submissions for suitable research projects under Components 1 and 3 of the Project. This approach to stakeholders is likely to be around September 2021. They will be provided with relevant information about the submission process, including a template to complete. This type of engagement will occur regularly throughout the project, in line with the cycle of developing work plans.

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

These stakeholders will be approached at relevant times throughout the project to advise them of PSMB recommendations regarding results of research, so that the outputs of Component 1 and 2 are widely assessable to all PICs.

As part of Component 2 of the Project, the Project will engage with technical development partners and Ministries of Pacific developing states, including the National Statistics Offices, to increase capacity to produce and use data required to measure poverty and to strengthen regional capacity in development economics.

Ministries of PICs and NSOs will also be engaged during planning and implementation of Innovative Experiments. They will be provided with relevant information about the experiments and will be invited to express interest in hosting a relevant experiment. Further engagement will occur with NSOs, field staff (local consultants) and the general public who may be engaged as respondents to statistical collection exercises. During experiments there will be continued liaison between SDD and the Beneficiary Country to assess progress and provide any assistance required.

The POM sets our procedures in relation to engaging stakeholders in the Project's research and experimentation initiatives. The Research Proposal will assess stakeholders needs and will review ESCP specifically in the context of each Experiment, including timing for engagement.

SPC employees, SDD generally and consultants to the Project

SPC (mainly SDD) employees and consultants will be engaged to provide technical, administrative and managerial input to the Project. SDD employees will be also be engaged as beneficiaries of capacity development initiatives of the project, such as training in the conduct of poverty assessment. SDD employees will be engaged on an ongoing basis throughout the entire life of the project.

4.2. Proposed strategy for information disclosure

The project will disclose both general and technical information to stakeholders. General information will be in the form of project information and plans for PSMB Commissioned Work, capacity building initiatives and Innovative Experiments. Technical information will be the outputs of PSMB Commissioned Work, Innovative Experiments and statistical best practice, as recommended by PSMB.

General information will be prepared for the General Public, PSMB, SPC's members (ministries and NSOs) and SPC. This information will be disclosed SDD website (e.g., PACSTAT project page: <https://sdd.spc.int/innovation-sdd/statistical-innovation-and-capacity-building-pacific-islands-project-pacstat>) and via other means, such as through the development of a project information flyer, which will also include a Grievance Mechanism, which will provide Project Labour and Stakeholders access to a grievance mechanism.

Reports will be produced on each PSMB Commissioned Work and Innovative Experiment, including recommendations for implementation in Pacific Islands. These reports will be distributed as part of PSMB minutes and will also be distributed more widely by SDD to relevant NSOs and development partners via email and/or meeting/video conference. SPC has a number of existing channels of communication which will be used for this purpose, such as:

- i. The SDD quarterly newsletter
- ii. SDD event page

At the time of writing, it is already apparent that PSMB and methodological information needs to be better organized and accessible. The Long Term Consultants will provide the capacity to administer and develop

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

and communicate PSMB recommendations.

Microdata will be accessible to a small group of project stakeholders and microdata management will be governed by the Pacific Data Hub - Microdata Library.

Information collected by the National Statistics Office is governed by Statistical Legislation, which authorizes the NSO to collect information from individuals, households, businesses and institutions. The NSOs in the Pacific Region do not generally face a lot of resistance when collecting data. Major statistical undertakings are usually published via some form(s) of local mass media, including: radio, TV, newspaper, government announcements and notices, SMS and social media. Innovative Experiments that require the involvement of the General Public (e.g., via participation in a survey) will adopt all or some of these means to disclose information about the Project activity.

SPC has official protocol when engaging officially with its members. These protocols are followed for major undertakings (i.e., experimental research hosting) and for invitation to meetings and trainings. Beneficiary Countries of Innovative Experiments (Component 3) will be engaged via a Partnership Agreement and the POM clearly sets out the strategy for designing the Innovative Experiment with the Beneficiary Country.

The POM sets our procedures in relation to engaging stakeholders in the Project's research and experimentation initiatives. The Research Proposal will assess stakeholders and will review ESCP specifically in the context of the Innovative Experiment, including strategy for information disclosure.

4.3. Proposed strategy for consultation

The General Public who are directly engaged in Innovative Experiments, PSMB and NSOs will all have access to the above referred information flyer.

General Public

The General Public will be notified of Project activities via local mass media, including: radio, TV, newspaper, government announcements and notices, SMS and/or social media. The General Public will be provided with a project information flyer, which will include general project information and a Grievance Mechanism.

The General Public who are selected to participate in Innovative Experiments will be consulted during the first approach of the interviewers who are employees of the NSO. During this time, normal statistical practices will be followed, which include informing the General Public (the respondent) about the purpose of the activity, confidentiality and the authority of the NSO to collect information under the national statistical legislation.

Apart from those who will be directly affected by the Project (e.g., those from the General Public who will be selected to respond to a survey), consultation with the General Public in relation to the Project is not deemed necessary.

The Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB)

PSMB meets twice each year, either through face-to-face meetings in one of SPC's member countries or virtually, with occasional interim meetings. Meeting minutes and documentation are published on SDD's website. As SDD is Secretariat of PSMB, it is responsible for coordination with the Chair and members. SDD-SPC organises the meeting agenda and facilitates meeting invitation and logistics.

PSMB was involved as early as the project development stage, so the Board was consulted on numerous occasions and their input is reflected in the PAD. PSMB has already been briefed about its role in the

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

project and the POM has had significant input from PSMB. PACSTAT is a standing agenda item at each meeting of PSMB. The processes for submission of research and experiment proposals is described in the POM.

SPC members and Ministries of PICs, particularly National Statistics Offices (NSOs)

The engagement of the three Long-Term Consultants to the Project is expected to significantly increase SDD's capacity to communicate with and consult government stakeholders. The project will engage ministries and NSOs via usual means (email, video conference, face-to-face meetings, web-based communication, social media).

Communication of project-related knowledge is a key aspect of the project. PSMB recommendations will be communicated via email and knowledge-products will be made available via SDD's website. The project will also identify new ways to efficiently communicate and strengthen capacity of SPC's members, such as through the development of online training materials and publication of guidelines.

Government agencies will also be beneficiaries of training. SPC will communicate training opportunities with members through SPC's normal official channels (usually with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Training will be either face-to-face in one of SPC's member countries (travel may therefore be required), or via video conference.

Selected Pacific Island countries to host Innovative Experiments (Component 3 of the project) will undergo a more structured consultative project and feedback will be sought from members to gauge their satisfaction with the consultation process and to ensure that SPC's members' feedback is incorporated into the experiment design. These procedures are detailed in the POM and the project's performance indicators reflect this requirement. Participation in experiments will be voluntary and the specific roles and responsibilities of stakeholders will be defined in the Partnership Agreement (and the Grant Agreement where financial exchange is required).

The National Statistics Agency will provide significant input into the Research Proposal, including the ESCP review, so the review of Stakeholder risk will be consultative with the NSO. These procedures are set out in the POM.

SPC Employees and Consultants employed on the Project

SPC Employees are already informed of the project. It is regularly discussed in meetings of SDD's meetings and it has been presented to numerous audience, including SPC's Senior Leadership, Finance, Procurement, SER personnel, HR and legal. Key SDD personnel are listed in the Annual Work Plan under Recurrent Technical Staff. SPC employees who would otherwise be considered as in-kind Recurrent Technical Staff or Corporate Support will be engaged on a needs basis and they will be communicated with via means of face-to-face meetings, calls and email.

4.4. Timeline

The below table summarises the timing for activities over the project life.

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Table 1: Timeline of Project Activities

	HY1 2021	HY2 2021	HY1 2022	HY2 2022	HY1 2023	HY2 2023	HY1 2024	HY2 2024	HY1 2025
Stakeholder 1: PSMB									
PSMB meetings	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ongoing engagement with PSMB	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Stakeholder 2: NSOs and local workers									
Workshops and training	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PSMB recommendations	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Innovative Experiments			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Stakeholder 3: SPC employees and project consultants									
Long-term consultant: Statistics Advisor	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Long-term consultant: Welfare Economist	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Long-term consultant: Harmonisation Advisor			x	x	x	x	x	x	
Consultant for PSMB Commissioned Work 1	x	x							
Consultant for PSMB Commissioned Work 2		x	x						
Consultant for PSMB Commissioned Work 3			x	x					
Consultant for PSMB Commissioned Work 4				x	x				
Consultant for PSMB Commissioned Work 5					x	x			
Other consultants, as required	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SPC Staff	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PSC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Stakeholder 4: General public									
Innovative experiment 1			x	x					x
Innovative experiment 2				x	x				
Innovative experiment 3					x	x			
Innovative experiment 4							x	x	
Beneficiaries of Project Development Outcomes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

4.6 Review of Comments

In this section, we will consider the following:

- i. PSMB Commissioned Work;
- ii. Workshops and trainings; and
- iii. Innovative Experiments.

The POM outlines the procedures for requesting for proposal for PSMB Commissioned Work. On a case-by-case basis, consultations with the proposer will be conducted via email or call. These consultations are likely to seek clarity or more information from the proposer. The proposal are then taken to PSMB for consultation and prioritising during PSMB's regular meetings.

NSOs that participate in Workshop and Training activities of the project will be provided with an evaluation form, which will seek feedback on all aspects relating to organisation and delivery of the training. Comments will be taken on board for all future Workshops and Trainings of the project.

The POM describes the procedures for consultation of Innovative Experiments with Beneficiary Countries. Given that 'incorporation of feedback' from Beneficiary Countries is a project performance indicator, the Project will develop a questionnaire for completion by the Beneficiary Country, which will seek feedback to evaluate whether the Beneficiary Country feels that their input to the project is reflected in the experiment design.

4.7 Future Phases of Project

The regular semi-annual meetings of PSMB will serve as an opportunity for communication of different 'phases' of the project, which will include 5 x PSMB Commissioned Works and 4 x Innovative Experiments. The communication of PSMB recommendation is critical to ensure stakeholders remain informed about

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

new statistical methods and best practice. The Project activities of Workshops and Trainings will also serve as an opportunity for knowledge transfer in relation to statistical development and as new research findings and recommendations become apparent as a result of the project.

5. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities

5.1. Resources

The Project Manager will be responsible for managing all aspects of the SEP. While no specific budget has been allocated for stakeholder engagement, it is an essential part of the project. As at the time of writing, the biggest 'unknown' with respect to Stakeholder Engagement is those who may be affected by the Innovative Experiments of the project. Considering this, a requirement for each Innovative Experiment is to prepare a comprehensive research proposal, which will serve both technical and operational aspects of the Project, including a review of Stakeholder Engagement. The other aspects of the project are deemed to be 'business as usual' (e.g., PSMB will continue functioning as usual, NSOs will continue to receive training and capacity building opportunities and SPC employees will continue to participate in statistical methodological development, albeit with increasing frequency and a major focus on poverty statistics).

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5.2. Management functions and responsibilities

As per the POM, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been established and is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis. The Financing Agreement requires semi-annual reporting ('Progress Reports'), which will include details on the implementation of Safeguard Instruments, including Stakeholder Engagement. The Progress Report includes monitoring the status of compliance with the Safeguards Instruments, including details on:

- i. measures taken in furtherance of Safeguards Instruments;
- ii. conditions, if any, which interfere or threaten to interfere with the smooth implementation of such Safeguards Instruments; and
- iii. remedial measures taken or required to be taken to address such conditions.

Annexes 20, 21 and 22 of the POM provide templates for ESCP monitoring and reporting, incidents reporting and project monitoring, reporting and evaluation, respectively.

The Project Manager, with support from the PSC, will ultimately be responsible for carrying out stakeholder engagement activities. The PSC comprises:

- i. Director, SDD (Chair)
- ii. Manager, Data Analysis and Dissemination
- iii. Economic Statistics & Microdata Specialist
- iv. Finance Manager
- v. Finance and Administration Officer

PACSTAT Stakeholder Engagement Plan

vi. Procurement Officer

It is noted that SPC's Social and Environmental Policy, which includes an established 'Social and Environmental Responsibility Practice Group', which will be engaged throughout Project implementation if and as required. Given the limited E&S risks, SDD will manage any necessary activities that require Safeguards input and engage the SER Group if and as required. No dedicated staff are required for the management of Safeguards.

6. Grievance Mechanism

SPC is committed to receiving any concerns or grievances from any affected community, about the environmental and social plans or performance of any SPC project. At any time, an affected member of a community may raise their concerns by lodging a complaint through SPC's website (<https://www.spc.int/about-us/contact-us>; <https://www.spc.int/procurement>; <https://sdd.spc.int/innovation-sdd/statistical-innovation-and-capacity-building-pacific-islands-project-pacstat>).

In addition, SPC will develop an Information Flyer for the project, which will include contact information for lodging of grievances. The Information Flyer will allow members of an affected community to provide feedback, or raise potential concerns or grievances. The Information Flyer will include an email and the above website links, but also a phone number, fax and mailing address for Stakeholders with limited access to the internet. The Information Flyer will be made available to the General Public who are directly engaged in the Project through the Innovative Experiments (e.g., households who are selected to participate in a survey) and also PSMB and NSOs who participate in Project-related trainings and workshops. Lodgers of a Grievance will be asked to provide their contact information so that the Project's response to the Grievance can be communicated with the Lodger.

Any grievances will be directed to SPC's SER Helpdesk in the first instance and will be acknowledged within five working days. The SER Helpdesk will consider the grievance and will make recommendations to the relevant PSC about a potential action plan or redress mechanism. Where deemed necessary, the World Bank will be engaged to seek advice on how to address the Grievance.

Where the grievance relates to allegations of potential staff misconduct, or non-staff personnel misconduct, the grievance will be redirected to the Director-General's delegate and any inquiries will be carried out under Chapter XII Investigations and disciplinary actions of the Manual of Staff Policies.

All Grievances received will be reported to the World Bank via the Progress Reports.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

7.1. Involvement of stakeholders in monitoring activities

Where deemed appropriate, the Ministry (or NSO) and PSMB will be engaged to address grievances, however it is not anticipated that stakeholders will be involved in Project monitoring activities.

7.2. Reporting back to stakeholder groups

The 6-monthly Progress Reports, including reporting on implementation of the ESCP, will be made available on the Project Webpage (<https://sdd.spc.int/innovation-sdd/statistical-innovation-and-capacity-building-pacific-islands-project-pacstat>), to give stakeholders the opportunity to follow up on ESCP related matters.