



15th Meeting of the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB15) 26th March 2025 (Virtual Meeting)

MEETING REPORT AND OUTCOMES

Background

The purpose of the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB) is to make recommendations to the national statistics offices (NSOs) of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) on statistical best practice and standards considered fit for purpose for use in the region.

Participants

PSMB membership includes NSO representatives for the Pacific subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia, and for small NSOs, as well as members from three development partners – Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Stats NZ, and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF as UN representative). The World Bank attends as a standing observer and other observers are welcome at meetings. The Pacific Community (SPC) convenes PSMB and provides the secretariat.

PacStat

The Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands (PacStat) regional project, led by SPC and funded by the World Bank, supports the administration of PSMB and the dissemination of its recommendations. PSMB is responsible for technical guidance and oversight of statistical research and innovative experiments commissioned through PacStat. PacStat’s overall objective is to improve the quality of welfare data collection and accessibility to comparable welfare data in Pacific Island countries.

PSMB 15

The papers and presentations are at: <https://sdd.spc.int/events/2025/03/pacific-statistics-methods-board-extraordinary-meeting-psmb>

The summary of meeting outcomes is in Annex 1; the list of abbreviations is in Annex 2; the agenda is in Annex 3; and the full list of meeting participants is in Annex 4.

Session 1: Opening and Welcome

Vince Galvin, Stats NZ, Chair, welcomed participants and invited Leota Aliielua, Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS), Vice-Chair, to give the opening prayer.

The meeting approved the agenda and the report of the previous meeting, PSMB 14. The Chair noted that several of the items on today’s agenda were follow-ups to the recommended actions from PSMB 14. Apologies were accepted from Taggy Tangimetua (Cook Islands), Aritita Tekaieti (Kiribati), James Kaphuka (UNICEF) and Peter Ellis (SPC).

Session 2: Pacific HIES Toolkit

Maria Musudroka, Bertrand Buffiere, Olivier Menaouer, Mosese Qaloewai and Michael Sharp (SPC)

Maria Musudroka outlined the purpose and scope of the Pacific Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) Toolkit, which represents the fulfilment of recommendations from PSMB 12 in October 2023. Four

guidance notes in the toolkit were presented for approval in this session: HIES planning, HIES fieldwork, HIES data processing, and estimation of the use value of durable goods in consumption aggregates. PSMB had given input on early drafts of this guidance at PSMB 13 and 14.

2.1 Guidance Note: HIES Planning

The Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) provides a standard framework to modernise and streamline survey work activities. This HIES Planning guidance note identifies the necessary steps, methods and components to help guide the overall process. These steps are all interconnected and include design and build, choice of data capture, questionnaire design, sampling, mapping, design collection, and collection budgeting and HIES governance. The framework is flexible so some steps can be done at the same time. The presentation identified the changes that had been incorporated since an earlier 2024 version of the guidance note.

2.2 Guidance Note: HIES Fieldwork

This guidance note described the steps involved in the management of HIES fieldwork over its 12-month duration. These include recruitment, field staff training and fieldwork management. The presentation identified the changes that had been incorporated since an earlier 2024 version of the guidance note. A standard monitoring dashboard to concurrently monitor multiple surveys was presented. This dashboard, which is under development, has been designed to provide a user-friendly visualization of ongoing surveys and censuses for NSOs.

2.3 Guidance Note: Processing of HIES

This guidance note outlines the systematic process for converting raw HIES datasets into finalized, high-quality datasets that are suitable for analysis and dissemination. It begins with the initial steps for generating a consolidated dataset from multiple versions of the survey questionnaire and proceeds through detailed cleaning and editing procedures to ensure consistency, accuracy, and completeness of the data. The presentation identified the changes that had been incorporated since an earlier 2024 version of the guidance note.

Discussion

All the participants commended SPC on the preparation and quality of the guidance notes. Some participants noted that these guidance notes would help NSOs implement HIES in the future with less dependence on SPC. The emphasis on monitoring was noted as a particular improvement to the Toolkit. A suggestion was made to supplement the dashboard with explanations of the principles behind monitoring together with examples.

Some countries questioned whether there needed to be strict adherence to the guidelines, and it was confirmed that there is no “one-size-fits-all” model and that countries should apply the guidelines in a flexible manner and according to their own specific circumstances. A suggestion to change the title of the Pacific HIES Toolkit to the Pacific HIES Handbook was discussed, and it was decided to retain the original title.

The Toolkit is a living document and will be updated periodically. The discussion concluded with a suggestion for the countries to use and apply the guidance notes as they proceed with future HIES surveys and to share with SPC their experiences with the guidance notes so that they can be updated in the future.

2.4 Guidance Note: Estimation of the Use Value of Durable Goods in Consumption Aggregates

This guidance note describes a method to collect and analyse data to estimate the use value of durable goods. The method includes a questionnaire module to collect data on the durable goods, followed by the application of a user cost approach to estimate the value of the durable goods. A geometric depreciation model is used to generate depreciation rates. The presentation identified the changes that had been incorporated since an earlier 2024 version of the guidance note and listed areas for future research.

Discussion

Participants noted that this guidance note presented a good framework for doing a poverty assessment and was more useable than a previous version presented to PSMB 13. While it was pointed out that further steps were needed to expand on missing information in the geometric depreciation model, it was also acknowledged that it is necessary to be realistic about how much work to put into the durable goods estimation as it is a small component of total household consumption.

Outcome: Pacific HIES Toolkit

PSMB:

- approved the four guidance notes relating to planning, fieldwork, processing and estimation of the use value of durable goods in consumption aggregates as part of the Pacific HIES Toolkit and recommended they be put on a webpage and communicated to NSOs and other stakeholders;
- noted that the guidance notes are living documents and will be periodically revised as they are applied;
- recommended that applications of the guidance notes be compiled to create a repository of good practices.

Session 3: HIES Innovative Experiment – Samoa HIES Food away from Home (FAFH) Experiment

Lilianetelani Hennemann, SBS, Nathalie Troubat and Michael Sharp, SPC

This experiment sought to improve the current methodology used to estimate the dietary energy (calories) consumed away from home using information collected in HIES and to propose an innovative protocol to better estimate away from home food consumption. Two main instruments were developed for the FAFH experiment: a manual on food portion quantification (MFPQ) and an individually administered 7-day diary to collect FAFH consumption quantity data referenced to the MFPQ.

The experiment, conducted in 2023, showed that the cost of one kilocalorie consumed away from home was around 2.25 times higher than one calorie consumed at home (after controlling for socio-economic characteristics of the household). This is far greater than the 1.25 multiplier currently used when processing food data collected in HIES in the PICTs. These results have significant implications for the estimation of the prevalence of undernourishment.

The report concluded that it was difficult to formally recommend a specific multiplier to be adopted by other PICTs as the context of FAFH consumption in Samoa may be different to that of other PICTs. Further research is recommended.

Discussion items

Participants congratulated SBS on the successful completion of the experiment and the excellent quality of the report. The discussion concluded that the use of the previous 1.25 multiplier needed revisiting. Transferability of methodology and the results of the Samoa experiment needed further research given the different contexts and eating habits of residents in the PICTs. SBS noted that they were not surprised by the results and that they planned a workshop in Samoa next week to inform stakeholders of the experiment's results.

Outcome: HIES Innovative Experiment – Samoa HIES FAFH Experiment

PSMB:

- thanked and congratulated the Government of Samoa and the SBS on the successful completion of the Samoa Food Away From Home Innovative Experiment;

- noted the need for further research into the method used for measurement of food consumption away from home and the transferability of the results to other PICTs.

Session 4 Wrap up and Closing

Future PSMB Topics arising from the United Nations Statistical Commission 56th Session, 4–7 March 2025

Representatives from Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and SPC attended the 56th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Key topics of interest for Pacific statistical methods included the following:

- The new 2025 System of National Accounts (SNA) was presented as the international statistical standard for the compilation of the national accounts of countries. Some countries may find the shift from the base year methodology to the chain linking methodology difficult. Recognizing that the 2025 SNA may prove a challenge for the Pacific countries, the ABS offered to organise a roundtable to discuss the changes.
- 2030 census round – this is of high importance for all Pacific NSOs and was the subject of a resolution at the UN Statistical Commission.
- There was a side event, food security and nutrition statistics, and an expert group is to be created. During the discussion, it was apparent that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean and Pacific experience similar challenges and in some respects the Pacific SIDS are leading the way, e.g. with Samoa’s innovative experiment on FAFH.
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Privacy issues and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Activities for World Statistics Day on 20th October 2025.

Items recommended for inclusion on the agenda for PSMB16, scheduled for 14–15 May 2025, were the 2030 census round, and the transition to SNA 25.

Outcome: Future PSMB Topics arising from United Nations Statistical Commission 56th Session, 4–7 March 2025

PSMB:

- recommended the 2030 census round and the transition to SNA 25 be included on the agenda for PSMB16, scheduled for 14–15 May 2025.

Session 5: Long Form Census Innovative Experiment

Lae Peleti, Tuvalu Central Statistics Division; Michael Sharp, Benuel Lenge, Andrea Borlizzi, Nathalie Troubat and Jean-Paul Zoyem, SPC

PSMB noted the final report on the Tuvalu Long Form Census Innovative Experiment.

Closing

The date and venue for the next PSMB meeting is 14–15 May 2025 in Canberra. The meeting will be in conjunction with the ABS Pacific Statisticians Leadership Forum in Canberra.

The Chair will be retiring from Stats NZ at the end of 2025 and the May PSMB meeting will discuss the mechanism for electing a new Chair and new Board members.

The Chair thanked PSMB members for their hard work. After a closing prayer, the meeting ended.

Annex 1: PSMB15 – Summary of Meeting Outcomes

Session 2: Pacific HIES Toolkit

PSMB:

- approved the four guidance notes relating to planning, fieldwork, processing and estimation of the use value of durable goods in consumption aggregates as part of the Pacific HIES Toolkit and recommended they be put on a webpage and communicated to NSOs and other stakeholders;
- noted that the guidance notes are living documents and will be periodically revised as they are applied;
- recommended that applications of the guidance notes be compiled to create a repository of good practices.

Session 3: HIES Innovative Experiment – Samoa HIES FAFH Experiment

PSMB:

- thanked and congratulated the Government of Samoa and the SBS on the successful completion of the Samoa Food Away From Home Innovative Experiment;
- noted the need for further research into the method used for measurement of food consumption away from home and the transferability of the results to other PICTs.

Session 4: Future PSMB Topics arising from United Nations Statistical Commission 56th Session 4–7 March 2025

PSMB:

- recommended the 2030 census round and the transition to SNA 25 be included on the agenda for PSMB16, scheduled for 14–15 May 2025.

Session 5: Long Form Census Innovative Experiment

PSMB:

- noted the final report on the Tuvalu Long Form Census Experiment.

Annex 2: PSMB15 – List of Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAFH	Food Away From Home
GSBPM	Generic Statistical Business Process Model
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
MFPQ	Manual on Food Portion Quantification
NSO	National Statistics Office
PacStat	Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands
PICTs	Pacific Island countries and territories
PSMB	Pacific Statistics Methods Board
SBS	Samoa Bureau of Statistics
SDD	Statistics for Development Division
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SNA	Statistical National Accounts
SPC	Pacific Community
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

Annex 3: PSMB15 – Agenda

15th Meeting of the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB15) 26th March 2025 (Virtual Meeting)

Agenda

Time (Wellington UTC+13)	Item	Lead and Documentation
11.00-11.10	1. Opening and welcome Recap on outcomes of previous meeting Introduction of agenda Apologies	Chair Agenda and previous minutes
11.10–12:15	Session 2. Pacific HIES Toolkit Introduction, purpose and structure of toolkit Guidance notes for PSMB input and approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning of HIES ▪ Fieldwork for HIES ▪ Processing of HIES ▪ Estimation of the Use Value of Durable Goods in Consumption Aggregates 	Benuel Lenge, Bertrand Buffiere, Olivier Menaouer and Michael Sharp (SPC) Cover note and four Guidance notes
12:30–12:40	Break	
12:40–13:15	Session 3. HIES Innovative Experiment Report for PSMB information and discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Samoa Food Away From Home (FAFH) Innovative Experiment 	Lilianetelani Hennemann (SBS), Michael Sharp (SPC) Cover note and experiment report
13:15– 13:30	Session 4. Wrap up and closing Future PSMB topics arising from the United Nations Statistical Commission 56 th Session, 4 - 7 March 2025 Meeting outcomes Next meeting (14-15 May 2025)	Chair
13.15 – 13.20	Session 5. Tuvalu Long Form Census Innovative Experiment	Chair Final experiment report for noting.

Annex 4: PSMB15 – List of Meeting Participants

MEMBERS

Name	Participant (organisation)	Country	Email
Mr Vince Galvin	Chair (Stats NZ)	New Zealand	vince.galvin@stats.govt.nz
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Apologies were accepted from Taggy Tangimetua (Cook Islands), Aritita Tekaieti (Kiribati), James Kaphuka (UNICEF) and Peter Ellis (SPC).