Context

The Sixth Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development held in Suva, Fiji in 6-7 December 2022, provided an important opportunity for the Pacific participants to highlight the key challenges and opportunities of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Participants emphasized the need for guidance in developing a realistic/rational set of indicators that could be used by small islands developing States (SIDS) to report on the SDG's, other global and regional sector-specific reporting needs, as well as meet their own national reporting requirements. In particular, the challenge of producing adequate and coherent data to report progress against the SDGs was advocated.

The Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics, 2022-2030, developed under the leadership of the Pacific Community (SPC), includes a relevant outcome under the Key Focus Area 2 "All PICTs are producing and disseminating (either in-house or through TA) an agreed core set of high-quality economic, social, and environmental statistics in a timely and user-friendly manner in line with national priorities and are integrating SDGs and regional/global reporting requirements". Guidance tools for supporting the production of a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics have been developed, however, no single framework or guidance tool is available to allow Pacific policymakers, planners and statisticians to best develop this “core set” of high-quality and timely statistics. Pacific National Statistical Systems and Planning Offices continue to face funding and capacity constraints to effectively develop and maintain a “core set” or ensure their use can be maximized for policy and planning implementation and monitoring.

Objective

The key objective of the EGM will be to commence the formulation of a set of guidance notes to assist countries in the Pacific subregion to first better understand the internal
and external demands placed on their National Statistical Systems with respect to indicator requirements, and secondly to identify potential approaches that could be taken to best address the challenges faced by small, often underfunded National Statistical Systems. A particular focus will be to ensure a nationally led and tailored approach, by receiving extensive inputs from national experts, especially senior officials from National Statistics Offices (NSOs) and Planning Departments, who best understand the capacities within their country, and the ever changing challenges faced with this element of their work, and then guide the follow-up activities.

More specific objectives and outcomes:

1. Share experiences of how countries in the Pacific are currently tackling indicator production work, to meet the demand of global, regional and national reporting requirements.

2. Seek country views on what key challenges they face in meeting reporting requirements. Use this information to form a draft outline of the guidance notes.

3. Discuss what global and regional initiatives are currently relevant for the Pacific SIDS, and what emphasis countries in the Pacific are placing on reporting progress against each.

4. Based on the outcomes of “2”, delve deeper into the sorts of issues and guidance that should be provided to Pacific SIDS with respect to each key element of national indicator production.

5. Initiate discussions on what type of tool/template could be developed to assist countries review and revise their indicator landscape.

6. Discuss and propose next steps for taking the work programme forward, covering:
   a. Finalization of a draft of the guidance note;
   b. Country plans for reviewing and developing their national indicator landscape, including pilot testing recommendations in the guidance notes in a selected number of Pacific SIDS.

**Participants**

The EGM will consist of representatives from the following:
Country representation
From selected member States, senior colleagues from both the National Statistics Office (NSO) and Department of Planning, ideally the head of department or a deputy.

Development Partners representation
Experts from Development Partner organizations involved in overseeing the implementation of key global and regional initiatives of high importance to the Pacific, as well as those involved in supporting member States with developing indicator frameworks for monitoring national plans/policies.

Participation will be by invitation only.

Programme Overview
The EGM will be held over one day on Friday 24 November 2023.

A very broad description of the agenda is as follows:

Day 1 – 24 November

Morning
- Opening session
- Country perspective: discussion of current indicator landscapes at national level
- Brainstorming on structure/content of guidance notes
- Overview of priority global and regional initiatives (and hence reporting requirements)
- Overview of national reporting requirements
- Aligning guidance notes with existing processes and infrastructures

Afternoon
- Brainstorming in more detail, proposed sections of the guidance notes
- Next steps
  - Drafting and endorsing guidance notes
  - Country plans, including pilot testing of guidance notes recommendations
- Workshop closing
Further Information

The EGM will take place in person at the ESCAP Pacific Office, Level 5, Kadavu House, Suva, Fiji. It will be conducted in English only.

For information, please contact Mr Chris Ryan, Statistician, ESCAP Pacific Office, ryan@un.org with copy to Ms Teenari Tekeraoi, teenari.tekeraoi@un.org.

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