Data analysis and report writing workshop for civil registration based vital statistics - Concept Note

21-31ST May 2018, Nadi, Fiji

1. Introduction and background

Improving the quality and reporting of vital statistics data is a priority under the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) phase II (2010-2020), adopted by leaders of Pacific Islands Countries and Territories in 2009. Pacific Heads of Planning and Statistics (HOPs) as well as Pacific Heads of health have echoed this priority during different gatherings, including the most recent HOPS gathering in November 2017, which recognised civil registration as a fundamental source of vital statistics . Additionally, Pacific island countries have committed to the Asia-Pacific Regional Action framework for civil registration and vital statistics, which commits countries to : *Universal registration of births, deaths and other vital events (Goal 1)*; and to ensuring that *"Accurate, complete and timely vital statistics (including on causes of death) are produced based on registration records and are disseminated" (Goal 3)*.

 In addition to strengthening the capacity of countries to improve the completeness and quality of civil registration data, it is critical that support is provided to ensure that this data is analysed, reported, and made available to decision makers. A number of countries are now in a position where their civil registration systems either are able to, or will soon be able to generate reasonably reliable data. Ensuring that system improvements are reflected in an actual improvement in the availability and reliability of data is a key regional challenge, and may be a significant change for many NSO's who have not previously had a clear role in the routine analysis or reporting of this data.

2. Workshop objectives

This course aims to strengthen the capacity of countries in the analysis of administrative data generated from civil registration systems with an objective of providing evidence on the performance of civil registration systems and; making this data available for policy and planning (where it meets a sufficient level of quality and completeness). The course also over-achingly aims at supporting countries to identify systems weaknesses, and crafting strategies and practical solutions for systems improvement. Specifically the course is designed to address these three objectives:

a. Assist countries to complete a vital statistics report that illustrates current levels and trends of births, deaths and cause of death over time, and that can be used for planning and policy review purposes;

b. Assist participants to build proficiency in key analytical, interpretation and presentation skills required to meet regional, national and international reporting requirements;

c. Assist participants to develop key skills to critically appraise their data collection systems and processes, to identify key system weaknesses and craft solutions, and to strengthen their stakeholder relations in support of system improvements

3. Participants

Fifteen participants from five countries: **Fiji, Tonga, Nauru, Niue, Cook Islands** will attend the course.

A team of three participants is expected from each country i.e. a representative of the National statistics office, a representative of the Ministry of Health and a representative of the civil registration office. These three entities are the main stakeholders, and the key drivers of CRVS reform in countries. In this regard, it is important that they share a common level of understanding of each of their roles in the CRVS reform process, and that their relationship and coordination arrangement is strengthened. More specifically, the participation of the three is encouraged for the following reasons:

a. *The national statistics office-* holds the mandate of production official statistics. While the analysis of administrative data is encouraged, this has not been the culture/ the practice in most countries. Often, analysis of administrative data is not included within countries national statistics plans and when done is often regarded of "secondary priority". This course will aim at encouraging the analysis and routine reporting of this data among NSOs as well as underlining their role in improving the quality of civil registration data.

b. *The civil registration office*—are the primary custodians of the data being analysed. The workshop will provide an opportunity for them to engage with the data from a user's perspective and hence appreciate its limitations and strengths. Their participation is envisaged to understand the importance of the data they collect from an analytical and policy perspective, and hence assist them to appreciate the critical role that that they play in providing quality data and. The course will also focus on identifying weaknesses in civil registration processes and identifying practical solutions and strategies for improvement.

c. *The ministry of health-* maintain primary records of births, deaths and causes of death for events that occur in health facility. The workshop will underline the fundamental role of the ministry plays in ensuring quality cause of death records, and in strengthening the completeness of civil registration records. Their participation is envisaged to assist them to appreciate the importance of the data the collect (from an analytical and policy perspective), and the critical role that that they play in providing quality data.

4. Workshop format and materials

The workshop will follow a combination of formal teaching, plenary discussions and supervised practical sessions. Country representatives will be required to bring to the course unit-record data on birth, death (incl. causes of death) from the civil registration system. During the practical sessions of the workshop, participants will analyse their data and draft descriptive paragraphs of the same.

Topics to be Covered:

- Importance of CRVS data
- Data and quality
  - Sources of vital statistics data
  - Cleaning CRVS data
  - Quality assessment of CRVS data (including aggregation and dealing with small numbers)
  - Data plausibility and comparisons
- Assessing performance of civil; registration systems:
  - Estimating completeness of birth and death registration
  - Challenges, opportunities and best practices in improving registration completeness
- Births and Fertility
  - Tabulation of births, sex, age of mother, place of birth and residence and risk factors (ie birth weight)
  - Crude birth rates
  - Age specific (incl. adolescent birth rates), and total fertility
  - Tabulation of deaths by, sex, age, place of death and residence
- Deaths and all-cause mortality

- o Crude death rates
- o Age specific mortality patters
- o Measures of childhood mortality
- o Age-standardisation
- o Life tables and summary measures of mortality
- Causes of death
  - o Importance of cause of death data
  - o Sources of cause of death data
  - o Quality assurance for cause of death data
  - o Leading causes of death, counts, and proportional mortality
  - o Maternal mortality
  - o Intro to: Cause specific mortality rates and age standardised cause specific mortality
  - o Monitoring NCDs and probability of dying from an NCD
- Writing and dissemination
  - o Intro to writing – paragraphs
  - o International reporting requirements
  - o Data users and data needs
  - o Selecting Key Messages
- Linking data to policy

The workshop will draw upon materials provided in the data analysis and report writing course workbook developed by BAG.

5. Partners

The workshop will be facilitated by members of the Brisbane accord group namely:
- Week 1: SPC, UNESCAP, ABS, UNICEF
- Week 2: SPC, UNESCAP, ABS, WHO

6. Expected output

At the end of the workshop, each participating country will be expected to have an initial draft of a vital statistics report, including basic tabulations, key demographic indicators and descriptive summaries of the tables, indicators, data sources and data imitations. After the workshop, BAG members will continue to provide technical support to countries in the development and completion of the reports.

7. Key reference documents

1. Workshop Agenda
2. Workshop course book
3. Vital statistics reporting template