



Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands Project

Advertisement
Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI)
Harmonisation Advisor - (individual consulting services)

Assignment Title: Harmonisation Advisor

Reference No.: FJ-SPC-144951-CS-INDV and EO122-4868

1. BACKGROUND

The Pacific Community has received financing in the amount of USD 4.5 million equivalent from the World Bank toward the cost of the Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include those of a Harmonisation Advisor for a period of 30-months, until 30 June 2025, or whichever occurs first. The Consultant will be expected to work for 22 days per month for 11 months per year and, as much as possible while home-based, follow the general working hours of the Pacific Community (SPC). The expected start is in January 2023. As this is a long-term assignment, a detailed Terms of Reference is provided, including background to the project and the expected outputs over the duration of the project.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following website: <https://www.spc.int/procurement>.

The Pacific Community (SPC) now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.). Firms’ staff may express interest through the employing firm for the assignment and, under such situation, only the experience and qualifications of individuals shall be considered in the selection process.

2. SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

- An advanced Degree (PhD, Master's or equivalent) in Statistics, Economics, Data Science, or other related discipline.
- At least 5 years of professional experience in areas relating to deriving development indicators using household survey microdata, standardisation of survey instruments, harmonising microdata, publishing outputs using survey microdata, and delivery of statistical capacity building programs.

Technical and quantitative skills:

- An applied statistician / microeconomist with experience in the following areas being highly desirable:
 - Demonstrated technical and quantitative skills as an applied statistician / microeconomist, including proven track record in data processing (essential in Stata), statistical modelling, indicator computation and complex econometric analysis of household and individual level data.
 - Quantitative and analytical background with a record of high-quality analytical work in the areas outline above. Publications in peer reviewed journals are desirable.
 - Experience in providing client-facing technical assistance, including conducting workshops and training in data use, poverty analysis, statistical analysis, and development of policy recommendations.
 - Experience in drafting guidelines or other reference material is desirable.
 - Experience performing analysis in two or more of the following topics: harmonising consumption data from household surveys, harmonising development microdata, consumption aggregate compilation, labour market and labour mobility analysis, sex-disaggregated analysis and indicator computation, food security analysis, and big data / non-traditional data source analysis.
 - Experience designing and developing harmonised databases.
 - Experience as a practitioner in developing and/or transition countries.
- General economic knowledge and analytical skills: demonstrated track record of working with household survey data and analytical tools and models to conduct applied statistical and economic analyses, and to produce user-friendly written outputs; understands underlying economic and statistical concepts

Professional Skills / Experiences:

- Demonstrated experiences:
 - With governments, NGOs, and donors.
 - As a mentor (ability to work with staff from all levels), coach to junior staff
- Integrative skill: Work to develop an integrated view across all facets of current sector
- Policy dialogue skills: Identify and assess policy issues and play an active role in the dialogue with the government and/or other stakeholders.
- Knowledge and experience in development area: understand policy issues and policy-making process; distil recommendations/lessons to stakeholders
- Written and oral communication skills in English, with French language skills also being desirable.

In addition, the following skills/demonstrated experience will be appreciated:

- Experience specific to the Pacific region.
- Interpersonal skills: ability to collaborate effectively with multi-disciplinary teams, and to listen and integrate ideas from varied sources, sense of diplomacy, awareness to cultural, political, and gender issues
- Written and verbal communication delivers information effectively in support of team or workgroup.

The evaluation will be carried out according to the following notation:

Criterion	Desirable skills and experience	Maximum points	Weight
Education & work experience	Advanced degree and 5-years of professional experience	8	25%
Technical skills	Technical and quantitative skills; analytical background; providing technical assistance and training; drafting guidelines; analysis; designing databases; practical experience in low-middle income countries	14	44%
General knowledge	General economic knowledge and analytical skills	2	6%
Professional skills	Working with government and counterparts; integrative skills; policy dialogue skills; knowledge and experience in development arena; communication skills	8	25%
TOTAL		32	100%

The attention of interested Consultants (including firms) is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's *Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers*, dated July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("the Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Although in a consultant role, the selected candidate will be expected to fully participate in the Statistics for Development Division (SDD) team's activities such as team meetings and administration (e.g., developing annual work plans, reporting, monitoring and evaluation), and to collaborate with SDD staff on activities that are common to the Project.

3. REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION

All requests for clarification should be sent by e-mail before **January 20, 2023 12:00 am** (New Caledonia Time / GMT+11), to the following address : procurement@spc.int

The subject of the mail must imperatively include the following reference:
FJ-SPC-144951-CS-INDV and EOI22-4868 - REOI - Harmonization Advisor

4. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Expressions of interest must be sent in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by **January 24, 2023 17:00 am** (New Caledonia Time / GMT+11).

The Pacific Community
Procurement
98848 Noumea, New Caledonia
procurement@spc.int
<https://www.spc.int/>

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background information on the project

The Pacific Community

The Pacific Community (SPC) (www.spc.int) is the principal scientific and technical organization supporting development in the Pacific region. It is an international organization established by treaty (the Canberra Agreement) in 1947 and is owned and governed by its 27 members, including all 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs). SPC's headquarters are in Noumea, New Caledonia, and it is one of nine member agencies of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP).

The Statistics for Development Division

The Statistics for Development Division (SDD) (<http://sdd.spc.int/en/>) of SPC is the main stakeholder in the implementation of the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS), which was adopted by PICT leaders in 2009 in recognition of the need for a comprehensive plan to drive improvement and development of statistics in the Pacific region. TYPSS proposed a regional approach to provide regional strategic leadership to improve the scope and quality of national statistics. The 10 year strategy (2010 - 2020) outlined a series of short and long-term programs to contribute to national statistics capacity development and regional coordination and capability. SDD's strategic framework is guided by TYPSS and its current work program by the Business Plan 2021 - 2023. The revision of both TYPSS and SDD's business plan are currently underway.

SDD's goal is to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems and social and economic planning agencies to provide policy-makers and analysts with important demographic, economic and social indicators for planning and decision-making.

SDD plays a significant role for TYPSS as a large and comprehensive technical provider to national statistics offices (NSOs) in the Pacific region. SDD's technical assistance role has been strongly endorsed by NSOs, in particular the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) where resources are limited and technical assistance and supplementation is essential.

As part of a regional organization with a broad technical and social mandate operating across 22 PICTs, SDD has been able to translate and mediate between international standards and frameworks and Pacific contexts and focus.

Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific (PACSTAT) Project

The PACSTAT project is an International Development Association (IDA; <https://ida.worldbank.org/>) funded project that is to be implemented over the period of June 2020 to June 2025. The overall development objective of PACSTAT is to *improve the quality of welfare data collection and accessibility to comparable welfare data in the Pacific Island Countries*.

The context for this project is summarised as:

- i. PICs are characterised by small populations spread across vast areas.
- ii. More comparable data is needed to understand trends in deprivation within countries, as well as across the region as a whole.
- iii. The Pacific is a region with substantial gender inequality.
- iv. Data deprivation in the PICs hinders evidence-based policy design and low statistical capacity is a major challenge in addressing data deprivation. Public access to data is another challenge facing the region. National Statistics Offices (NSOs) lack funding to meet the costs of data collection in the Pacific.
- v. There has been some improvement in statistical capacity over time, but results have not been sustained.

Given the shared challenges and small size of the PICTs, a common approach is needed. As such, PACSTAT is part of an IDA Regional Program that seeks to address the considerable challenges of data deprivation and low quality of statistics in the Pacific region. In the first phase, SPC will work with two IDA small states – Kiribati and Tonga – to initiate the Regional IDA program¹.

The context for SPC’s component of the regional project is summarised as:

- i. SPC is a key stakeholder in addressing the statistical capacity gap in the region, but it too suffers from resource and capacity issues.
- ii. The SDD 2018-2020 Business Plan marks a shift in SDD’s role to a “statistical system leader” (ref: <http://sdd.spc.int/media/401>).
- iii. The Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB; <https://sdd.spc.int/pacific-statistics-methods-board-psmb>) has potential to accelerate the adoption of new methods for data collection and statistical analysis as well as promote regional harmonization and comparability.
- iv. SPC has a substantial role to play in improving the availability and comparability of gender statistics in the Pacific.

The Project includes the following components and sub-components:

- i. To support the administration of PSMB and the dissemination of its recommendations:
 - a. PSMB technical support and administration, including overseeing PSMB commissioned statistical development research.
 - b. Dissemination and training of best practice recommendations from the PSMB to regional NSOs; and
 - c. Improve the analysis and publication of gender statistics in the region.
- ii. To strengthen SDD’s ability to play a “statistical system leader” role and provide technical assistance on data collection methods:
 - a. Expanding technical capacity of SPC in welfare data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
 - b. Create comparable indicators, including gender statistics, and micro-datasets to promote data use in the region.
 - c. Financing of technical and operational support needed to implement and manage the project; and
 - d. Funding for office and information and communications technology (ICT) facilities to enable the implementation of project activities.
- iii. To promote context-appropriate innovation in the Pacific region:
 - a. Technical support to experiments in alternative data collection methods; and
 - b. Finding innovative experiments.

Objectives of the assignment

PACSTAT’s Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve the quality of welfare data collection, and accessibility to comparable welfare data in the Pacific Island Countries². The PDO Level Indicators are:

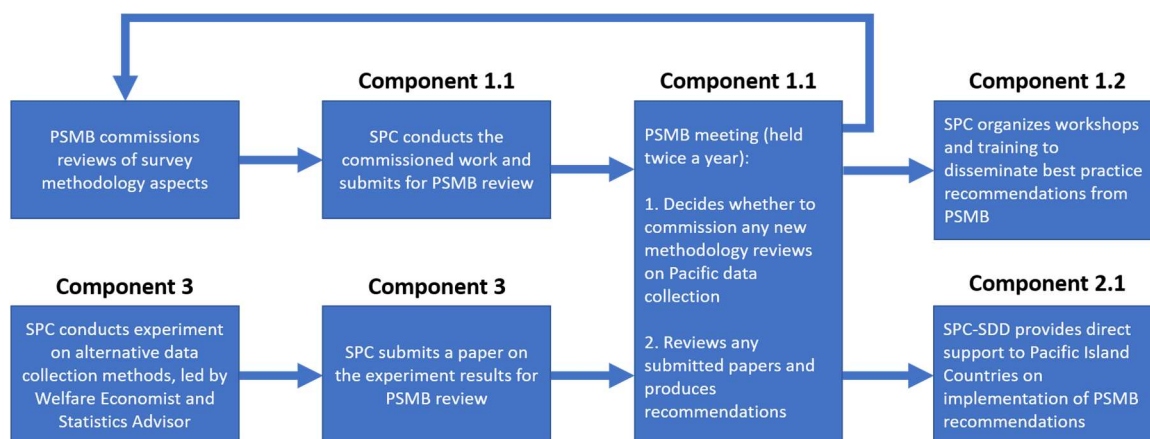
- i. Number of PSMB guidance notes produced and circulated to PIC NSOs.
- ii. Number of experiment reports produced and submitted to PSMB.
- iii. Number of regionally comparable welfare indicators published on SPC platforms.

¹ While there are significant linkages between projects to be implemented by the Government of Tonga, the Government of Kiribati and SPC, including linked Project Development Objective and Results indicators, the projects are implemented and administered as stand-alone projects.

² For the purposes of the project and its development objective, “Pacific Island Countries” include countries that are members of SPC and eligible for financing from IDA, which, as of the date of the Project Appraisal Document, include the following: the Federated States of Micronesia; the Republic of Fiji; the Republic of Kiribati; the Republic of the Marshall Islands; the Independent State of Papua New Guinea; the Independent State of Samoa; Solomon Islands; the Kingdom of Tonga; Tuvalu; and the Republic of Vanuatu.

- iv. Number of harmonized micro datasets published on SPC platforms.

The project has three components: 1) to support the administration of the Pacific Statistics Methods Board and the dissemination of its recommendations; 2) to strengthen SDD’s 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. The components and detailed activities are elaborated below, with the linkages between these three components are illustrated in the following flowchart:



The key feature of the SPC project is two long-term consultant positions that will be hired to execute the majority of the work across the three components. The two positions are one Welfare Economist and one Statistics Advisor. In addition to the two long-term consultants, a medium-term consultant, a Harmonisation Advisor, will be hired under Component 2 to initiate microdata harmonization processes to facilitate the production of comparable statistics.

The core responsibilities of the Welfare Economist will include supporting analysis for and dissemination of national poverty statistics as well as producing regionally comparable statistics. This goal would be further supported by technical workshops to increase capacity in NSOs and consequently, the quality of data and statistics they produce. The technical advice and analysis, for up to ten Pacific Island Countries, may include sample design and poverty estimation, among others. In the past there have been issues with poverty estimation, such as the creation of inconsistent consumption aggregates, due to varying technical recommendations and the uncoupled processes for the data cleaning and analysis. By joining these activities under a harmonised set of regional guidelines, it would be possible to increase efficiency and quality in the production cycle of national and regional statistics. To support this kind of integrative work, the Welfare Economist will conduct workshops on topics such as poverty assessments, outliers, non-standard units (NSU) conversions, and use value of assets. The desired outcome is an increase in the institutional capacity of SDD and the technical capacity of country NSOs.

The Statistics Advisor will act as the chief advisor on survey methodology for the region and as the main source of technical advice to country-level Resident Advisors. The selected candidate will bring extensive knowledge of the survey methods literature, which will be used to inform both the activities of the PSMB (Component 1) and the innovation experiments (Component 3). The focus of this consultant’s work will be on the development, documentation, and dissemination of context-specific best practices, as well as skills transfer to current SPC and regional NSO staff. In addition, the Statistics Advisor will serve as the focal point for operationalizing the PSMB regional guidelines and will be the first point of contact for the Resident Advisors embedded in the NSO under the country-level projects within this Series of Projects (the first phase of which includes Tonga and Kiribati). Linking the country-level Resident Advisors to a single centralized source of advice will eliminate the heterogeneity in technical assistance that has historically hindered comparability and promote regional harmonization.

Scope of Work

The Harmonisation Advisor's Scope of Work includes:

- i. **Define a core set of consumption, labour and gender indicators³**, which can be derived using household survey microdata and other relevant databases, including those relating to food consumption.
- ii. **Develop and publish protocols, guidelines and syntax for harmonising household survey microdata**, and harmonise up to 15 household survey datasets.
- iii. **Curate and publish harmonised household survey microdata** in the Pacific Data Hub to enable their access by researchers and data users.
- iv. **Publish indicators, papers, statistical briefs, abstracts, tables, summaries**, using household survey microdata and other relevant databases, in the Pacific Data Hub.
- v. **Deliver capacity building programmes** in the *form* of physical or virtual trainings, attachment or peer-peer type initiatives, intra- and cross-organisational collaboration in capacity building initiatives such as those relating to SDGs and in *areas* relating to harmonising and using household survey microdata, producing comparable consumption indicators, and in the interpretation and production of statistical outputs and *counterparting with* national statistics offices and line ministries, Pacific universities, policy makers and planners, SPC staff and partners.
- vi. **Build on work done to date** with respect to harmonisation guidelines, harmonised databases and syntax (e.g., work done in food, labour, disability, POVCAL) and **provide input to** initiatives such as software development (e.g., ADePT-FSM and ADePT-POV Shiny app), implementing GitHub in harmonisation processes, and automating processes to populate data in the pdh.stat.
- vii. **Provide ongoing technical assistance** to IDA-eligible Pacific Island countries in areas relating to household survey harmonisation and analysis.
- viii. **Input to PACSTAT Project activities**, including Innovative Experiments (significant input to processing food data in current projects in Samoa and Tuvalu), and Pacific Statistics Methods Board, Statistical Research, Capacity Building and Statistical Dissemination Activities; be an active participant in Project and broader SDD team initiatives; input to Project administration, development of work plans and operations.

Expected Outcomes/Deliverables and timeline

The Annual Work Plan will ultimately guide the activities, deliverables, and timing of the Harmonisation Advisor; however, it is expected that the Harmonisation Advisor will, over the course of the project, achieve the following:

- i. Publish 2 PSMB Guidance notes on areas relating to harmonising and using household survey data.
- ii. Submit 1 experiment report to PSMB.
- iii. Publish 14 comparable welfare indicators in the Pacific Data Hub.
- iv. Curate and publish 5 harmonised consumption datasets in the Pacific Data Hub – Microdata Library.
- v. Contribute to development and delivery of 3 Regional Conferences and the ongoing programme of National or Sub-Regional Trainings.
- vi. Publish 3 analytical papers or briefs relating to harmonising and using household survey data, or statistical analysis relating to the scope of work.
- vii. Provide input to the publication of guidelines on food data processing from household consumption expenditure surveys in collaboration with Statistics Norway.
- viii. Publish 16 gender indicators in the Pacific Data Hub.
- ix. Submit to the Pacific Statistics Methods Board 3 proposals for Innovative Experiments in areas relating to harmonisation of household survey microdata.

³ Or others, including: education, health, agriculture, inequality, food insecurity, wealth, welfare, etc.

Duration of the assignment and estimated expert-time input

The assignment will be for a maximum period of 30 months (up to maximum 242 fee days per annum, 11 months per annum), from January 2023 until 30 June 2025. This will be a full-time consultancy with the Statistics for Development Division of the Pacific Community. As much as possible, the Consultant will be expected to observe a standard five-day business week consistent with SPC regulations.

When possible, the Consultant will be expected to travel extensively throughout the Pacific region and will thus need to conduct some work in international environments and outside standard office hours. When travel is required, it will be organized separately under the direct authority of SPC (i.e., SPC will organise and pay travel in accordance to SPC's Travel Policy, including air fare by the most economical route and per diem, to be organised and paid outside of the Contract). As per the below, please note it is the responsibility of the Consultant to ensure she/he has travel insurance and visas required.

Reporting requirements

The Consultant will report to the Manager Statistical Collections (PACSTAT Project Manager), who reports to the Director, SDD. The Finance and Administration Officer will be the focal point for all finance and administrative aspects of the Consultancy.

The Consultant will be expected to:

- i. Provide a monthly summary of activities undertaken within the reporting month; along with evidence of work completed for audit purposes, this will be completed in association with the monthly timesheet indicating the number of days worked in the period, which will not normally be expected to exceed 22 days per month, unless prior authorization has been agreed by SPC in writing.
- ii. Provide a six-monthly report on all activities delivered in relation to the current Annual Work Plan, and against the expected outcomes identified above.
- iii. Support Project reporting and administration requirements.
- iv. Contribute to SDD internal reporting and reflections in accordance with SDD's monitoring, evaluation and learning practices.

The Manager Statistical Collections and the Consultant will maintain regular dialogue with respect to reporting requirements, timing of deliverables and ensuring the Terms of Reference are fully executed.

Working arrangements

The Consultant will be required to work with several different important stakeholders to the Project. The Consultant will have ongoing and regular dialogue with the National Statistics Officer of the Pacific, all of SDD Staff (and engagement and interaction with other divisions of SPC is encouraged), the Project Steering Committee, PSMB, the World Bank, other donors and partners, NGOs and academia. The Consultant will collaborate with PACSTAT sister projects, including in Kiribati and Tonga, which will benefit from the regional PACSTAT project at SPC.

The Consultant should ensure that he/she has valid health insurance for the duration of the assignment. The Consultant will be responsible for obtaining any visas necessary for undertaking the assignment. The Consultant is responsible for any tax payable under their national jurisdiction; SPC will accept no liability for any tax due.

The Statistics Advisor, Welfare Economist and Harmonisation Advisor will form the core technical project team and there will be a requirement and expectation for close ongoing positive collaboration between the three Consultants and the SDD team. Most engagement will be virtual.

Client's Inputs

SPC shall pay the Consultant up to a maximum agreed professional fee (preferably in Euro, or in NZD, AUD, USD, VUV, XPF, GBP, CAD, or JPY) for the duration of the Consultancy.

The amount invoiced by the Consultant shall reflect the actual number of days worked in each calendar month up to a maximum of 242 days per annum; timesheets shall be provided by the Consultant, to SPC and certified by the Supervisor.

SPC will effect payment to the Consultant after acceptance by SPC of an invoice and timesheet at the end of each month worked and every endeavour will be made to ensure payment is made within thirty days of receipt of the invoice.

TEMPLATE FOR CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

Name of Expert:	{Insert full name}
Date of Birth:	{day/month/year}
Country of Citizenship/Residence	

Education: {List college/university or other specialized education, giving names of educational institutions, dates attended, degree(s)/diploma(s) obtained}

Employment record relevant to the assignment: {Starting with present position, list in reverse order. Please provide dates, name of employing organization, titles of positions held, types of activities performed and location of the assignment, and contact information of previous clients and employing organization(s) who can be contacted for references. Past employment that is not relevant to the assignment does not need to be included.}

Period	Employing organization and your title/position. Contact information for references	Country	Summary of activities performed relevant to the Assignment
[e.g., May 2015-present]	[e.g., Ministry of, advisor/consultant to... For references: Tel...../e-mail.....; Mr. Hbbbb, deputy minister]		

Membership in Professional Associations and Publications:

Language Skills (indicate only languages in which you can work): _____

Adequacy for the Assignment:

Reference to Prior Work/Assignments that Best Illustrates Capability to Handle the Assigned Tasks
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Expert's contact information: (e-mail, phone.....)

Certification:

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes myself, my qualifications, and my experience, and I am available, as and when necessary, to undertake the assignment in case of an award. I understand that any misstatement or misrepresentation described herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal by the SPC, and/or sanctions by the Bank.

{day/month/year}

Name of Expert
Date

Signature