



**FORTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 28–30 June 2016)

AGENDA ITEM 5: CONSIDERING REGIONAL PRIORITIES – THE PACIFIC YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

(Paper presented by the secretariat)

Summary

1. Implementation of the Pacific Youth Development Framework (PYDF) is still largely in its inception phase, with the focus being on engagement of stakeholders, governments and youth networks, and resource mobilisation through existing opportunities.
2. Initial work has begun in all four of the framework's strategic approaches. The overall challenge relates to limitations of capacity and resources to deliver results on the scale required and within the intended time-frame.
3. Addressing the key challenges highlighted for progressing the PYDF requires CRGA's support in the context of regional prioritisation, noting the issue was referred to CRGA by the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism.

Recommendations

4. CRGA is invited to:
 - i. acknowledge progress made within current resources towards an integrated framework for evidence-based youth investments;
 - ii. consider opportunities for future implementation, through advancing programme integration in SPC, particularly in climate change, non-communicable diseases, food security and the expansion of Youth@Work across Pacific Island countries and territories;
 - iii. agree that mainstreaming youth into SPC's broader portfolio and programme delivery is a matter of priority, as proposed in the Pacific Youth Development Framework;
 - iv. recognise that this mainstreaming has resource implications and support efforts to secure the funding required.
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CONSIDERING REGIONAL PRIORITIES –THE PACIFIC YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Purpose

5. The submission on the PYDF made under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism was referred to CRGA 46 for further analysis and consideration. At the Ninth Conference of the Pacific Community in 2015, members requested that progress in implementing the PYDF be reported to CRGA 46. This paper reviews progress made to date, highlighting key challenges and future opportunities for supporting this work, in the context of regional prioritisation and resourcing.

Background

6. In June 2015, the Pacific Youth Council (PYC), in partnership with the Pacific Community, submitted a proposal on the PYDF to the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR) of the Forum Officials' Committee (FOC) to establish a regional facility aimed at increasing investment in youth employment, youth health, and youth engagement in environmental action. The proposal recommended strengthening the evidence base on youth, coordination of technical assistance to Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs), support for youth engagement and youth-led development, and development of strategic guidance and regional advocacy to drive more investment and increase the effectiveness of existing investment in PYDF outcome areas. The submission was referred to CRGA for further analysis and consideration.

Introduction

7. The purpose of the PYDF is to catalyse investment in four priority outcomes, determined by youth, through using a set of strategic approaches. To increase implementation effectiveness, the framework focuses on improving development accountability, engaging beneficiaries and stakeholders, strengthening statistical and analytical evidence, and using strategic information to inform decision-making for policy and programming.
8. At the core of the PYDF is a set of pragmatic and strategic approaches to creating enabling environments for investment in youth development. The approaches, detailed below, guide *how* we develop and implement integrated programmes that benefit youth. They also form the basis of work at the regional level to assist with regional coordination to accelerate progress towards PYDF outcomes.

Review of progress

9. Implementation of the PYDF is still largely in its inception phase with the focus being on engagement of stakeholders, governments and youth networks, and resource mobilisation through existing opportunities. Initial work has begun in all four strategic approaches, as follows.

An inclusive rights-based approach to position youth as equal partners

10. SPC's partnership with, and hosting of, the PYC Secretariat allows young people to influence development agendas and build their capacity as regional and national citizens. PYC operates on minimal resources provided by external partners and is in need of further support to sustain and develop its role.

11. Youth networks and other youth stakeholders are engaged in the Pacific Regional Youth Think Tank, which was established formally in August 2015. The Think Tank is an advisory body that brings expertise together to support informed decision-making on regional coordination.

A targeted approach to complement and enhance mainstream efforts

12. A needs analysis is being conducted to assess the reach and coverage of youth programmes and services, identifying gaps and potential duplication in service delivery and development assistance. This will provide governments and administrations with a tool to support national budgetary processes, and bilateral and multilateral negotiations. It will also provide an analysis of what regional action is required to attract greater investment and to improve delivery and coordination of development assistance.

An evidence-based approach to provide incentives to increase and focus investment in youth development

13. SPC is a member of the Commonwealth Youth Development Index (YDI) advisory panel and has contributed advice to the development of the 2016 YDI Report and a regional iteration of the YDI for the Pacific. In partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), regional training on evidence-based policy making for youth, including a focus on youth indicators for the Pacific, is being conducted in June 2016. Further resources are required to provide specialist technical assistance in this area to both PICT national statistics offices and youth ministries and departments.
14. UN agencies in the Pacific are also embarking on the fourth State of Pacific Youth report, which will serve as the baseline for the PYDF.

An integrated approach to introducing youth objectives across sectors

15. SPC's programmatic approach provides opportunities to integrate PYDF priorities by increasing potential openings for youth engagement, building youth capacity, and addressing specific youth issues within programmes.
16. SPC and young people themselves have made advances in the significant sectors of climate change, health and employment. Pacific youth are engaging in climate change issues and were effective in generating international media attention at COP21 in Paris and supporting Pacific representatives in their objectives. With partners, SPC has developed policy guidance relating to opportunities in the agriculture sector for youth¹ and access to support for improved sexual health and well-being.² A focus on youth and sports as a preventative approach to addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) has also been explored and highlighted as a key strategy for small island developing states (SIDS). In addition, SPC's Youth@Work programme in Solomon Islands has been very successful in providing opportunities for youth to gain work experience and generate incomes across a range of programmes delivered in that country.

Key challenges

17. Not all young people in all PICTs have the same potential or opportunities for education and careers and there is a need for initiatives targeting marginalised groups of youth who are not reached by mainstream development efforts.

¹ SPC and European Union. 2015. *Youth in agriculture: Enhancing the value of farming jobs for youth*. Policy Brief 27/2015.

² SPC. 2014. *Pacific sexual health and well-being shared agenda 2015–2019*.

18. There are major gaps in the data available on young people in the Pacific and several priorities (e.g. youth employment) are not measured to international standards. The lack of good data equates to a lack of the evidence needed to provide strong incentives to invest.
19. There is also scarcity of resources. The PYDF was developed taking resource availability into account in that it is an adjustment of existing approaches to what we do already, positioning youth objectives across the development agenda and strengthening the 'drivers for investment'. Even though the PYDF is judicious in approach, SPC does not have the resources to develop specialist areas such as youth statistics, and improved communication and networking. For example, dedicated human resources for youth development work in SPC consist of one Youth Advisor based in the SPC Social Development Programme.

Priorities for action

20. There are several opportunities for improving progress and mobilising more resources:
 - i. Networking and communication are strategies common to several development and donor partners as an equity measure for reaching and engaging marginalised groups. A key activity is to coordinate and facilitate planned dialogue between individuals, groups, institutions and organisations using on-line platforms as a methodology to contribute to policy and programme development.
 - ii. Gap analysis of service delivery is a key activity that all PICTs can participate in, as noted above.
 - iii. The Commonwealth Secretariat is an important partner in developing youth indicators for the Pacific region, as are UN agencies in the Pacific in compiling situation analyses on youth. Institutionalising standard youth indicators into national surveillance is a longer-term measure that will involve delivering specialist technical assistance to PICTs. SPC will explore opportunities to resource this work with potential partners.
 - iv. Development of SPC programmes in climate change (post-COP21) and in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) provides opportunities for integration of youth issues and provision of youth expertise on a cost recovery basis.
 - v. SPC's Youth@Work program – recently redesigned to align with the PYDF – provides a model results framework that can be applied across countries, with adaptation to their different contexts and needs. Expansion of the Youth@Work programme could also factor in cost recovery for relevant expertise.

Conclusion

21. Despite resource constraints, SPC, in partnership with the PYC, has made positive progress towards implementing the PYDF at the regional level and developing strategic partnerships for technical and financial support to achieve shared goals. More rapid progress towards achieving PYDF outcomes will depend on ensuring that SPC has sufficient capacity and resources to deliver services, including through the potential use of cost recovery mechanisms for provision of expertise. Two specialist areas have been identified with the intention of seeking external support.

Recommendations

22. CRGA is invited to:
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