Adoption of Standard Business Registers in the Pacific

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Pacific Community
Research question and scope of study

Research: To have a **Standard Central** Statistical Business Register (CSBR) that all Pacific Island Countries and Territories will be able to adopt to be able to supply consistent survey frames for all business collections and provide information on business demography.

Scope:
- Workshop on Business Statistics held in 2013 attended by larger Pacific Island Countries: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa.
- Fiji’s and Australia’s BR checked for suitability of a Pacific standard. Both countries have well established CSBRs – Fiji having a simpler system more suitable for the Pacific countries.
- Business listings maintained in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Tonga and Nauru were also viewed.
- Literature available elsewhere e.g. Wiesbaden Group were looked at.
- SPC decided to take the lead in setting up CSBRs in the Pacific. ABS offered to collaborate.
- Fiji was taken on the project to provide assistance through the South-South collaboration.
- When work commenced in the countries – more issues were identified than what were raised in the Workshop.
- NSOs from PNG, Vanuatu and Tonga have had the opportunity to be attached to the Fiji Bureau of Statistics to learn from them
- Refinements brought about in the Fiji BR.

*SPC and ABS jointly produced a broad guide to assist Pacific countries.*
Methodology
Findings

1. A **Standard** SBR in the Pacific countries is possible. Benefits countries as well as SPC.

2. A **Central** SBR ensures coherence, efficiency and functionality.

3. BR needs to contain businesses operating in the formal sector only.

4. Knowledge on industrial classification was week and outdated classifications were used – PACSIC compiled, Classification workshop conducted.

5. Administrative data is the preferred source – cost, response burden, identification variables, timely.

6. IT platforms used need to be owned and operated by countries.

7. Geospatial capability.
Remaining issues/further research

Issue
Not all the countries in the Pacific have a SBR.

Further work
Those countries that have a CSBR need to strengthen that:

1. Add more economic variables to strengthen the CSBR to be used in its own right as a leading economic indicator
2. Link it to international trade
Thank you