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CENSUS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN SAMOA

Presentation by

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History of Census taking in Samoa

- Dated back to the early part of last century
- Since 1951, an unbroken tradition of 5 yearly censuses.
- 1991-2001, first 10 years census taken.

Census Administration

- Statistics Act 1971, mandated Government Statistician and Statistics Department to take Census every five years.
- Complete head-count of population either on de facto or de jure basis or both.
- 2006 census reference date: 6 November 2006, Census Moment, 12 midnight

Administration cont.

- “Household refers to an individual or group of people that make common provision for food”.
- About 25,000 households covered in last census.
- About ST\$900,000.00
- Preliminary results in a Village Directory publication has been released 16 March 2007
- Coding started 26 March 2007
- Other Reports should be out on time.

Tools and Processes used.

Although census planning is the core process in linking different phases of the census cycle and thus always require the use of a formal framework through out, the Samoa 2006 census employed a formal framework and a not so formal approach.

Formal framework normally follows activities as mapped on a Gantt chart.

- Appoint census steering committee.
- Organize users workshop.
- Develop a plan of activities and time table using a Gantt chart.
- Liaise with other government ministries like Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture and others.
- Organise questionnaire pretest...etc, etc,

Informal approach in census planning.

Special features of census taking in a small country like Samoa which may probably not relevant in countries like PNG, NZ and Australia .

- Use of informal channel of communication and processes.
- Institutional memory still intact.
- Monitoring is faster and simpler.

Planning cont,,.

- Some specific strategic decision were made at the planning stage. Introduction of some changes in the fieldwork approach:
 - reduce to maximum of 20 households per enumerator.
 - assign teachers to work in their own village.
 - limit the number of training team to two.
 - provide vehicles for each supervisor during fieldwork.

Strengths:

- Smallness of population size.
- Repeating census every five years.
- Well structured training program.
- Commitment of the government.
- Strong and powerful legislation.

Weaknesses

- Relying too much on external funding.
- Introduces a lot of uncertainty.
- High demand from users for inclusion of some of their questions in census questionnaire.
- Community support lacking.

Opportunity:

- Use of Statistics Department Household Capability Survey Program.
- Use of church ministers as an instrument in census publicity program.
- Use of teachers to enumerate population of their own village.
- Easy availability of technical assistance from regional organisations.
- Existing close collaboration between Regional Implementing Organization and us.

Reccommendations:

- Strengthen other alternative data sources.
- Encourage government to fully provide census budget.
- Invest on census staff capacity building through training.
- Encourage the use of standard census questionnaire.