

## **EXPLOITING NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION IN THE PACIFIC**

### *Introduction:*

The Pacific island region covers 22 countries and territories with populations ranging from 38 (Pitcairn) to about 4.5 million (Papua New Guinea). Spread over 30 million square kilometres, more than 98 per cent of which consists of the Pacific Ocean, the Pacific region is vast. Of the 7,500 islands in the region, only some 500 are inhabited. The isolation implied by these statistics complicates communication, administration and provision of basic services. The Pacific Islands are separated into 3 sub-regions: Melanesia (West), Polynesia (South-East) and Micronesia (North), based on their ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences.

### **Dissemination of information : The SPC Demography Programme**

The Demography Programme is one of 13 work programmes of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (formerly the South Pacific Commission). Each programme is responsible for the dissemination of information it produces.

Our programme has embarked on various ways of disseminating information over the last 3 or so years in order to meet the demands of the citizens of the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT); and other people who are interested in their welfare. Each of the means the programme has undertaken is aimed at a target population as discussed later. In the process 2 very important factors; cost and timeliness, have been taken into consideration.

#### *1) Population Profiles*

In its 1994-97 programme cycle, the SPC demography programme conducted in-country workshops on “Integrating population concerns into Development Planning”. This was a consequence of one of the recommendations by the Pacific Island Regional Planners at its meeting held in 1992 where it was recognised that there is a need “to assist island countries integrate population concerns into development planning”. The workshops covered 16 of the 22 countries and territories which are members of the SPC.

Further, in anticipation of the need by PICT policy makers and planners who have had little, if at all, any training in population, and as a by-product of the above workshops, the demography programme embarked on a related activity - developing population profiles for the countries in the region.

The main objective of the profiles was to:

“ pay greater attention to the analytical component in ‘demographic analysis’, and undertake more policy- and planning-relevant demographic analyses to assist member countries and territories in the formulation of their national development plans and development frameworks”.

These profiles were a:

“first attempt to provide a brief demographic profile that is useful for planners. Unlike more traditional demographic analyses, which are usually indigestible by non-demographers, we tried to write for non-technical audience, paying less attention to discussing mathematically complex demographic concepts at great length, and, instead, more attention to specific implications for planners”.

The sections highlighting the implications for planners are the main emphasis of the profiles as they give PICT planners some idea on how to integrate population issues in to development planning. And because they were written in simple language, they could be used by anyone. In this respect, the profiles were highly popular.

To further enhance national capacity-building in the countries concerned, further training was given to 1-2 of the better participants of the above mentioned workshops where they were exposed, during a 3-4 weeks’ attachment in Noumea, to actually write some of the chapters of their country profiles. This was a strategy aimed at ensuring that there is continuity in the process of updating their country profiles.

To date almost all of the countries that requested the profiles have been completed or are nearing completion stages. Furthermore, a couple of the countries have requested updates based on their most recent censuses. These should be completed this year. The feedback on the population profiles has been most encouraging and given their usefulness, countries have been urged to update them when new data become available.

## 2) PACIFIC ISLAND POPULATIONS POSTERS

Recognising the need to disseminate pertinent demographic indicators on the Pacific to as wide an audience as possible, and also recognising the need to fill data gaps on PICT in the United Nations system (United Nations Population Division, Statistics Division, ESCAP, World Bank), it was deemed necessary to produce a population data sheet (poster) for PICT. Apart from its capacity to reach a wide audience, posters have the added bonus of being disseminated at a cheaper price.

Posters were developed for people who have some skills in reading demographic indicators not only in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT) but also internationally. To date the SPC Demography Programme has published 2 versions (1996 & 1997) of the highly popular posters. The response to the posters has been most

encouraging, and as a response to the demand for more posters, a re-print has had to be done of the 1996 version.

### 3) Web-site

#### Target

In our continuing endeavour to reach the widest audience possible, while at the same time, keeping an eye on the budget, using the Web-site seemed like another answer to our need. In view of the potentials for reaching more people through the system, we have decided not only to include demographic information, but also pertinent information about the programme, including biodata information of the programme staff. This is expected to be fully operational by the end of September.

#### Affordability and Timeliness

Apart from reaching a wider audience (compared to both profiles and posters), the system has the potential to disseminate information at a much cheaper price and much more quickly too. Given our 'isolation' these are 2 of the main issues that have previously hampered our efforts in disseminating our information to as wide an audience as possible and as quickly as possible.

#### Security of information

Although the web-site has its advantages, its potential disadvantage lies in the security of information. Unless there is absolutely no doubt that information sent through the Web site cannot be accessed by unauthorized people, it may not be able to exploit all its full potential in that area. We will be taking a keen interest in its development because of its potential in further enhancing our relationship with the PICT.

At this point in time, countries and territories are reluctant to 'give' their data to outsiders and it is therefore of utmost importance to both the PICT and the SPC that transmission of such data is foolproof if we are to rely on the system for the purpose.

FACT SHEET 1 (10 September 1997):

PACIFIC ISLAND POPULATION GROWTH

TABLEAU DE BORD 1 (10 Septembre 1997):

ACCROISSEMENT ANNUEL DE LA POPULATION DANS LES PAYS DU PACIFIQUE

Country/territory Pays/territoire	Last census Dernier recensement	Population at last census Population au dernier recensement	Mid-year population estimate 1997 Estimation de la population au milieu de l'année 1997	Land area (km <sup>2</sup> ) Superficie (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population density (people/km <sup>2</sup> ) Densité de la population (personnes/km <sup>2</sup> ) (a)	Annual intercensal population growth (%) Accroissement intercensitaire annuel de la population (%)	Population doubling time (in years) Doublement de la population (en années)	Urban population (%) Population urbaine (%)	Annual urban population growth (%) Accroissement annuel de la population urbaine (%)	Annual rural population growth (%) Accroissement annuel de la population rurale (%)
<b>MELANESIA</b>										
Fiji	1996 *	772,655	779,200	18,333	43	0.8	87	46	2.6	-0.6
Nouvelle-Calédonie	1996 *	196,836	201,300	19,103	11	2.6	27	71	2.7	2.2
Papua New Guinea	1990	3,607,954 (b)	4,311,500 (b)	462,243	9	2.3	30	15	4.1	2.0
Solomon Islands	1986	285,176	401,100	28,370	14	3.4	20	13	6.2	3.1
Vanuatu	1989	142,419	177,200	12,190	15	2.8 (c)	25	18	7.3	2.1
Total			5,870,300	540,239	11	2.2	32			
<b>MICRONESIA</b>										
Federated States of Micronesia	1994	105,506	111,800	701	159	1.9	27	27	1.3	2.1
Guam	1990	133,152	145,400	541	269	2.3	30	38	1.9	2.5
Kiribati	1995 *	77,658	83,400	811	103	1.4	50	37	2.2	1.0
Marshall Islands	1988	43,380	60,000	181	331	4.2	17	65	8.2	-0.6
Nauru	1992	9,919	11,200	21	533	2.9	24	100	2.9	
Northern Mariana Islands	1995	58,846	65,100	471	138	5.6	12	90	5.6	5.6
Palau	1995	17,225	18,100	488	37	2.6	27	71	3.2	1.3
Total			495,000	3,214	154	2.7	26			
<b>POLYNESIA</b>										
American Samoa	1990	46,773	61,100	200	306	3.7	19	48	8.2	2.9
Cook Islands	1996 *	19,020	19,000	237	80	0.4	173	59	0.5	0.4
French Polynesia	1996 *	219,521	222,300	3,521	63	1.9	36	54	1.4	2.5
Niue	1997 *	2,082	2,100	259	8	-1.3		32	-0.3	-1.6
Pitcairn Islands	1996	47		39	1			0		
Samoa	1991	161,298	170,700	2,935	58	0.5	139	21	1.2	0.4
Tokelau	1996 *	1,507	1,500	12	125	-0.9		0		-0.9
Tonga	1996 *	97,446	97,800	747	131	0.3	231	36	0.7	0.1
Tuvalu	1991	9,043	10,900	26	419	1.7	41	42	4.8	-0.0
Wallis et Futuna	1996 *	14,166	14,200	255	56	0.6	116	0		0.6
Total			599,600	8,231	73	1.3	53			
<b>ALL Pacific Islands</b>										
<b>TOTAL Iles du Pacifique</b>			6,964,900	551,684	13	2.2	32			

See below for explanatory notes.

Voir ci-dessous pour les notes explicatives.

Compiled by the Population/Demography Programme, South Pacific Commission, Noumea, New Caledonia, 1997.  
Compilé par la section Population/Démographie, Commission du Pacifique Sud, Nouméa, Nouvelle-Calédonie, 1997.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

NOTES EXPLICATIVES

These figures are based on the latest available demographic analyses of national censuses, vital registration data (French Pacific territories), vital statistics surveys (Western Samoa, Solomon Islands), and health records.

These statistics have been crosschecked and validated with all national/territorial statistics offices in the region. Considering the impact of random fluctuations of demographic events on small and/or mobile population, we have decided to represent certain demographic indicators as multi-year averages for (i) all island countries and territories of population of less than 50,000, and (ii) for countries with substantive annual migration flows (American Samoa, CNMI, Tonga, Samoa). Please take note that Western Samoa changed its name to Samoa as from 4 July 1997.

\* Provisional results; census analysis still in progress.

a) Population densities are based on 1997 population estimates.

b) These figures exclude the population of North Solomons Province (Bougainville), estimated by Hayes (1993) at 155,000 at the time of the 1990 census. If this figure was added to the published census total, the 1990 PNG population would have been 3,762,954. A mid-year population estimate for 1997 on this basis would mean a PNG population of 4,466,500.

c) The Vanuatu growth rate refers only to the ni-Vanuatu population component (139,475) of the 142,419 de jure population. Considering that the 1979 Census was taken just the year before independence, when several expatriates left the country, the calculation of growth rates using total population data would give a misleading picture of population developments during the 1980s.

Ces chiffres tiennent compte des dernières analyses démographiques disponibles sur les recensements nationaux, des statistiques de l'état-civil (territoires français du Pacifique), des enquêtes sur les statistiques de l'état-civil (Samoa-Occidental, Îles Salomon) et des registres de la santé.

Ils ont été vérifiés et validés auprès des bureaux de statistiques des États et territoires de la région.

Compte tenu de l'effet de certaines variables aléatoires de la situation démographique sur des populations caractérisées par leur petite taille ou leur mobilité, nous avons décidé de représenter certains indicateurs démographiques par des moyennes sur plusieurs années pour : i) tous les États et territoires insulaires dont la population est inférieure à 50 000 habitants; et ii) les pays dont les flux migratoires annuels sont importants (Samoa américaines, Îles Mariannes du Nord, Tonga, Samoa-Occidental). Nous vous prions de noter que le Samoa-Occidental s'appelle le Samoa depuis le 4 juillet 1997.

\* Résultats provisoires; analyse du recensement en cours.

a) Les densités de population sont fondées sur les estimations de la population pour 1997.

b) Ces chiffres excluent la population de la province septentrionale des Salomon (Bougainville) qui s'établirait à 155 000 à l'époque du recensement de 1990, selon les estimations fournies par Hayes (1993); si on l'ajoute à celui des résultats officiellement publiés on obtient un chiffre de 3 762 954 habitants pour la population totale de Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée en 1990. D'après ces calculs, la population de Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée s'établirait à 4 466 500 habitants au milieu de l'année 1997.

c) Le taux de croissance de Vanuatu s'applique uniquement à la population ni-Vanuatu qui représente 139 475 habitants sur 142 419 de la population de jure. Etant donné qu'en 1979 le recensement a été réalisé l'année précédant l'indépendance, à un moment où de nombreux expatriés quittaient le pays, les taux de croissance calculés sur la base des données démographiques globales risqueraient de donner une image erronée de l'évolution démographique au cours de la décennie 1980.

FACT SHEET 2 (10 September 1997):

BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS OF PACIFIC ISLAND POPULATIONS (ALL BASED ON LATEST CENSUS DATA, NOT ON ESTIMATES)

TABLEAU DE BORD 2 (10 Septembre 1997):

INDICATEURS DEMOGRAPHIQUES DE BASE POUR LES POPULATIONS DU PACIFIQUE

Country/territory	Last census	Sex ratio (males/100 females)	Dependency ratio (e)	Population age <15/60+ (%)	Median age	Crude birth rate	Crude death rate	Total fertility rate (f)	Teenage fertility (15-19) (i)	Infant mortality rate (j)	Life expectancy at birth males (k)	Life expectancy at birth females (k)
Pays/territoire	Dernier recensement	Rapport de masculinité (hommes/100 femmes)	Rapport de dépendance (e)	Population <15 ans/+60 ans (%)	Age médian	Taux brut de natalité	Taux brut de mortalité	Indice synthétique de fécondité (f)	Fécondité chez les adolescentes (15-19) (i)	Taux de mortalité infantile (j)	Espérance de vie à la naissance hommes (k)	Espérance de vie à la naissance femmes (k)
<b>MELANESIA</b>												
Fiji	1996 *	103	68	38/5	20.2	25 (1995)	6 (1995)	3.2 (1990)	52	16 (1994)	72 (1995) (l)	75 (1995) (l)
Nouvelle-Calédonie	1996 *	105	62	31/7	24.5	22 (1995)	5 (1995)	2.8 (1995)	32	8 (1995)	68 (1995)	76 (1995)
Papua New Guinea	1990 *	112	85	42/4	18.2	34 (1990)	13 (1990)	4.7 (1991) (g)	84	82 (1991)	52 (1991)	51 (1991)
Solomon Islands	1986	108	109	47/5	15.8	42 (1986)	10 (1986)	5.8 (1989)	101	38 (1986)	60 (1986)	61 (1986)
Vanuatu	1989	106	98	44/5	17.6	38 (1989)	9 (1989)	5.3 (1989)	81	45 (1989)	62 (1989)	64 (1989)
<b>MICRONESIA</b>												
Federated States of Micronesia	1994	104	92	43/5	18.1	31 (1994)	8 (1994)	5.0 (1994)	58	46 (1994)	64 (1994)	67 (1994)
Guam	1990	114	58	30/7	25.0	28 (1995)	4 (1995)	3.6 (1995)	99	9 (1995)	73 (1995)	77 (1995)
Kiribati	1995 *	98	87	41/5	19.6	32 (1995)	9 (1995)	4.5 (1995)	61	67 (1995)	57 (1995)	62 (1995)
Marshall Islands	1988	105	124	51/4	14.1	43 (1994)	7 (1994)	5.7 (1994)	151	63 (1988)	60 (1988)	63 (1988)
Nauru	1992	105	83	42/3	18.0	23 (1992-95)	5 (1992-95)	4.9 (1991) (h)	55	11 (1994-95)	55 (1988)	64 (1988)
Northern Mariana Islands	1995	99	37	24/3	27.4	28 (1991-95)	3 (1991-95)	3.4 (1995) (h)	85	9 (1991-95)	67 (1995)	73 (1995)
Palau	1995	115	56	28/8	28.1	23 (1990-95)	7 (1990-95)	2.8 (1995) (h)	67	20 (1990-95)	65 (1990)	69 (1990)
<b>POLYNESIA</b>												
American Samoa	1990	106	77	38/5	20.4	34 (1991-95)	4 (1991-95)	4.5 (1990)	29	13 (1991-95)	75 (1980) (m)	75 (1980) (m)
Cook Islands	1996 *	106	76	35/9	25	25 (1991-95)	6 (1991-95)	3.3 (1991)	75	11 (1991-95)	71 (1991)	74 (1991)
French Polynesia	1996 *	108	65	36/6	24.3	23 (1995)	5 (1995)	2.9 (1995)	69	10 (1995)	68 (1994)	73 (1994)
Niue	1997	102	87	37/10	21.5	15 (1991-95)	7 (1991-95)	3.5 (1991)	40	22 (1991-95)	60 (1994)	65 (1994)
Pitcairn Islands	1996	88	96	30/19	35.1							
Samoa	1991	110	88	41/6	18.2	29 (1991-95)	5 (1991-95)	4.8 (1992)	26	22 (1991-94)	70 (1996) (l)	74 (1996) (l)
Tokelau	1996 *	99	103	42/9	20.3	32 (1991-95)	5 (1991-95)	5.7 (1996)	0	32 (1991-95)	65 (1986)	70 (1986)
Tonga	1996 *	101 (d)	89 (d)	41/6 (d)	18.1 (d)	26 (1991-94)	4 (1991-94)	4.2 (1995)	22	8 (1991-94)	70 (1996) (l)	74 (1996) (l)
Tuvalu	1991	94	78	35/9	24.8	28 (1991-95)	9 (1991-95)	3.3 (1995)	41	51 (1991-95)	64 (1991)	70 (1991)
Wallis et Futuna	1996 *	97	84	38/8	20.1	25 (1990-95)	6 (1990-95)	4.6 (1990)		15 (1990-95)	68 (1990) (m)	68 (1990) (m)

See below for explanatory notes.

Voir ci-dessous pour les notes explicatives.

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 Compilé par la section Population/Démographie, Commission du Pacifique Sud, Nouméa, Nouvelle-Calédonie, 1997.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

\* Provisional results; census still in progress.

(d) Earlier census data (recent information not available).

(e) Dependency Ratio: 
$$\frac{\text{Population age 0-14} + \text{population 60+}}{\text{Population age 15-59}} \times 100$$

(f) Total Fertility Rate (TFR): average number of children a woman gives birth to during her lifetime (this average reflects current fertility behaviour).

(g) This figure is based on own-children method based on 1991 DHS survey; analysis of 1990 census data using Arriaga/Brass method, yields a TFR of 5.3.

(h) **Nauru:** the TFR refers to the fertility behaviour of the Nauruan women only, whereas the Crude birth rate is based on the total Nauru population. **Northern Mariana Islands:** the national TFR for 1995 was estimated at 2.1. The value of 3.4 quoted here refers to the fertility behaviour of Pacific Island women in the CNMI (Chamorros, Carolinians, Micronesians, and other Pacific Island women); it excludes 67 % of women of child-bearing age who are temporary Asian migrant workers, whose TFR amounts to 1.5. **Palau:** this figure refers to Palauan women only, with the national TFR estimated at 2.5.

(i) This refers to the number of births per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

(j) Infant Mortality Rate (IMR): the number of deaths to infants under 1 year of age for each 1,000 live births.

(k) Life expectancy at birth: an estimate of the average number of years a person can expect to live.

(l) These figures are based on recent estimates prepared by SPC Population/Demography Programme.

(m) Only combined life expectancy at birth available,

## NOTES EXPLICATIVES

\* Résultats provisoires; analyse du recensement en cours.

(d) Données du recensement antérieur (informations récentes non disponibles).

(e) Rapport de dépendance en fonction de l'âge : 
$$\frac{\text{Population 0/14 ans} + \text{Population} > 60 \text{ ans}}{\text{Population 15 à 59 ans}} \times 100$$

(f) Indice synthétique de fécondité (ISF) : nombre moyen d'enfants mis au monde par une femme, dans sa vie (cette moyenne reflète son comportement actuel en matière de fécondité).

(g) Ce chiffre est basé sur la méthode dite "own-children method" fondée sur l'enquête démographique et sanitaire (DHS) de 1991 ; l'analyse des données du recensement de 1990 utilisant la méthode d'Arriaga/Brass donne un indice synthétique de fécondité de 5.3.

(h) **Iles Mariannes du Nord:** L'indice synthétique national de fécondité (ISF) pour 1995 est estimé à 2,1. Le chiffre de 3,4 mentionné dans ce tableau reflète la fécondité des femmes océaniques des Iles Mariannes du Nord (Chamorros, Caroliniennes, Micronésiennes et autres Océaniques) ; il ne tient pas compte de 67 pour cent de la population féminine en âge de procréer relevant de la catégorie des travailleurs migrants asiatiques temporaires et dont l'ISF est de 1,5. **Nauru:** l'indice synthétique de fécondité reflète la fécondité des femmes nauruanes uniquement, tandis que le taux brut de natalité est basé sur la population totale de Nauru. **Palau:** ce chiffre s'applique qu'aux femmes originaires de Palau, avec l'indice synthétique de fécondité national estimé à 2,5.

(i) Nombre de naissances pour 1,000 femmes âgées de 15 à 19 ans.

(j) Taux de Mortalité Infantile: nombre d'enfants de moins de 1 an décédés pour 1000 naissances vivantes.

(k) Espérance de vie à la naissance: estimation du nombre moyen d'années qu'une personne peut espérer vivre.

(l) Ces chiffres se fondent sur de récentes estimations préparées par la section Population/Démographie de la CPS.

(m) La valeur combinée d'espérance de vie à la naissance est seule disponible.