

**Tenth Management Seminar for the
Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific
7 - 8 December 2011, Chiba, Japan**

FIJI COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Introduction

The Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBOS) comes under the Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics and this gives the recognition of the Department in the provision of statistics information for Planning and National Development.

The roles of FBOS are:

- Collect, compile, abstract, analyse and publish statistical information relating to the commercial, industrial, agricultural, social economic and general activities and conditions of the people of Fiji in a timely and coherent manner.
- Collaborate with government departments and other agencies in the collection, abstraction, analysis and publication of statistical records.
- Organise a coordinated scheme of social and economic statistics relating to Fiji, and
- Conduct a Census of the Population of Fiji as required.

I. Monitoring the Production of Statistical Indicators for the Development Agenda

Since FBOS is now part of the National Development Ministry, its role is to provide relevant statistics for the national planners in the formulation of their development plans and programmes for the country.

The Government realizes the need for FBOS to be part of the Ministry to improve the coordination between the ministries in terms of the collection and compilation of statistical information for development purposes. FBOS provides socio-economic indicators from the numerous surveys and censuses as well as administrative sources to update the major indicators used for development planning.

While the Ministry monitors all Government development projects, it relies on FBOS to provide the relevant statistical indicators on the performance and progress of these projects.

Major development Agenda like the Millennium Development Goals, Gender, Youth and Culture are some of the projects where FBOS have provided socio-economic indicators as well as monitor the changes that are taking place with respect to other available data sources.

II. International Standards

FBOS is very much supportive to the use of International standards in the compilation of statistics and this has resulted in the Department using various standards for specific areas of compilation.

FBOS ensures that correct methodologies are followed when carrying out surveys and censuses, correct methodologies in the actual compilation of the statistics collected as well as the correct determination of various indicators. Coupled with this is the correct usage of classifications and definitions which would ensure compatibility and reliability in the statistics being collected.

International standards are very useful in the sense that they give more reliability, credibility and compatibility in the data you compile as you are able to compare your data with other countries and sources. There are instances where statistical compilers use different standards, definitions and classifications in their compilation which in some way ended up having different interpretations of the same statistical information.

At the moment, we do not have an effective way of coordinating and imposing standards in the country and that is one reason we are in the process of reviewing our Statistical Act (legislation) and one of the changes is to give more coordinating powers to the Government Statistician which will ensure other Ministries and organizations follow the same standards in carrying out their statistical activities. We have Ministries who have their own statistical units doing their respective compilations and having a general standard gives more credibility to the statistics they are producing and also gives more compatibility in the data being collected.

The Fiji Bureau of Statistics is the official statistical agency in the country which means that any information released by FBOS is official information, hence, the need for coordination in standards to ensure reliability and credibility in the data being disseminated. There are cases where different numbers or indicators are being quoted by different sources which tend to confuse users and the general public, hence the need to involve the national statistics office in their compilation.

III. Microdata Dissemination

FBOS provides microdata datasets only on the approval of the Government Statistician. The only microdata we provide are mainly the household surveys data which include the Population Census, HIES and labor Force Survey.

Due to confidentiality and our agreement with our stakeholders, we do not provide microdata datasets of our establishment and business surveys.

We do not have a microdata dissemination policy in place but the current practice is that once the Government Statistician approves the release of the data, we ensure that the data is provide in such a way that the users won't be able to identify individuals persons or households. This is done by removing person ids as well as geographical locations (enumeration areas).

The IHSN Documentation tool is one way for us to provide these microdata with the relevant documentations which ensures correct use of data as well as keeps the confidentiality of the information provided.