

Subregional Workshop on International Recommendations in Preparation for the 2030 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the Pacific

13 – 17 October, 2025 | Nadi, Fiji

Concept Note

I. Background and rationale

The population and housing census is the most comprehensive source of data on the counts and characteristics of a country's population, forming the foundation of national statistical systems. Censuses provide essential social, economic, and demographic information, serving as baseline evidence for planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring policies across various sectors and diverse user needs, including research. They are also a critical source of population data for numerous Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators, aiding in the monitoring of national progress towards achieving related targets.

First published in 1958, the Principles and Recommendations for population and housing censuses have been a pillar of the decennial World Programmes on population and housing censuses, setting out the standards, concepts, and methods that National Statistics Offices (NSOs) should follow to plan, organize, conduct, and use population and housing censuses. In March 2025, the United Nations Statistical Commission endorsed the 4th revision of these *Principles and Recommendations*.¹ As with previous versions, the revised guidance covers key census elements (characteristics, methodology, and content) and addresses several key emerging issues, such as the transition to alternative approaches from traditional methods, including the use of administrative data, the integration of geospatial information with census data, emergency preparedness and contingency planning, and quality assurance.

The Principles and Recommendations are crucial for standardizing census practices globally and are indispensable for ensuring the consistency, comparability, and accuracy of census data across countries in each census round. As such, capacity building to support the effective implementation of the recommendations is an essential element of the advanced preparations for census-taking. Given the recent endorsement of the revised recommendations and the fact that several countries in the Pacific region are due

¹ [Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 4 \(Draft\)](#), UNSD, 2025

to undertake their censuses before 2028, there is an urgent need to provide the requisite training to NSOs in that region to ensure full and effective implementation of the international standards and the overall success of their censuses.

Within the framework of the 2030 World Population and Housing Census Programme and as part of its global role in supporting census taking, the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in collaboration with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Statistics Division, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pacific Sub-Regional Office will be organizing a subregional workshop targeting the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICs). This training will be delivered as a face-to-face course from 13 to 17 October 2025 in Nadi, Fiji.

II. Objectives and expected outcomes

The objectives of this workshop are to strengthen the capacity of member States to implement the recently endorsed *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses (Revision 4)* and enhance overall preparedness for census-taking according to the endorsed international statistical standards.

More specifically, the training workshop is expected to:

- a) Improve participants' understanding of concepts and methodologies in the production of population and housing statistics, with some emphasis on the use of administrative data
- b) Strengthen participants' capacity to implement the revised recommendations
- c) Facilitate South-South cooperation and sharing experiences between countries
- d) Identify gaps and challenges in census-taking that need to be addressed and facilitate discussions around solutions to support the production of population and housing data.
- e) Identify possible areas of technical support opportunities and partnerships with international and regional agencies.

This training workshop is expected to contribute significantly to the broader coordination, technical assistance and capacity development initiatives being led by UNFPA Pacific SRO and SPC to support PICs with census-taking. It is expected to result in:

- Strengthened technical capacity at the subregional and national levels to correctly apply and use the recommendations

- Enhanced quality, comparability, and consistency of the socio-economic and demographic data generated from the 2030 round of censuses.
- Identification of capacity development gaps and needs among participating countries

III. Training design and content

To achieve the learning outcomes and maximize participation, this training workshop will be designed using a mix of delivery formats (presentations, group discussions, quizzes, hands-on exercises) and will be tailored to match the priorities and subregional context of the targeted countries. In addition, the training will be designed to create a platform that encourages participants to engage in peer-to-peer learning and share country experiences on their preparations for the upcoming census round, as well as the challenges encountered, and lessons learned from previous census rounds. Participants will be required to prepare and deliver country presentations on different aspects of their census plans and experience. Details will be communicated to the selected nominee(s) prior to the workshop.

Furthermore, to support the sessions related to the use of administrative data for census purposes, the Self-Assessment Tool on Readiness to Use Administrative Data for Census (SATRAC)² will be sent to participating countries. The country teams are expected to consult within their organizations and with at least one key administrative data holder and complete and submit the questionnaire prior to the workshop.

The training will cover new topics included in the revised recommendations, which have been identified as challenges by countries in the global UNSD survey on 2020 round censuses,³ including inter alia: census methods, census operations, integration of geospatial information and administrative data, census risk profile, data quality and improving coverage, data analysis, and contingency planning. A draft agenda will be circulated to confirmed participants.

IV. Target countries

This subregional workshop will mainly target selected countries in the Pacific that are due to undertake a census within the next three years. As previously mentioned, the Pacific

² [Self-Assessment Tool on Readiness to Use Administrative Data for Census \(SATRAC\) | ESCAP](#)

³ https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/statcom/session_56/documents/BG-3b-Survey_Report_and_Analysis_of_Topics-E.pdf

subregion was selected as 12⁴ out of the 22 PICs will undertake their population and housing censuses before 2028.

Each country is invited to nominate **one or two staff members** from the NSO based on the following criteria:

1. Nominee(s) are responsible for the planning and management of the upcoming population and housing census. Priority should be given to staff member(s) who have a stronger understanding of census management processes and can actively contribute to discussions on the preparations for the 2030 census in their respective countries.
2. In addition, consideration will be given to nominations from countries who may already have well established administrative data in place relating to population data on births, deaths, migration, or are in the process of planning and transforming their systems into digital formats.
3. Each country whose NSO has ten or fewer staff members must nominate **one eligible staff member**, while those with NSOs of more than ten staff members may nominate **two**.

V. Language

The working language for this training is English. Hence, nominees for this workshop should definitely be proficient in or have a very good understanding of English.

VI. Evaluation and certification

Certificates will be issued to participants who attend and complete the workshop successfully. The workshop evaluation form will also be distributed for completion by participants.

VII. Resources or reference materials

This training will draw on several resources, including the following:

- United Nations Statistics Division. [Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 4 \(Draft\)](#) United Nations, New York. 2025

⁴ Based on dates obtained from SPC Census and Survey Calendar: <https://sdd.spc.int/census-and-survey-calendar>

- [Handbook on the Management of Population and Housing Censuses – Revision 2](#). United Nations, New York, 2021.
- E-learning courses “Population and Housing Census - Basic Training - Census Methodology and Data Collection” and “Population and Housing Census - Advanced Training - Census Planning, Design and Management”, available at <https://learning.officialstatistics.org/course/index.php?categoryid=1>
- UN Social and Economic Council. 2020 and 2030 World Population and Housing Census Programmes: Report of the Secretary-General. United Nations, New York, 2025.
 - ESCAP [Self-Assessment Tool on Readiness to Use Administrative Data for Census \(SATRAC\)](#)