From Data to Knowledge: Helping Countries Make the Most of Their Statistics

Statistical Capacity Building Programme in the Pacific

Background
Having timely and reliable education data is essential for education policy makers and planners to formulate and implement appropriate policies and actions to achieve the Education for All (EFA) and to monitor progress.

With the support from Japanese Government, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Asia-Pacific Regional Office, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, and UNESCO Office for the Pacific States based in Apia, Samoa are jointly implementing the Statistical Capacity Building Programme in the Pacific.

Many Pacific Island States need to strengthen the capacity of its Ministries of Education to enhance data collection, production of education indicators and analyze these indicators as part of EFA monitoring and for use in evidence-based policy planning.

This project aims to enhance governance in the education sector by strengthening countries’ capacities in the use and analysis of education indicators for better decision-making.

The project aims to institutionalize the monitoring and evaluation of where the country stands in terms of international commitments such as the EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its own national goals.

Fostering a closer working relationship between the education statisticians and policy planners, and encouraging MOEs to make maximum use of their data for planning purposes is also one of the main objectives of this project.

The project will benefit 15 Pacific Island States: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Focus:
This project is primarily aimed at expanding the capacity of the Pacific Island States beyond the traditional collection and dissemination of education statistics, aiming toward improving skills of key staff on systematic data collection and its analysis.

Tailor-made technical trainings will be provided to statisticians and planners from Ministries of Education and National Statistical Offices as part of the project.
The main goal of the technical training will be to assist countries produce a wide-range of quality education data and how to make them more usable. It will cover systematic data collection, data validation, understanding of key EFA and MDG indicators, their calculation as well as analysis and interpretation of data (transforming data into information) and effective dissemination. The trainings will adopt a “hands-on” approach with the participants. This will also contribute towards ensuring the availability of data from the Pacific in the UIS international database used to monitor the progress on EFA at the global level.

To ensure the project will have a wide reach, collaboration with regional bodies will be maintained, such as the Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE), the University of South Pacific, and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) Statistics Unit. South Pacific Bureau for Educational Assessment

Activities:
- Regional workshops on use and analysis of education statistics
- Sub-regional technical workshops for:
  - Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, and Samoa
  - The Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Palau
  - Fiji, Nauru, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu
- Technical missions to visit the Pacific Island States (Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga)

Expected results:
- Improved skills and knowledge of education staff, especially statisticians and planners within the Ministries of Education as well as National Statistics Offices in the region;
- Improved availability and quality of education data in a timely manner;
- Timely reporting of education data for monitoring of national and international goals and targets;
- Better use and analysis of education data for evidence-based policy formulation and results-oriented programme implementation.

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