

Chapter 1

Realising the Pacific Vision by 2050: Building on the Basics

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1.1 Introduction¹

In 2004 (PIFS, 2005), Pacific leaders set a vision for the region that was reiterated ten years later through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (PIFS, 2014):

Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

At the end of 2015, the Commonwealth Pacific small states had made some progress towards this vision based on their progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but many fell short. At the deadline for the MDGs in 2015, only Fiji and Tonga had achieved at least half of the MDGs; Nauru, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu achieved less than half of the goals; while Kiribati, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Solomon Islands failed to achieve any of the MDGs (PIFS, 2015a). Sights are now set on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, which is expressed in the outcome document of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, ‘Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ (2030 Agenda). If realised, this will also mean the realisation of the Pacific Vision.

By looking to 2050, this study provides the latitude to trace the different trajectories that are possible in seeking to achieve the SDGs and realise the Pacific Vision. Against the backdrop of the region’s track record on implementing the MDGs, achieving all the SDGs will be an onerous task given the breadth and scope of the 17 goals and their 169 targets. This study does not cover all the areas of the SDGs. Instead, it focuses on the possible trajectory to 2050 of a cross-section of issues:

- Governance, focusing on political governance (Chapter 3), development effectiveness and co-ordination (Chapter 4) and ocean governance (Chapter 5).
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Chapter 6).
- Information and communications technology (Chapter 7).
- Climate change, focusing on migration and climate change (Chapter 8) and energy (Chapter 9).

The focus on these areas does not mean that other critical development issues (such as poverty, education, child and maternal health, gender equality – including violence against women, youth development, food security, economic growth, trade, etc.) not covered by this study are any less important. By looking at a few critical areas for the

Commonwealth Pacific small states, the aim of this study is to draw out common messages and offer practical recommendations that can also resonate with those areas not covered, as well as for all other small states.

This study is organised as follows: chapter 2 considers whether the Commonwealth Pacific small states can achieve the SDGs by 2030, finding that many will miss the mark even by 2050. Chapters 3 to 9 presents a full treatise of the issues and key messages in each of the respective thematic areas. This chapter provides a brief synopsis of the issues and challenges that are discussed in detail in chapters 3 to 9 (Part 1.2), outlines the common threads emanating from these chapters (Part 1.3), and presents some recommendations that can help steer the Commonwealth Pacific small states' trajectory to achieve the SDGs and realise the Pacific Vision (Part 1.4).

1.2 Issues and challenges

The focus areas of this study begins with a chapter on political governance – a major underlying determinant for the success or failure of any economy. Chapter 3 reviews the key challenges that the Commonwealth Pacific small states currently face in the structure and operation of their governance institutions, noting that while there is consensus on challenges, there is less agreement on the possible solutions. At the national level, key challenges include establishing stable and representative institutions, strengthening the distinct roles of the legislature, executive and judiciary, improving the quality of public policy and developing government capacity at provincial and local levels, in both urban and rural settings. At the regional level, there are issues of sovereignty, deepening integration beyond regional co-operation (including through subregionalism), constraints to the delivery of pooled services, and funding and accountability issues.

In looking to 2050, the chapter offers three scenarios for the Commonwealth Pacific small states individually and possibly for the region as a whole. The first scenario is one in which very few changes are made to the way countries are being governed, and future progress of these societies continues along the same pathways as at present. A second, bleaker, scenario foresees a deterioration in the quality of political governance, with consequent declines in human security, and a worsening of livelihoods. A third scenario, which is preferred, envisages transformations in political governance, which result in more rapid human development, as a consequence of greater focus on social justice and sustainability, and ensuring that government machineries serve all citizens equally, and to high standards. Faced with these scenarios, it is argued that attention should be focussed on developing capacity at subnational, national and regional levels, in addition to continuing efforts in building institutions, which was a primary focus of many countries post-independence. The chapter concludes with practical recommendations on how to strengthen local, national and regional governance.

Chapter 4 tackles governance from the perspective of development effectiveness and co-ordination, which is an important issue for the Commonwealth Pacific small states and the region, given the relatively high dependence of many countries on

official development assistance. The chapter outlines a range of issues that relate, directly and indirectly, to the level of development effectiveness achieved by the Commonwealth Pacific small states and identifies national and regional policy options for strengthening results in the future. It highlights the steps already taken in the Pacific, at both national and regional levels, to make progress but also underlines the importance of understanding the differences that exist in the economic and social determinants of the nine states. These determinants include their population size, availability of human and other resources, governance structures, political histories, cultural and social factors, and their overall level of development at this point in time.

Key issues and challenges identified at the national level include weak ownership of development priorities, insufficient focus on results, ineffective partnerships and poor accountability and transparency. There are also issues of ineffective implementation, and of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as well as limited efforts to address gender inequality. Similar issues are encountered for programmes that are delivered from regional platforms, and the effectiveness of regional and subregional efforts, as well as regional organisations, is examined.

The Pacific region has made progress on these challenges, including through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Co-ordination.² Nevertheless, there are remaining gaps that need to be considered in the face of the three potential scenarios (status quo, deterioration, transformation) as the countries progress toward 2050. These gaps include – leadership to ensure that countries are driving their national development agenda; improving the availability, quality, accessibility and timeliness of data; more inclusive policy analysis and formulation process; more effective co-ordination; greater focus on issues of gender; improving regional mechanisms to deliver results and ensuring the best technical advice. The chapter concludes with recommendations on addressing these gaps.

The discussions in Chapters 3 and 4 complement and reinforce each other, highlighting the broader governance issues that Commonwealth Pacific small states face. In Chapter 5, these issues of governance are brought to light at the sector level through the examination of ocean governance and management arrangements. As abundant as the uses and users of the Pacific Ocean are, so too are the global, regional and national mechanisms that govern them. The chapter discusses these governance arrangements before examining the key issues and challenges in the fisheries, transport, tourism and emerging sectors (deep sea mining and bioprospecting), highlighting also environmental pressures and threats, geopolitical interests and gender perspectives.

The Pacific has had promising responses to the challenges faced, with successful Pacific advocacy and leadership on oceans issues in the global arena, mushrooming of regional oceans policy commitments, capitalisation of the tuna resources through the Parties to the Nauru Agreement and advances in community-led natural resource management. Looking to 2050, the major challenges to overcome include responding to foreign pressures, lack of national investment in environmental management, inadequate fiscal regimes and revenue management options, population growth and

climate change. The chapter offers practical actions to address these challenges – shifting the ocean paradigm from ‘explore and exploit’ to ‘sustain and be sustained by’; refining regional approaches to ‘communities of interest’ and reviewing the role of technical agencies; whole-island and whole-ocean approaches and improving national service delivery and natural resource governance arrangements.

Issues of governance, particularly in relation to development effectiveness and co-ordination, also feature strongly in Chapter 6, which outlines the Pacific region’s battle against non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the leading cause of death in all the Commonwealth Pacific small states (except PNG). Despite major international, regional and national policy responses in place, there are remaining issues around trade and health sector policy coherence, effective multisectoral approaches, financing for NCDs, M&E and civil society engagement. The chapter also highlights the interlinkages between NCDs, poverty, gender, youth and climate change, as well as the effects that the improved urban design of towns and cities, along with information and communications technology (ICT), can have in combating NCDs.

In looking to 2050, two possible paths are offered. The first, and the one which is more likely to occur unless the current NCDs epidemic is curbed, is the deterioration in the health and economic livelihoods of the countries. The second, and the ideal one for Commonwealth Pacific small states, is that of transformation, which reflects the harnessing of sufficient political will to lead the fight against NCDs. The chapter underscores the importance of political leadership, the impact of rapid population growth and the rising costs of NCDs in influencing these paths. It is clear from the chapter that there are more than adequate policies and strategies in place to combat NCDs at the global, regional and national levels. The key challenge is to do with the effective implementation of these policy interventions. In light of the two possible paths and the gaps highlighted, the chapter concludes with recommendations that can help unlock the constraints to effective policy implementation at national, regional and international levels.

ICT pervades much of society today and will definitely influence the landscape of 2050. While many developed countries have capitalised on the advances in ICT, with applications for areas such as e-government, climate change, disaster risk reduction and management, education, health and business, small states have lagged behind. Chapter 7 looks at the key challenges that Commonwealth Pacific small states face in maximising ICT. The remote island geography and population dispersion are major barriers to improving connectivity and ICT infrastructure in the region. However, ICT penetration through mobile and broadband connectivity has increased significantly, although there are wide intra-regional differences, with lower internet usage in PNG and Solomon Islands, underpinned by high costs.

Most Commonwealth Pacific small states have strategies in place to develop and regulate the ICT sector but gaps remain as the development of ICT application and systems has been largely ad hoc and piecemeal. Much more concerted effort is needed to expand connectivity and ICT infrastructure, use a mix of innovative connectivity technologies to overcome geographical barriers, optimise ICT applications (consistent with one of the recommendations of Chapter 6 to embrace

ICTs in combating NCDs), as well as to ensure that there are more effective laws and regulations in place. In 2050, ICT is expected to be radically different from what it is now and while progress is slower than elsewhere, uptake of ICT in the region is expected to follow the global trend. Therefore, to prepare the region for a technology-driven knowledge-based society in 2050, the chapter recommends an integrated approach to ICT infrastructure and services development, development and/or strengthening of a regional e-government resource centre and the scaling up and replication of ICT applications.

However, the opportunities that 2050 can bring for the Commonwealth Pacific small states could be easily thwarted by the impact of climate change if it is not addressed now. An emerging issue in this regard is migration and climate change, which is the focus of Chapter 8. In this chapter, international migration, migration structures, interregional migration, and rural-urban migration patterns, and their impact on economies, populations and remittances are discussed. The particular circumstances of atoll states (Kiribati and Tuvalu) are also highlighted, given their significant development challenges and extreme vulnerability to climate change and severe climatic events.

Looking towards 2050, demand for migration is expected to become more important, making it necessary for Commonwealth Pacific small states to strengthen or develop strategies for skilled migration and seasonal worker schemes. On the other hand, the impact of climate change raises the challenges of climate-induced migration, with a need to address issues of displacement and resettlement, as well as gathering data for evidence-based policy in this emerging area. Thus, the journey towards 2050 is expected to be complicated and challenging, as well as dependent on the policies of the metropolitan states adjoining the Pacific region. The chapter concludes with practical recommendations at the regional and national level to address these challenges, noting that effective governance and an integrated approach will be crucial for success.

A discussion on climate change will not be complete without considering the energy sector, which is what Chapter 9 sets out to do. While the Commonwealth Pacific small states' contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is negligible, the energy sector plays a major role in the economic resilience of these countries, given their heavy dependence on imported petroleum products. Common challenges include difficulties in achieving energy security and effective co-ordination, population dispersion and geographical barriers, lack of energy data, weak institutional and technical capacity, non-market electricity tariffs, irregular electricity supply, lack of attention to energy efficiency and sustainable transport, financing constraints and a lack of gender perspectives. For each of these challenges, the chapter outlines the regional and national responses in place but highlights that gaps remain.

In looking to 2050, three possible scenarios are envisaged: (i) a 'business as usual' scenario that sees steady population growth and growing energy demand, yet little improvement to access, energy efficiency and renewable energy; (ii) a scenario where there is moderate population growth, with only some improvements to access, energy efficiency and renewable energy; and (iii) an optimistic scenario with lower population growth rates and escalated action on access, energy efficiency and

renewable energy. Based on current trends, Commonwealth Pacific small states are headed for the first scenario, with the level of financing a catalyst for moving towards the two improved scenarios. The chapter concludes with practical recommendations that can change the current trajectory, as well as address the gaps in the regional and national responses.

1.3 Common threads

As discussed in the previous section, chapters 3 to 9 highlights the gaps in policy responses that are currently in place to address the major issues and challenges in that sector. Key sector-specific recommendations are then offered to address these gaps so that Commonwealth Pacific small states can change their trajectory into 2050 to achieve greater development dividends. Consistent with the poor outcomes expected on the SDGs (see Chapter 2), many of the baseline 2050 scenarios offered in chapters 3 to 9 are scenarios that lead to less than optimal development outcomes.

Several common themes and challenges also flow through chapters 3 to 9. These common threads have applications to other sectors not covered in this study, as well as for other Pacific island countries, so addressing them could effectively catapult the region closer to realising the SDGs and the Pacific Vision.

1.3.1 Political will

High-level political will is required to achieve the type of transformation that meets the ambition of the SDGs and the Pacific Vision by 2050. This theme reverberates across chapters 3 to 9. Clearly, the achievement of development goals, whether set at the national, regional or global level, is more likely to occur in those countries where there is strong political will to succeed and where the associated administrative, financing and performance management frameworks are synchronised and effectively implemented. Some Commonwealth Pacific small states are already demonstrating such level of political will.

Samoa's efforts to translate the SDGs into national outcomes provides one example of the high-level political leadership and national ownership required to achieve the SDGs. Samoa took early steps to integrate the SDGs in the context of its national development strategy (Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016/17–2019/20).³ Samoa was also one of the first countries in the world to lodge its national voluntary review on the SDGs as part of the follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda (see Box 1.1). Other Commonwealth Pacific small states that have also integrated the SDGs into their national development plans include Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. At the sector level, Fiji's initiative to have both the head of state and the head of government lead the fight against NCDs is another demonstration of high-level political will, leadership and commitment.

1.3.2 Data challenges

Many Commonwealth Pacific small states lack a functional and effective M&E system due to data gaps, which limits their capacity to review and develop evidence-based

Box 1.1 Samoa's First National Voluntary Review Report on the SDGs

Lodged at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2016, Samoa's National Voluntary Review Report on the SDGs noted Samoa's strong support for the objectives of Agenda 2030 and their direct links to the aspirations of the SAMOA Pathway (outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States). In pursuit of the SDGs, the report highlighted the importance of:

- a. Using existing in-country processes, systems and institutions to ensure the SDGs are appropriately contextualised.
- b. Open and consultative processes in the development of the national strategy and the accompanying sector-level plans for implementation.
- c. Mainstreaming the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway, Paris Accord and Financing for Development objectives as an ongoing process.
- d. Establishing a co-ordinating body for monitoring and reporting – in Samoa's case, a National SDGs Taskforce.
- e. Accurate national statistics for monitoring the SDGs. This is central to political and policy considerations in deciding the vision and priorities of the national strategic plan.
- f. Close collaboration between the National Statistics Office and key stakeholders for the collation and validation of relevant country and regional indicators.
- g. Increased investments in human capacity and institutional capabilities and, as a consequence, the support of development partners.
- h. Taking account of the specific challenges faced by small island states and in doing so adequately reflect economic inequalities, social crises and ecological risks.

Source: Speech of the Samoa Minister of Finance at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2016

policies. Addressing the gaps in national data and weak national information systems is therefore critical and a prerequisite for sound policy formulation, establishing partnerships and strengthening capacity. While there are ongoing efforts to strengthen data collections in the region, principally through regional programmes and sector-based work led by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and a range of development partners, concerns remain about the quality and availability of data in a timely manner that can be used by policy-makers and planners to better inform development initiatives. All Commonwealth Pacific small states continue to face challenges on the availability, accessibility and timeliness of reliable, good quality data to support effective policy analysis and formulation across all sectors and in

tracking the SDGs. This is also evident from Chapter 2, where data gaps prevented a complete analysis of the countries' prospects against each of the SDGs.

Raw data (official and administrative) are available in all countries but in many cases are not analysed or presented in formats that support objective and evidence-based decision-making. Key challenges include: weak legislation or weak implementation of legislative provisions governing the collection, analysis and reporting of statistics in some countries; lack of time series data that could support trend analysis, forecasting and modelling of future challenges and potential solutions; lack of disaggregated data by age, sex and (geographical) location to inform more effective targeting of policy focus and interventions, and the undervaluing of the importance of data often leading to static or diminishing levels of resources accorded to national statistical offices and virtually no attention accorded to the importance of mining, analysis and reporting of administrative data available across all sectors at the country level. In countries where the importance of data is valued, high-level political commitment is evident and national processes are aligned to generate, analyse and report timely data for decision-making and/or tracking of national development goals and the SDGs.

Looking to 2050, the Commonwealth Pacific small states should aspire to, embrace and be part of the regional and global knowledge society, where the tools to support effective evidence-based decision-making (good quality, reliable, timely and easily accessible data) at country level are universally available and linking quality data, evidence and decision-making becomes the norm.

1.3.3 Governance

Building effective state institutions and promoting national unity were among Pacific Leaders' top priorities in the post-independence decades of the second half of the twentieth century. The twenty-first century, however, is presenting the challenges of a more globalised world: climate change is foremost among these, as well as the influences of global finance, global commerce and telecommunications, new geo-strategic alignments, and the rising expectations of ever-more educated, youthful and informed populations.

Other issues causing concern across the Commonwealth Pacific small states include corruption in public life, the conduct of parliaments, under-representation of women in public life and a lack of gender perspectives, resource exploitation that trades long-term environmental degradation for only short-term economic gain, and ongoing public-sector challenges in delivering basic services. These challenges manifest in one way or the other throughout chapters 3 to 9.

Therefore, looking to 2050, it is important for Commonwealth Pacific small states to strengthen public institutions at the national and subnational levels, as well as develop the capacity to engage effectively at the regional and global levels. At the subnational level, there is a need to strengthen the links between national, provincial and village or community levels of governance to ensure that the development priorities at the national level adequately reflect the aspirations of these other levels

of government. There is also a need to recognise the ongoing role of customary leadership and values, while respecting human rights. At the regional level, continued efforts are required to seek a model of regional governance suitable to deliver on development outcomes. At the global level, there will be ever-greater engagement with global policy networks and various international/global institutions. At all these levels, political actors must respond to the evolving circumstances of their constituents. There should be deliberative and inclusive decision-making processes in place, which include both government and non-government actors, in particular private sector, faith-based organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations. In addition, governments should encourage the full and equal participation of women in public life, and the full participation of young people in nation-building and decision-making processes. Good political governance, a dynamic private sector, regional co-operation, integration into global markets and well-managed infrastructure are essential for growth in Commonwealth Pacific small states to 2050.

1.3.4 Multisectoral policy coherence

Successful implementation of national development strategies and sector strategies requires the participation of many sectors in government and outside of government, including private sector, faith-based organisations and civil society organisations. Lack of policy coherence among implementing partners has been a key impediment to successful implementation of many national and sector policies, as outlined in many of the thematic chapters.

Looking to 2050, strengthened policy coherence between sectors, greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of interdependent sectors and actors (including civil society, private sector, faith-based organisations and NGOs) and greater clarity of governance and accountability mechanisms are critical to successful implementation of multisectoral policies and strategies.

1.3.5 Effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement

Openness, trust, shared accountability, and mutual respect and learning, while recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors, are at the core of effective partnerships in support of development goals. Many of the thematic chapters highlight the importance of effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement in delivering outcomes.

However, an ongoing challenge in most of the Commonwealth Pacific small states is ensuring an active and effective participatory process in developing and implementing national and sector plans and strategies. Ensuring genuine engagement with partners outside the government, including the private sector, civil society and faith-based organisations is crucial to cultivating joint ownership and long-term sustainability. In a number of countries, there continues to be a mistrust of civil society and NGOs by governments, while in some countries there is a selective approach as to which of these organisations are consulted by government agencies when designing national and sector plans and budgets.

Looking to 2050, in line with the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States) and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, Commonwealth Pacific small states should aim for genuine and durable partnerships based on national ownership, mutual trust, transparency and accountability. Countries also need to implement strengthened consultative processes aimed at improving the relationships between the government and its constituents, in particular the private sector and civil society organisations, including faith-based organisations, NGOs and community-based organisations, to cultivate and build trust and confidence.

1.3.6 Finance

None of the Commonwealth Pacific small states have levels of domestic resources to adequately and sustainably finance the achievement of the SDGs or realisation of the Pacific Vision. This is a clear message in chapters 3 to 9. The situation is exacerbated in some countries given the projected rapid population growth. Hence, the majority of the Commonwealth Pacific small states are anticipated to remain reliant on development assistance in 2050, especially countries like Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru which have limited prospects for domestic resource mobilisation. PNG is the only country endowed with substantial levels of natural resources and could potentially be economically self-reliant by 2050 but must overcome significant governance challenges before achieving this.

Looking to 2050, countries will need to secure adequate levels of financing from domestic resource mobilisation, where relevant, and external sources (such as climate finance, development finance, official development assistance, remittances, etc.). This needs to be supported by greater investments in ensuring robust financial management systems inclusive of effective budget formulation and implementation, and adequate human resource capacity. Most countries have adopted a single integrated budget approach and a number have moved to adopt a programme budgeting approach. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the budgeting process is fully reflective of the costs of development programmes, with the inclusion of all sources of finances in budgets. Budgets for some key stakeholders contributing to national development outcomes, such as faith-based organisations that run the bulk of education and health institutions in some countries, are also not yet fully reflected in the budget documents. Other options to address specific financing needs could include specific global, regional and/or subregional financing mechanisms. For example, Chapter 6 calls for a global fund to combat NCDs, while Chapter 7 calls for an ICT innovation fund.

1.3.7 Capacity development

Inadequate human, financial and institutional capacity often combine to undermine effective development progress in many of the Commonwealth Pacific small states. Many such capacity constraints are highlighted in chapters 3 to 9.

Looking to 2050, the focus on capacity development needs to go beyond just skills development of individuals. Comprehensive institutional capacity building of the central agencies of Government, focusing on both their internal operations

and their interrelationships with one another is crucial. Just providing additional funds has rarely been enough to strengthen and sustain delivery. Strengthening core government functions is a prerequisite to strengthening state operations and to restoring and expanding private markets. Some countries would need to undertake human resource mapping to enhance planning, including a review of their national education systems and curricula, to ensure these are geared towards future employment requirements and deliver on national capacity needs, including through technical and vocational education. Strengthening of human, financial and institutional capacities in Commonwealth Pacific small states will enhance their chances of achieving the SDGs and the Pacific Vision at least by 2050.

1.3.8 Population dynamics

Population dynamics heavily influence the 2050 trajectories of many Commonwealth Pacific small states as highlighted in many of the thematic chapters. Population growth places pressures on finite resources, as well as on public services. Despite this, many national and sector policies do not adequately account for population dynamics, including the constant rural-urban drift that leads to rapid unplanned urbanisation. On current population growth projections, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are expected to face considerable population pressures with obvious social and economic implications en-route to 2050.

Looking to 2050, many Commonwealth Pacific small states need to focus on achieving a demographic transition to lower fertility rates (such as those demonstrated by Fiji, Tuvalu and Tonga). Population dynamics need to take centre stage in formulating national and sector strategies, particularly in the countries with projected rapid population growth. Effective urban planning and management policies are also needed to ensure sustainable cities, in combination with more equitable and effective rural development.

1.4 Recommendations: building on the basics

Clearly, the issues highlighted in the previous section can resonate with all other sectors not covered in this study, as well as with other small states. These issues are by no means new or groundbreaking but rather reflect the essential building blocks of development. For the Commonwealth Pacific small states, these basic foundations are already in place but at different stages of maturity, with none completely on solid footing. Therefore, to change the current trajectory and achieve the SDGs and realise the Pacific Vision, Commonwealth Pacific small states must build on these basic foundations. The following recommendations provide practical ways to strengthen these foundations.

1.4.1 Strengthen political will

Political will and leadership is the foundation upon which each country's long-term vision and sustainable development goals can be achieved. Political will drives vision, transforms leadership, and catalyses policy coherence and effective implementation across all sectors to achieve development milestones and targets, and measures development progress.

1.4.2 Address the data challenges

Strengthen the regional approach and financing for statistics development. The Pacific region has in place a Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) 2011–2020, which is currently in its second stage of implementation. As TYPSS predates the SDGs, there is a need to update the strategy to fully take into account the demands of the SDGs, with strengthened engagement with national planners and policy-makers, in setting the revised priorities of TYPSS or to develop a new strategy. Implementation modalities of the strategy need to ensure the data demands at the national, regional and global levels are met. Building the capacity of countries to meet the SDGs data requirements and capitalising on ICT data platforms should also be paramount considerations. At national levels, countries should also consider the SDGs demands in their national statistics development strategies, with close engagement between policy-makers and statisticians. As many countries lack the financial resources to invest in strengthening statistics capacity, mobilising increased development assistance for statistics development is needed.

Strengthen engagement between policy-makers and statisticians. Often, the statistics produced do not fully meet the needs of policy-makers. Therefore, it is important to strengthen the engagement between policy-makers (national planners etc.) and statisticians to ensure that the statistics most needed for policy purposes are prioritised (policy-led data collection). This is critical given the significant breadth and depth of the SDGs, the existing data gaps and pressure to produce data for new indicators. At the national level, this can be done through the establishment of a committee to oversee statistics development, which includes relevant policy-makers, planners, statisticians and other key stakeholders. At the regional level, this can be done by strengthening the links between the Pacific SDGs Taskforce,⁴ National Sustainable Development Strategy Partnership Group⁵ and the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee,⁶ as well as the Heads of Planning and Statistics meeting.

Legal reforms to strengthen statistics collection. In some countries, while national statistical offices are mandated by law to collect and publish statistics, the law usually does not explicitly require other sectors inside or outside of government that are generating raw data to be mutually responsible for the production of statistics. Strengthening these laws, to include accountability requirements and indicators for all sectors involved in generating and collecting raw statistics could be a useful starting point in some countries to achieve a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to improving statistics. Such a legal requirement would encourage respective sectors to prioritise collection and analysis of statistics and put in place mechanisms and resources to analyse any administrative data collected, as well as consider datasharing modalities. Some Commonwealth Pacific small states have made progress in this area; for example, the 2015 Samoa Statistics Act established a ‘Statistics Advisory Board’ to address the role of other sectors that produce statistics.

1.4.3 Strengthen governance

Strengthen local governances across the Pacific. This requires reform to laws concerning intergovernmental relations; developing sustainable legal, financial and

administrative frameworks for both urban and rural local authorities; and utilising best-practice customary values in sustainable development particularly in natural resources management, supported by appropriate human and institutional capacity-building programmes.

Strengthen oversight of government performance, including policies to ensure that gender equality and development programmes are inclusive of all members of the community. This will include a stronger, more effective public accounts committee; regular reports from the Auditor-General that are submitted and considered by parliament; and more effective anti-corruption policies. It should also include scaling up of programmes that encourage women's participation in public life.

Implement a strengthened consultation process and co-ordination with governments. Engagement with civil society, the private sector and development partners is essential to ensure that all stakeholders, government, civil society, private sector and development partners are fully involved in the planning, budgeting, implementation and M&E processes of each country and are given the necessary support to ensure accountability and transparency in the decision-making of governments.

Strengthen parliamentary processes and democratic institutions. This may involve strengthening the function of legislatures through revision of Standing Orders to specify the duration of sessions, and standards for debate, question time; publishing an annual parliamentary calendar (work programme) to facilitate planning by members of parliament, committees, administrative support staff, government departments and agencies, and the public; ensure the autonomy of the Public Service Commissions, which will insulate the public sector from nepotism and politicisation; strengthen relations between the central government agencies to improve co-ordination, efficiency, and policy coherence and implement a whole-of-government approach to e-government to increase transparency, efficiency, policy coherence, and service delivery.

Explore fit-for-purpose mechanisms for regional co-operation and service delivery (as highlighted in the Morauta Report Pacific Plan Review, 2013). The process of delivering 'deeper integration' by the Pacific island countries requires greater clarification of consultation and decision-making processes, research, commitment of resources, milestones and time frames. The mandates, roles and responsibilities of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies; the results from CROP working groups; and the lines of accountability of existing Pacific regional organisations need be more easily and systematically made available to the public. 'Subregionalism' is an important aspect of Pacific regionalism. Sub-regional groupings – including those that already exist – can play constructive roles in identifying the most appropriate areas for co-operation leading to closer integration and, ultimately, development dividends, such as the success of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement. Governments should consider establishing or strengthening dedicated mechanisms to address Pacific regional integration and co-operation.

Strengthen national mechanisms that link international and regional agreements to national implementation and streamline institutional arrangements for

monitoring and reporting. One example being the efforts taken by Samoa, as well as other Commonwealth Pacific small states, to integrate the SDGs effectively into their national development plans.

1.4.4 Enhance multisectoral policy coherence

Ensure coherence of all policies, legislative reform and programmes at national and sector levels, and associated implementation projects/activities. Policy coherence is essential to successful implementation of multisectoral strategies or policies. A national energy policy, for instance, will involve legislative reforms, will rely on water, roads, transport and communication networks, will have an impact on financial and revenue systems, will impact trading of energy-related commodities, food security and food storage systems, and ultimately aim to provide social and economic development opportunities for people. Successful implementation of such policy will require policy coherence that generates effective participation of all actors in various parts of the energy sector services.

Costing and prioritisation of national development priorities/goals through an integrated multi-year planning, budgeting, implementation and M&E framework. Commonwealth Pacific small states should aim to achieve budget development processes that include all sources of finance, such as currently undertaken in Fiji.

Adopt a whole-of-government/whole-of-society approach to development. This will require strengthening interdepartmental or inter-ministerial co-operation and co-ordination. It will also require inclusive consultations and participation with all sectors outside government, including the private sector, faith-based organisations, NGOs and other civil society organisations, on strategy/policy development implementation and M&E processes. The new governance mechanism adopted by Tonga to oversee the implementation of its new national NCDs strategy provides an example of a whole-of-government/society approach (see chapter 6). This governance mechanism includes many partners in the government sector, the private sector and civil society organisations, who are collectively guided by one plan, one financing mechanism, one co-ordination mechanism and one M&E framework.

1.4.5 Establish effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement

Strengthen mechanisms for integrated stakeholder relationships to foster trust and meaningful participation on public policy processes (planning, implementation and M&E). More frequent, well-organised and structured consultative sessions need to occur between governments and other key stakeholders (NGOs, faith-based organisations, civil society, private sector, academia, etc.) aimed at cultivating trust and genuine partnership to jointly address national development challenges. This should also help to overcome the perceived mistrust between governments and these stakeholders.

Strengthen use and transparency of country-led mechanisms in government/development partner/donor consultative processes to ensure partnerships on Pacific terms. This epitomises one of the four key Busan principles highlighting

‘ownership of development priorities by developing countries’ and emphasising that ‘partnerships for development can only succeed if they are led by developing countries, implementing approaches that are tailored to country-specific situations and needs.’

Continue and expand the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination. This is a good practice example of south-south co-operation that includes a peer review process, demonstrating the value of Pacific island countries working together and learning from each other. Its expansion can include a continued rollout of public financial management reforms and ongoing confidence building among development partners to embrace national systems and provide increasingly untied budget support. The ‘refreshed’ Compact can also assist countries with costing and prioritisation of national development priorities through an integrated multi-year planning, budget, implementation and M&E framework, as well as help countries adopt whole-of-government/society approaches to development. It can also serve as a south-south co-operation platform to build capacity across the small states’ regions (Caribbean and Africa).

1.4.6 Secure sustainable finance

Enhance domestic resource mobilisation, where feasible, including through tax reforms. Except for Nauru, Kiribati and Tuvalu, which are likely to remain dependent on donors even in 2050, the other Commonwealth Pacific small states can consider growing their domestic resource base through appropriate tax reform.

Establish/strengthen global and regional financing mechanisms to address the most serious development challenges that undermine the future survival of the world’s populations. The global community needs to urgently consider establishing a global financing mechanism to tackle the global NCDs epidemic, the single largest killer of the world’s population. A global NCDs fund could also provide financing for the Pacific NCDs financing mechanism and national action against NCDs. The global community also needs to ensure that international commitments and obligations for the Green Climate Funds are met.

Consider national trust funds for large windfalls. For example, countries with potential large windfalls from new sources of revenue, such as those with deep sea mining potential, can benefit from the establishment of national trust funds. However, these need to be carefully designed and managed.

Harness the potential of diaspora finance. With increased international migration, the Commonwealth Pacific small states have a growing diaspora in developed countries. This has led to large remittance inflows for many of the countries (Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Fiji). Therefore, there is a good opportunity to harness finance from the growing diaspora to meet development needs.

Explore innovative and blended financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships. There are opportunities for public-private partnerships, particularly in ICT development, which should be explored. Levies can also be used to finance natural resource management and high-cost infrastructure developments.

1.4.7 Enhance capacity development

Implement a set of comprehensive human development and institutional strengthening programmes. These can include:

- Human resource mapping to enhance planning, including a review of the national education systems and curricula to ensure they are geared towards future employment requirements and can deliver on national capacity needs, including through technical and vocational education.
- South-south co-operation through the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination between the Commonwealth Pacific small states and similar small states in the Caribbean and African regions; and
- Institutional and intra-institutional strengthening through development assistance, where development partners are required to have effective capacity-building components as part of project delivery. This will ensure the sustainability of the project.

1.4.8 Account for population dynamics

Ensure that population dynamics are captured in regional and national development strategies, including at the sector level. Although population dynamics impact many development variables, such as migration, family planning, urbanisation, natural resource management, and labour mobility, population issues are generally not well integrated into national and regional strategies or sector plans. A better understanding by policy-makers of the impact of population growth on development and incorporation of these dynamics into national or sector plans is key to achieving more effective and sustainable development outcomes.

Establish comprehensive national and regional resettlement strategies, especially for climate-induced migration. Resettlement programmes, including those that result from climate change, are currently addressed on an ad-hoc and piecemeal basis. Many of the Commonwealth Pacific small states are currently feeling the brunt of climate change impacts, such as more severe cyclones. Some are expected to be completely inundated by 2050 by sea level rise, such as Kiribati and Tuvalu. Given this outlook, there is a need for comprehensive national and regional resettlement strategies, which will require a high level of regional and international co-operation.

Notes

- 1 This chapter benefited from inputs from Graham Hassall, Garry Wiseman, Hugh Govan, John Connell and Anthony Polack. Valuable comments were received from Denny Lewis-Bynoe and Amelia Kinahoi Siamomua.
- 2 The Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Co-ordination comprises various initiatives including: i) annual MDGs tracking; ii) peer reviews of national institutions, policies and systems; iii) development partner reporting on aid effectiveness commitments; iv) Public Financial Management reforms; v) more effective climate change financing; vi) private sector engagement/dialogue and vii) investment in infrastructure development.

- 3 Samoa identified a total of 146 indicators that are aligned between the SDGs indicators and indicators used to monitor the national development strategy. With support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Samoa is embarking on a SDGs data gaps assessment; mapping of the data ecosystem; and development of an integrated M&E framework, as well as a roadmap for implementation.
- 4 The Pacific SDGs Taskforce was established in 2016 to outline the Pacific SDGs Roadmap to guide the region's efforts to implement and monitor the SDGs. It consists of representatives of Pacific Islands Forum member countries, Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific agencies, multilateral agencies, bilateral partners, non-state actors and regional research/academic institutions.
- 5 The Pacific National Sustainable Development Strategies Partnerships Group (NSDSPG) was established to promote joint planning, support and implementation among relevant regional and international development organisations and partners to improve the formulation and implementation of national plans.
- 6 The Pacific Statistics Steering Committee was set up to monitor the implementation of the TYPSS.

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