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RECENT & UPCOMING TA MISSIONS

April

PFM	Solomon Is.	PFM Roadmap Implementation
	Fiji	Guidance on development of Non-tax revenue review
Tax	FSM	Compliance Risk and business process review (Mission 3) Review overall reform progress
	Regional-Fiji	Compliance Risk Management approach
Statistics	Fiji	Review of experimental GDP
	FSM	National Accounts: Strengthening Annual Methodology
	Palau	National Accounts: Strengthening Annual Methodology
	PNG	Compilation of GDP estimates
Financial Supervision	Palau	Credit Union Program
Macro	PNG	Develop macroeconomic model/fiscal planning framework
	Samoa	Develop macroeconomic model/fiscal planning framework
	Vanuatu	Updating and developing RBVs financial programming

May

PFM	Fiji	Review of operations for Fiji National Provident Fund (Phase 1)
	Tuvalu	PEFA Self-assessment with Australian DFAT

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May

Tax	Fiji	Compliance Risk Management Improving the audit function
	Kiribati	Assist in the implementation of a new organization structure
	Vanuatu	Compliance Risk Management
Statistics	Regional -Fiji	Participation in the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee
	Regional -PNG	Training on National Accounts
Financial Supervision	Tonga	On-site examination of a commercial bank Review of Prudential Guidelines/ desk review
Macro	Kiribati	Participate in Article IV consultation
	Vanuatu	Training RBV and Treasury staff on using FP Framework

June

PFM	Fiji	Complete review of legal framework Improve budget document in line with international standards
	Regional -Fiji	Workshop on Fiscal Framework
	PNG	Follow-up on IFMS transformation Improve cash management
Tax	Vanuatu	PEFA Self-assessment & PFM Roadmap start
	Fiji	Improving the Audit Function Strengthen compliance and risk management capability Implementation of strategic objectives

June

Tax	Palau	Review overall reform progress and attend OCO conference
Statistics	Regional -NCL	HIES technical working group with TA providers
Financial Supervision	Timor-Leste	Examination preparedness workshop Sourcing Central Bank data collection system to support Banking Supervision Function
	Regional -Guam	Regional workshop on Banking Supervision: Examination Preparedness
	Vanuatu	Post natural disaster banking sector assessment and Supervisory Strategy
Macro	Regional -Fiji	Workshop on Fiscal Framework

MEETINGS, SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

TRAINING COURSE ON NATIONAL ACCOUNTS, PORT MORESBY, PNG, 4-13 MAY, 2015

This sub-regional training focused on the use of household income and expenditure data in rebasing the national accounts and the rebasing process itself. A number of sessions were also devoted to the use of administrative data—such as that available from the tax system—in national accounts compilation as this is an important issue in the participating countries and the wider Pacific region.

The training was supported with exercises and real life country examples including presentations from the participants. The course was very well attended with 28 participants from PNG, including Treasury and the Central Bank and five other compilers from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The Australian Bureau of Statistics assisted with two presenters who led sessions on price statistics and supply-use tables.

PACIFIC STATISTICS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, NADI, FIJI, 27-28 MAY, 2015

PFTAC Coordinator, Scott Roger, and Statistics Advisor, Russel Freeman, participated in the meeting which took further steps towards implementing the modifications to PSSC management and procedures agreed to in October 2014. The position of PSSC Coordinator has just been filled, by Ms. Karen Punivalu. Much of the work of the meetings focused on the 4 Technical Working Groups (TWGs) established in November:

- Information & communications technology
- Use of administrative data
- Pacific Survey futures
- Data utilization and dissemination

Plus the existing group on the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES).

In addition to reporting on each group's Terms of Reference, participants also worked together to develop concrete action plans for beginning to implement strategies in each area. These groups, and potentially others, offer a practical way forward in terms of coordinating efforts in areas of particular importance for implementation of the second phase of the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy.

The meeting also included a presentation on the revamped Official Statistics program at USP. This is an area in which PFTAC is likely to provide support.

COUNTRY TA STRATEGIES



VANUATU

Public Financial Management

Vanuatu has regularly sent officials to PFTAC-sponsored regional training events. During FY2015 missions were conducted to prepare authorities for a review of non-tax revenues and assist with business processes for internal audit, including TA on the use of the audit software Team Mate. Anticipated activity during FY2016 includes coordinating a guided PEFA self-assessment and commencing work with Ministry of Finance officials on development of a PFM Reform Roadmap. In addition further TA on internal audit and review of non-tax revenues is planned.

Tax Administration

PFTAC and IMF Legal have provided past technical assistance to Vanuatu which included a mission in June 2010 setting the foundation for introducing an income tax and the development of a strategic and business plan in 2011. More recently two PFTAC missions were carried out, the first conducted an overall review of current reform progress whilst the second assisted the Department of Customs and Inland Revenue (DCIR) in the renewal of their strategic and business plan. A technical assistance plan to further strengthen compliance risk management has been agreed to and will commence shortly.

The DCIR has made steady revenue administration reform progress over the last few years which has included: (a) the development of a corporate strategy and business plan; (b) a risk-based compliance improvement strategy; (c) implementation of performance standards; and (d) the development of an IT strategy (supported by PFTAC) followed by the implementation of an IT system that has facilitated taxpayer compliance. The authorities recently submitted a request to PFTAC to review the current VAT and Rent Tax Legislation which needs to be modernized. A mission in May 2015 will focus on renewing the DCIR's Compliance Improvement Strategy.

Economic Statistics

PFTAC will continue to support the rebasing of the national accounts in 2015 and also the production quarterly accounts which is planned to follow the rebase. The rebase work has involved analysis of the 2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey data and updating the compilation system. Support has also been provided on rebasing the consumer price index and this work will now be continued by SPC now that their prices advisor is in place. IMF HQ have been providing support in strengthening BOP and GFS statistics but these projects are nearing completion so PFTAC may be responsible for future support in this area.

Financial Supervision

A series of technical missions are planned, involving the on-site examination of banks and revisions of the Credit Union Act and oversight capacity building. The Reserve Bank of Vanuatu indicated that those sectors were a priority for technical support. The programs are expected to be delivered during FY2016/17.

Following Cyclone Pam, a post natural disaster banking sector assessment and supervision strategy will be discussed with the Reserve Bank in June.

Macro-economics

In the macroeconomic area, PFTAC provided assistance to the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu (RBV) in developing their monitoring / projection framework and training staff on how to use the framework effectively. The Department of Finance and Treasury (DoFT) has indicated a desire to also use a framework along the lines of that being developed in the RBV. The current focus is therefore on developing the framework further in a practical workshop environment involving staff from the DoFT and RBV as well as the Vanuatu National Statistics Office. In addition, staff members from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and the RBV participated in a regional workshop on long-term fiscal planning jointly by PFTAC and the Asian Development Bank.