



**Regional Seminar on Developing Programmes for Implementing the 2008 SNA, the
2012 SEEA and Supporting Statistics in the Pacific Region
(Apia, Samoa, 20-23 August 2013)**

**Results of
UNESCAPs capacity screening exercise of
Pacific countries
and
SPCs 2011 Skills Audit Analysis**

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UNESCAPs capacity screening exercise of Pacific countries

Objective of Capacity Screening

- Collect overview information from member States on capacities and constraints related to producing the Core Set of Economic Statistics in each member country
- Information collected will be used for
 - the development of NESDPs
 - will map the relative capacity strengths among member States
 - facilitate exchanges of expertise across national statistical systems, including through South-South cooperation
 - assistance provided by development partners external to the national statistical systems.

Categories of the Core Set

- Prices and costs: consumer price index, wages, exchange rates, PPPs, terms of trade
- Demand and output: production and consumption, productivity measures, trade, informal economy, and short term indicators for consumer demand and investment
- Income and wealth: income, savings and wealth, balance of payments, income distribution
- Money and banking: assets and liabilities of the banking sector, interest rates
- Government: public revenue, expenditure, and debt and lending
- Labour market: statistics on employment, unemployment, underemployment, and other characteristics, such as gender and informal employment
- Natural resources and the environment: sustainability measures and accounting for natural capital



Development of the *Core Set*

- Developed through consultations among experts from national governments and international development partners
- Based on current internationally agreed standards and guidelines
- Adopted by ESCAP in Resolution 67/10 as a framework to focus regional efforts, coordinate training and mobilize donor support.

- Built on the principle of international cooperation
- Aims to provide targeted national capacity development assistance according to the needs, focusing on four main themes:
 1. Advocacy for economic statistics
 2. Coordination of national statistical systems
 3. Infrastructure for data collection and compilation
 4. Skills development and training on international standards and guidelines

- Producers of official economic statistics in governments are the main implementing bodies
- Users of economic statistics can contribute to achieving the goal by investing in, and advocating for, statistics development and by articulating the need for indicators that can help to direct policy.



Management of the *Core Set*

- **Steering Group**

- **Oversee implementation of the RPES by way of:**

1. Providing strategic and technical advice,
2. Helping maximize efficiency and coordination among capacity development activities,
3. Monitoring progress of the programme, and
4. Regularly reporting to the Committee on Statistics and other international bodies relevant to the advancement of economic statistics.



Mode of screening Capacity

- Through a questionnaire developed by the Steering Committee
 - has five sections: technical cooperation, institutional setting, IT and human resources, (statistical) infrastructure, and the ***Core Set*** of economic statistics.
- Administered to twenty-one member countries in the Pacific sub-region in March 2013 and responses were received between May and August 2013.
- Aside from those for Australia and New Zealand, all surveys were submitted to ESCAP by the SPC.
- SPC completed questionnaires on behalf of Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Palau, and Tuvalu, while country representatives from the remaining member states submitted responses to SPC.



Capacity screening Results

- *Analysed by UNESCAP and is provisional*
- In the Core Set, thirty-one indicators are listed and each country was asked to specify the frequency of collection for each item.
 - *For 14 of the 31 indicators, a majority of countries reported that they do not have any data available corresponding to the item.*
- Tables 1 through 4 summarize the number of countries that
 - meet the minimum standards that the Regional Programme specifies,
 - which do not meet the minimum,
 - which indicated ad-hoc collection or do not have the indicators available.



Prices and Costs

- CPI ☺ all countries met or exceeded minimum frequency. Widely used in GDP. Wage negotiations
- PPI much needed for GDP, but for 81% of countries it's not available
- Commodity price index - only New Caledonia met the standard. Not available for 90%
- XMPI done quarterly by 5 countries. A few countries are only doing MPI
- Wages / Earnings data not available for 43%
- Labour costs index / Wage index not available for 90%

Table 1: Prices and Costs	Minimum	Met or exceeded minimum frequency	Regularly collected but at a rate below the minimum frequency	Ad-hoc collection	Not available	Blank responses
Consumer price index (CPI)	Quarterly	21	0	0	0	0
Producer price index (PPI)	Quarterly	4	0	0	17	0
Commodity price index	Monthly	1	1	0	19	0
External merchandise trade price indices	Monthly	0	5	0	14	2
Wages / Earnings data	Quarterly	5	6	1	9	0
Labour costs index / Wage index	Quarterly	2	0	0	19	0



Demand and Output

- “Other” response to GDP expenditure was entered by Samoa, with a comment added stating, “Experimental estimates available”
- External trade (services) was entered by Solomon Islands, stating that the indicator is available but produced by the central bank, who was not involved in the capacity screening.

Table 2: Demand and Output	Minimum	Met or exceeded minimum frequency	or Regularly collected but at a rate below the minimum frequency	Ad-hoc collection	Other rates of collection	Not available
GDP (Production)	Quarterly	3	14	1	0	3
GDP (Expenditure)	Quarterly	2	7	1	1	10
External Trade – Merchandise	Monthly	6	13	0	0	2
External Trade – Services	Quarterly	4	5	1	1	10
Short-term Indicators – Industry Output	Quarterly	10	2	0	0	9
Short-term Indicators – Services Output	Quarterly	5	1	0	0	15
Short-term Indicators – Consumer Demand	Quarterly	3	1	0	0	17
Short-term Indicators – Fixed Investment	Quarterly	2	3	1	0	15
Short-term Indicators – Inventories	Quarterly	2	3	0	0	16
Economy structure statistics	Every 5 years	2	0	1	0	18
Productivity	Annually	2	0	1	0	18



Income and Wealth

Integrated National Accounts and Institutional Sector Accounts are not compiled by many countries.

Table 3: Income and Wealth	Minimum	Met or exceeded minimum frequency	Regularly collected but at a rate below the minimum frequency	Ad-hoc collection	Other rates of collection	Not available	Blank responses
Integrated National Accounts	Annually	4	0	1	0	16	0
Institutional Sector Accounts	Annually	2	0	1	0	17	1
Balance of Payments (BOP)	Quarterly	8	8	0	0	4	1
International Investment Position (IIP)	Annually	14	0	0	0	7	0
External debt	Quarterly	6	7	0	0	7	1
Income distribution	Every 5 years	4	0	1	1	15	1



Money, Labour and Government

Australia is the only country that reported a collection of natural resources.

Table 4: Money, Labour and Government	Minimum	Met or exceeded minimum frequency	Regularly collected but at a rate below the minimum frequency	Ad-hoc collection	Not available	Blank responses
Assets/liabilities of depository corporations	Monthly	5	10	0	5	1
Broad money and credit aggregates	Monthly	5	10	0	5	1
Interest rate statistics	Monthly	9	6	0	5	1
General government operations	Quarterly	4	14	1	1	1
General government debt	Quarterly	4	12	1	3	1
Labour supply and demand	Annually	9	0	2	10	0
Hours worked	Quarterly	2	6	2	10	1
Natural resources	Annually	1	0	0	20	0



Other than the Section on *Core Set* the capacity screening questionnaire had four other Sections:

Section 1: Technical cooperation

Section 2: Institutional setting: Statistical Legislation, Strategic Planning, National Statistical Coordination and Dissemination and Advocacy

Section 3: IT and human resources

Section 4: Infrastructure: Quality assessment framework, Metadata Repository, Business Registers, Other statistical infrastructure, Key collections

Provisional results of Section 1 through to 4 are summarised below:

Refer handouts



Section 1: Technical cooperation

Several partnership agencies were included in responses for question 1.1. The most frequently listed agencies were the IMF and SPC, which were noted for nine and 13 countries, respectively.

Table 1: RPES Technical Cooperation		Yes	No
1.1	Currently involved in international technical cooperation projects and programmes aimed at building capacity for economic statistics.	17	4
1.2	Interested in participating in Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) as a provider of technical assistance to other national statistical systems.	10	11
1.3	Interested in participating in Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) as a recipient of technical assistance from other national statistical systems and international agencies.	18	3

Section 2: Institutional setting



•Statistical Legislation

All countries have a legal framework that protects the confidentiality of respondent's information.

90% of NSOs have legal systems that allows them to make public methodologies of official statistical producers

	Table 2: Statistical Legislation	Yes	No	Blank
2.1.1	Existence of a Statistical law indicating distribution of responsibilities for producing official statistics. (If no law, skip to 2.2)	21	0	0
2.1.2	Law/regulation to protect confidentiality of respondent's information and ensure that data are used for statistical purposes only.	21	0	0
2.1.3	Law/regulation requires transparent statistical system, meaning that terms, conditions and methodologies of official statistical producers are made public.	19	1	1
2.1.4	There are current/ongoing plans to modify legislation that governs the statistical system.	8	13	0
2.1.5	Statistical law protects the independence of official statistics from political influence.	20	1	0



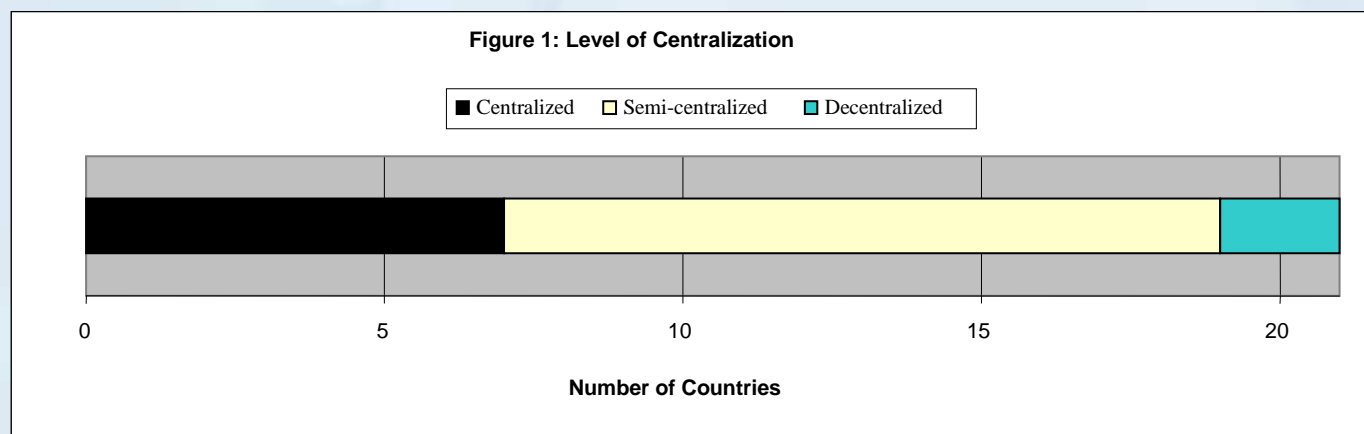
•Strategic Planning

2.2.1: American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and Kiribati all replied “Not Planned”

	Table 3: Strategic Planning	Yes	No	Blank
2.2.1	Status of statistical strategic plan or National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)	<i>Refer note 2.2.1</i>		
2.2.2	National strategic plan/NSDS available on public website.	3	14	1
2.2.3	<i>Statistical strategic plan or NSDS covers/includes:</i>			
2.2.3.1	Issues relating to co-ordination across the NSS	11	4	3
2.2.3.2	Government support (and the need for improved advocacy)	17	0	1
2.2.3.3	Adequacy of existing statistical legislation	13	3	2
2.2.3.4	Detailed action plan (including specific activities, responsibilities, timelines) and cost and funding sources for proposed activities	12	5	1
2.2.3.5	Monitoring and review process	14	2	2



•National Statistical Coordination



Seven countries reported a centralized statistical system, twelve reported semi-centralized, while American Samoa and French Polynesia reported that their systems were decentralized. Responses to the follow-up questions are given in Table 4.

	Table 4: National Statistical Coordination	Yes	No
2.3.2	The distribution of responsibility among agencies for producing the Core Set of economic statistics is clearly specified	15	6
2.3.3	Plans are currently being implemented or are under development to improve coordination of production of economic statistics	18	3



The remainder of Section 2 was a series of yes/no questions regarding dissemination and advocacy, displayed in Table 5 below

	Table 5: Dissemination and Advocacy	Yes	No	Blank
2.4.1	Publication policies are in place and available to users and staff	14	7	0
2.4.2	Contact points for each subject/statistical domain are publicized	13	6	2
2.4.3	Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are publically available	15	6	0
2.4.4	Information on how to receive assistance understanding/interpreting data from producing agencies are publicised for users	16	5	0
2.5.1	There are current/ongoing activities to improve awareness and use of economic statistics from official sources within countries	16	5	0
2.5.2	There are current/ongoing activities in country to build analytical/research capacities, develop data analysis methodologies, and increase utilization of official data	13	8	0
2.5.3	There is sufficient awareness, knowledge and appreciation among users/potential users of the relevance of official statistics for economic policy	14	7	0
2.5.4	Seminars or other regular opportunities for communication with users are organized by producers of economic statistics	10	10	1



Section 3: IT and Human Resources

The first question of Section 3 asked whether each country's IT systems were adequate for producing the Core Set. Sixteen countries replied "Yes" and the five "No".

The second question aimed at measuring the size of economic statistics staff for each country, with a follow-up regarding the adequacy of skills. Australia and New Zealand reported **economic statistics** staffs of 1000 and 310, respectively, but all other countries in the sub-region reported less than 30, with 15 countries reporting *less than ten staff members*. Only Australia, New Caledonia, and New Zealand consider their human resources adequate to produce and disseminate the Core Set.

Table 6: IT and Human Resources		Yes	No
3.1.1	IT Systems (computing power, software, equipment) are adequate for producing and disseminating the Core Set of Economic Statistics	16	5
3.2.2	Human resources are adequate for producing and disseminating the Core Set of Economic Statistics	3	18
3.2.3	Skills need / assessment recently conducted within your agency	17	4
3.2.4	Staff manuals/guidelines available on statistical processes for internal use	9	12
3.2.5	Internal processes (e.g. data editing, metadata documentation, etc.) are documented for internal use and reference by new staff	12	9



Section 4: Infrastructure

In sub-section 4.1 countries were asked if they use a quality assessment framework (QAF). Those who do not were asked if one was planned, and those who do were asked if international guidelines are followed.

•Quality assessment framework

Of the countries that do use a QAF, nine of ten indicated that they follow **international standards**.

		Have	Planned	Not Planned
	Table 7A: Quality Assessment Framework			
4.1.1	QAF available and used to monitor quality of economic statistics outputs.	10	2	7



•Metadata Repository

Fiji, New Zealand, and Niue replied “Yes” to the whole sub-section.

Metadata Repository, had a large number of “No” responses from the Pacific countries.

	Table 7B: Metadata Repository	Yes	No	Blank
4.2.1	Statistical releases accompanied with comprehensive metadata (source information, relevant accompanying notes and disclaimers for users, etc.)	17	3	1
4.2.2	Centralized national metadata repository available	4	16	1
4.2.3	Metadata format standard implemented	4	16	1
4.2.4	Metadata quality standard implemented	5	15	1



•Business Registers

Figure 2 displays the responses to the first part of this sub-section, with most of the remainder summarized in Table 8.

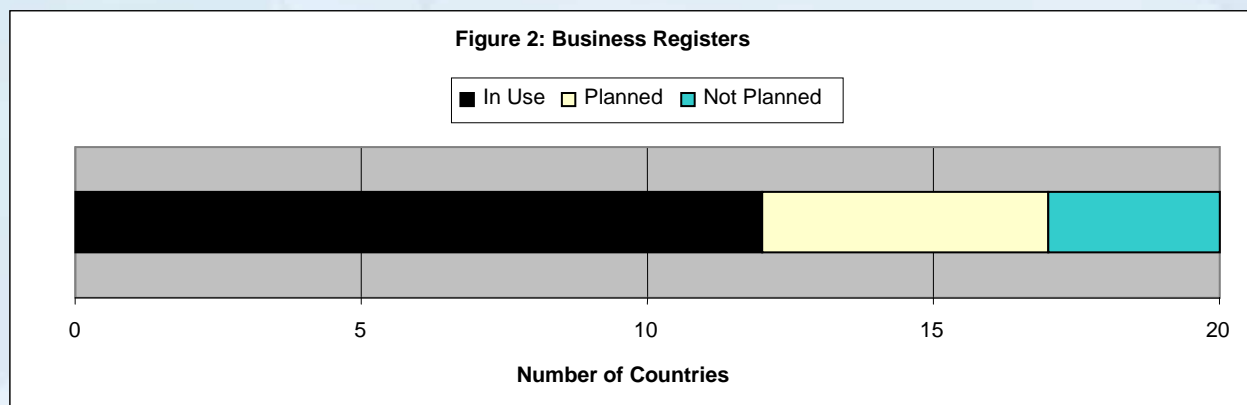


	Table 8: Business Registers, Births and Deaths	Yes	No	Blank
4.3.3	Use of business register shared by a number of agencies in the national statistical system	4	11	6
4.3.5	Established method for identifying 'births' (new businesses)	12	7	2
4.3.6	Established method for identifying 'deaths' (disbanded businesses or mergers)	12	7	2



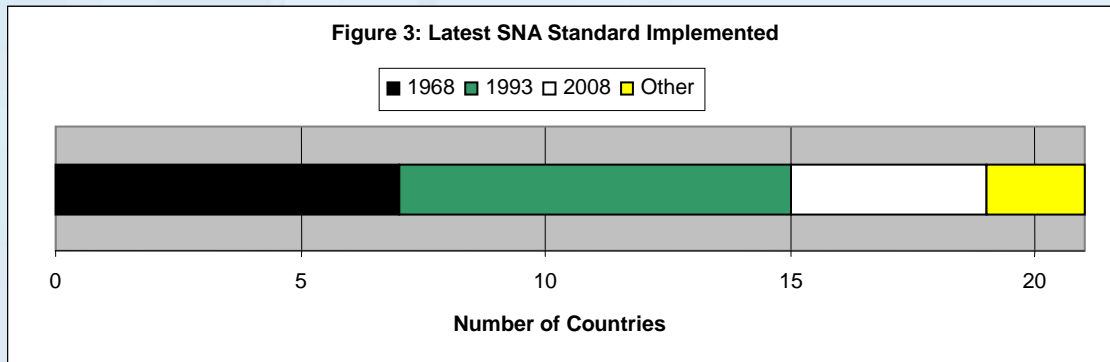
•Other statistical infrastructure

	Table 9: Other Statistical Infrastructure	Yes	No	Blank
4.4.1	Documented general guidelines available for survey sampling design	13	7	1
4.4.2	Design of key data collections include method to estimate the non-observed economy, including informal economy and informal employment	13	8	0
4.4.3	Participant in ICP Programme (for calculating PPPs)	20	0	1



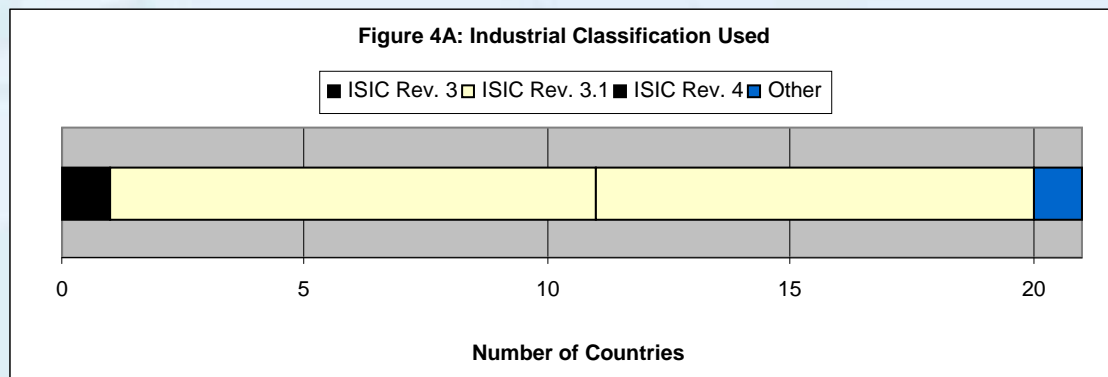
•Key collections

Sub-section 4.5 elaborates on national accounts inquiries. Figure 3 summarizes the sub-region's latest implemented standards for systems of national accounts.



Although only four countries reported that SNA 2008 had been implemented, an additional 15 countries reported that they have plans to update. American Samoa and Northern Mariana Islands, both stating that their standards were handled by the **US Bureau of Economic Analysis**.

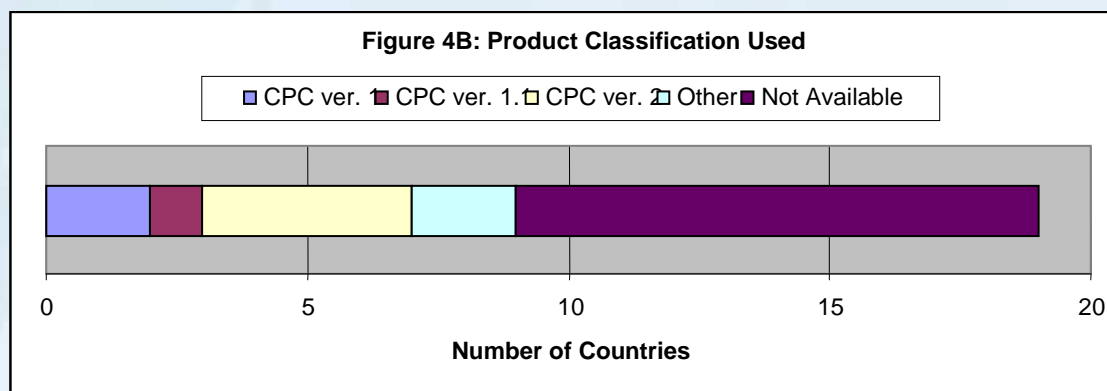
Next, countries were asked to specify which industrial classifications they use, summarized in Figure 4A.



Although only nine countries reported that they use ISIC Rev. 4, an additional nine stated that they have plans to update.



Figure 4B summarizes the responses to question 4.5.7 on product classification.



Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Tonga were the countries to report CPC ver. 2.

Remaining classifications in sub-section 4.5 are summarized in Table 10.

Table 10: Other Statistical Infrastructure		Yes	No	Blank
4.5.9	Classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP)?	12	8	1
4.5.10	Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG)?	10	10	1



At the end of Section 4, **additional data collections**, had responses from Northern Mariana Islands and Tonga. Northern Mariana Islands stated that every two years a Federal Labor Wage requirement is collected, while Tonga reported Ad-hoc collections of two different surveys: a demographic health survey and the Tongatapu electricity consumption survey, both conducted by the statistics department.

Following figures show a series of **key collections** in which respondents were first asked to indicate if they **report the specified collection**, then a series of **follow-up questions** were administered in each sub-section regarding **standards followed, frequency of collections, and timeliness of reporting**. Figure 5 gives the number of countries in the sub-region that report each key collection.



Figure 5: Key Collections

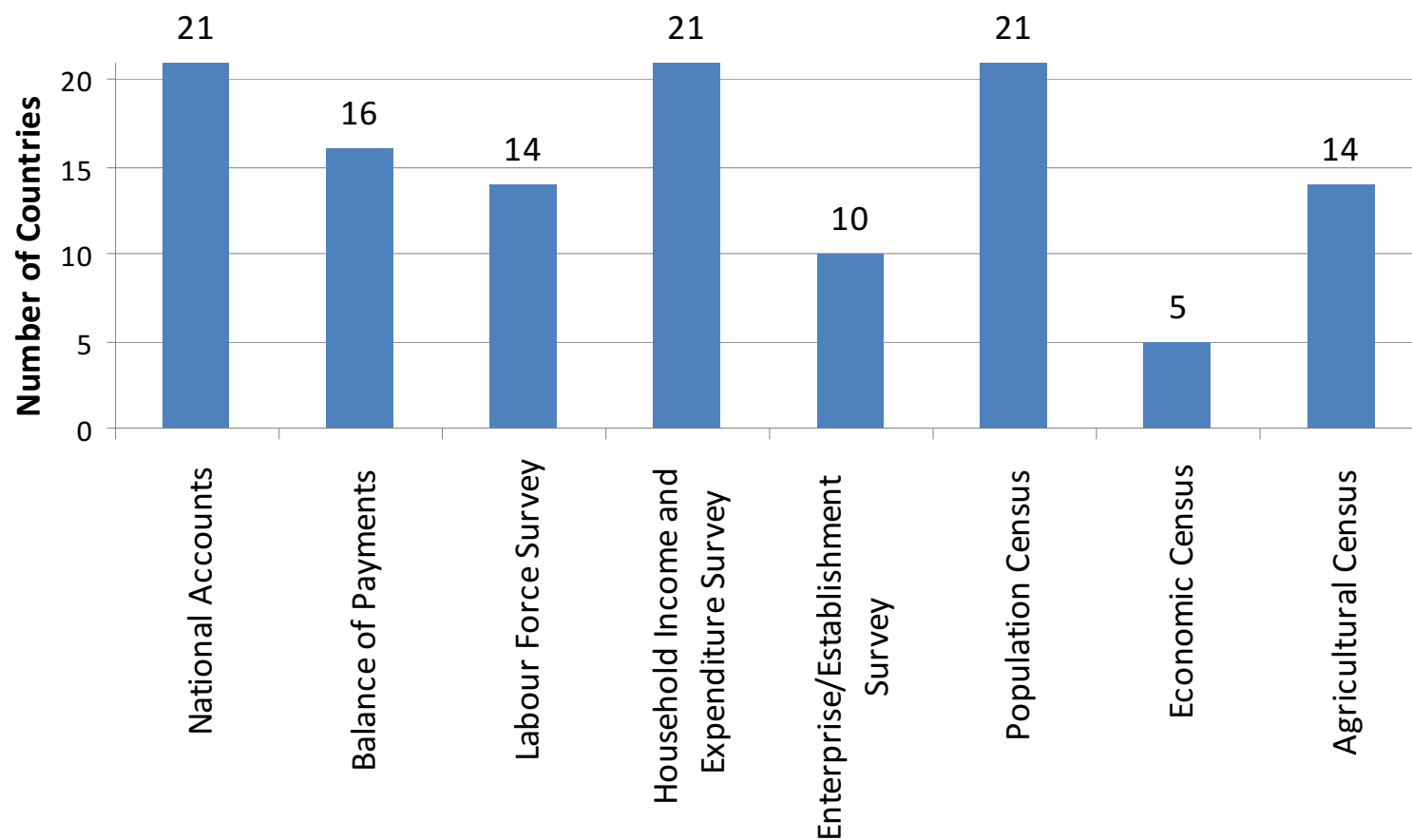
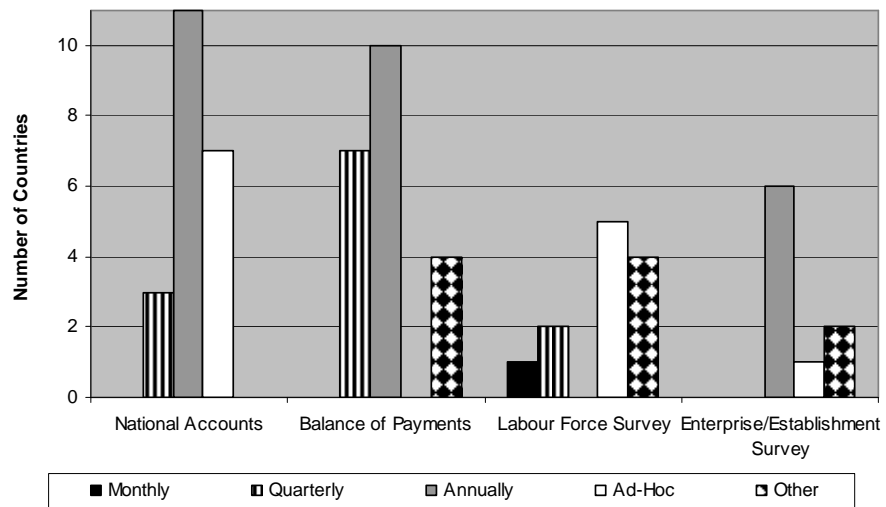




Figure 6A: Collection Frequencies 4.5 - 4.7, 4.9



Figures 6A and 6B summarize the frequencies of collection for each item from Figure 5.

Figure 6B: Collection Frequencies 4.8, 4.10 - 4.12

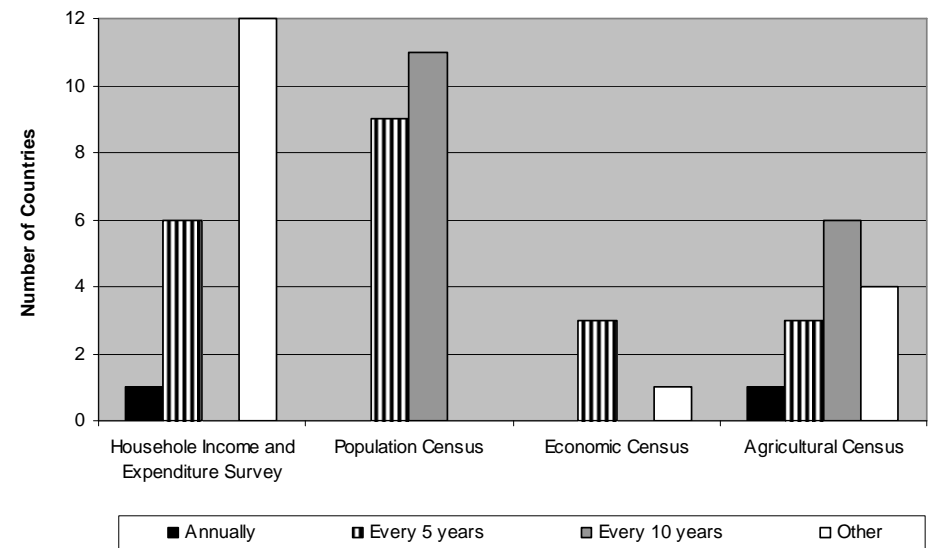
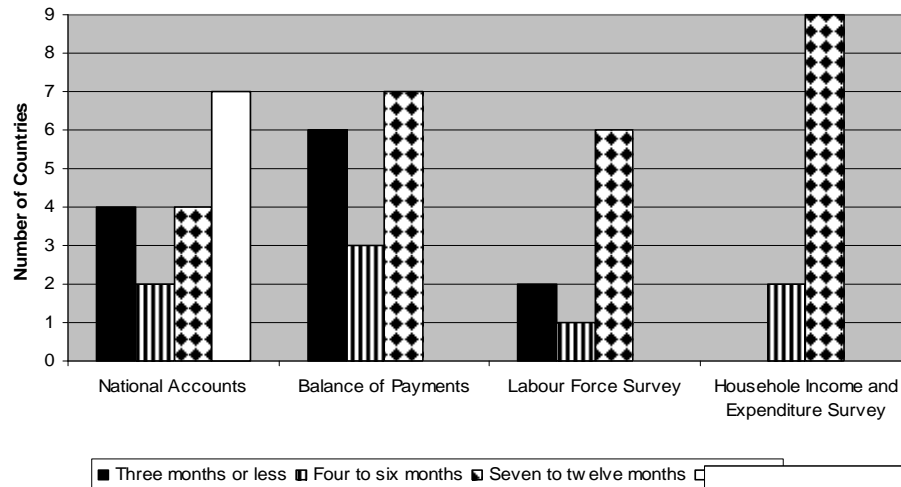


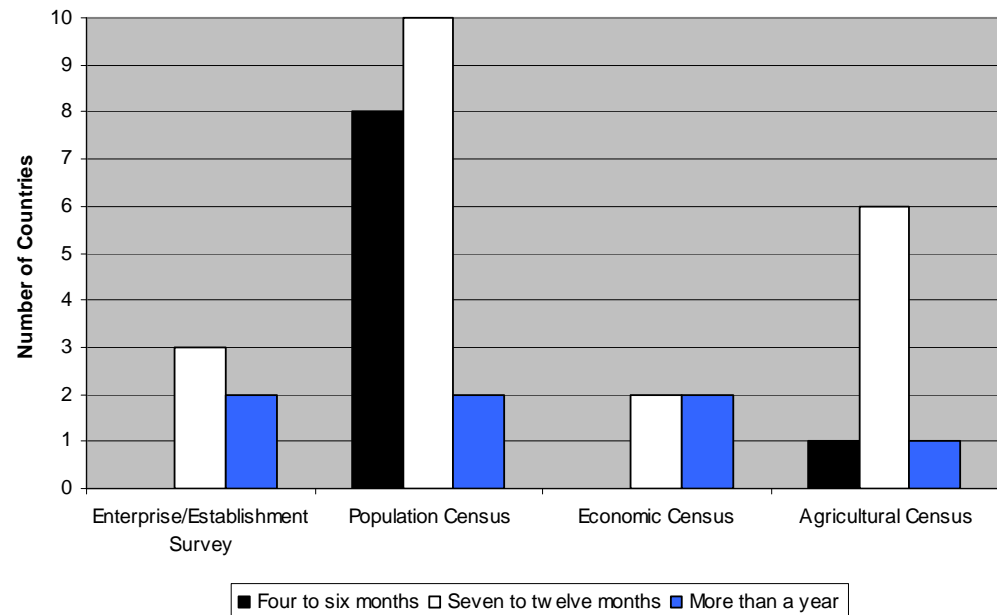


Figure 7A: Timeliness of Reporting 4.5 - 4.8



Figures 7A and 7B summarize timeliness of reporting (in months) for key collections.

Figure 7B: Timeliness of Reporting 4.9 - 4.12





SPCs 2011 Skills Audit Analysis Results

Background

- The skills audit was meant to establish a **baseline for development of long-term training and professional development strategies**
- Undertaken in late **2011** for all countries and US territories (18) where SPC is engaged
 - All countries participated except for PNG resulting in the participation by 17 countries & 224 participants.
French territories were excluded as our training activities are very limited there
- This audit provides a **snapshot of the situation at the time.**
Staff recruited since the audit are not covered in the results of this report.



One more caveat:
Open-ended text allowed for freedom of responses but also means the data collected is very subjective.

Country/Territory: _____

Name of staff: _____

Age: [____] Sex: [m] [f] Years working with your office: [____]

Division in your office: _____

Job title: _____

Principal duties: _____

[A] Training history – current Job-specific

1. have you received specific training to help you perform these duties?

[] **Yes** (specify in-house training, by whom, how long, when? External training provider – SIAP course, USP, SPC ABS, Statistics NZ... mention all course relevant to your current duties)

- a.
- b.
- c.

Do you feel this training has been sufficient for you to do a competent job?

[] Yes

[] No => what other training would you require?

[] **No:** I never received any specific training to help me do this particular job

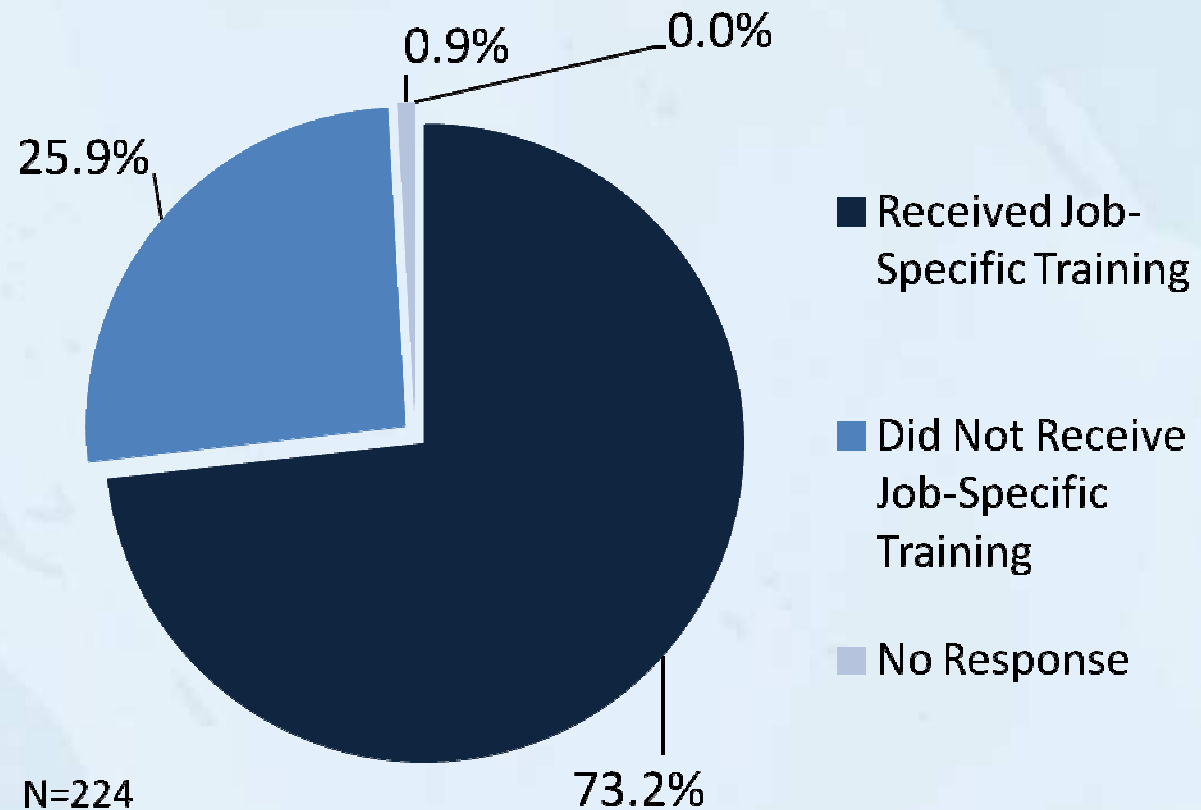
⇒ what type of training would you require?



Achievements/ Highlights

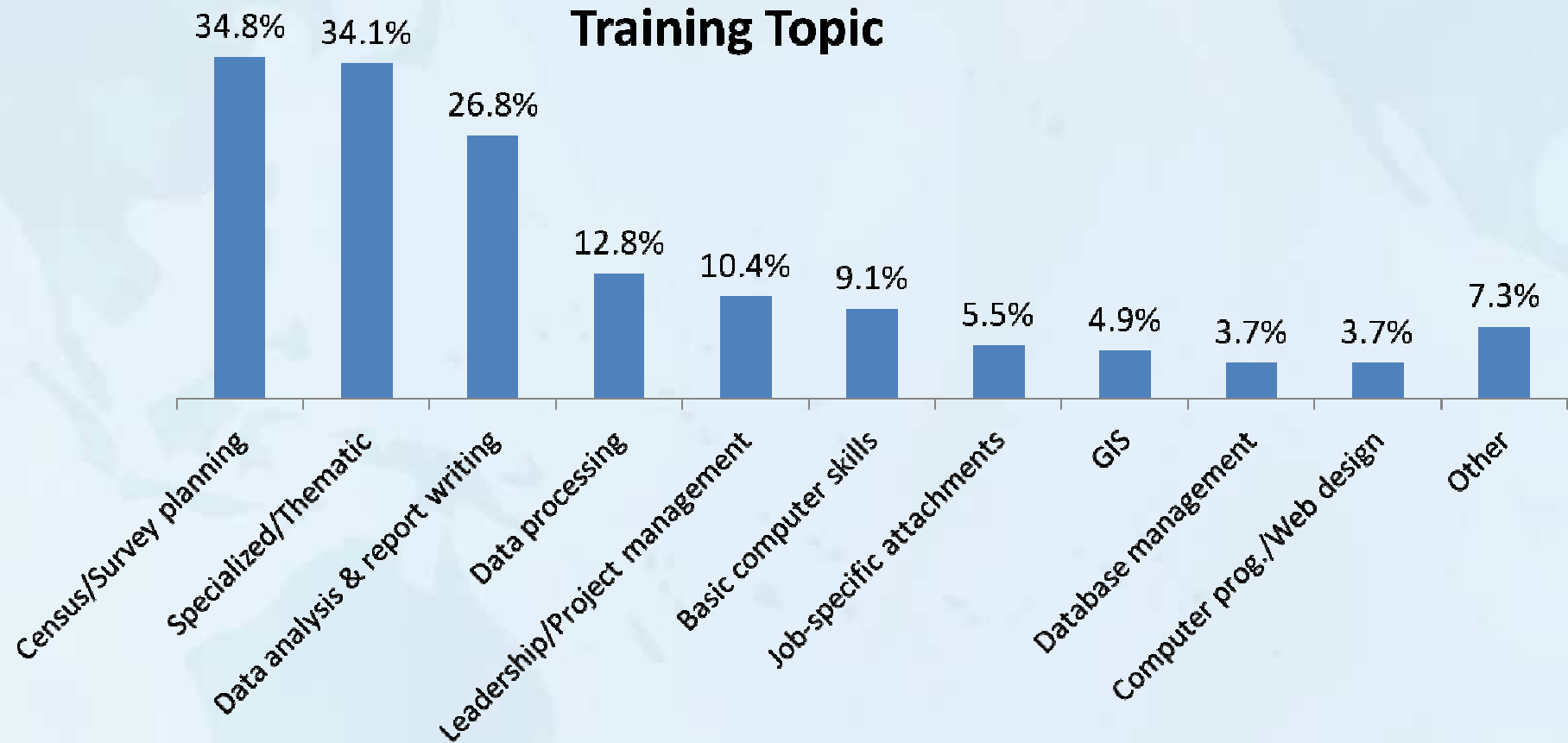
Almost three-quarters of staff (73%) had some kind of job-specific training

Percent of Respondents Who Received Job-Specific Training





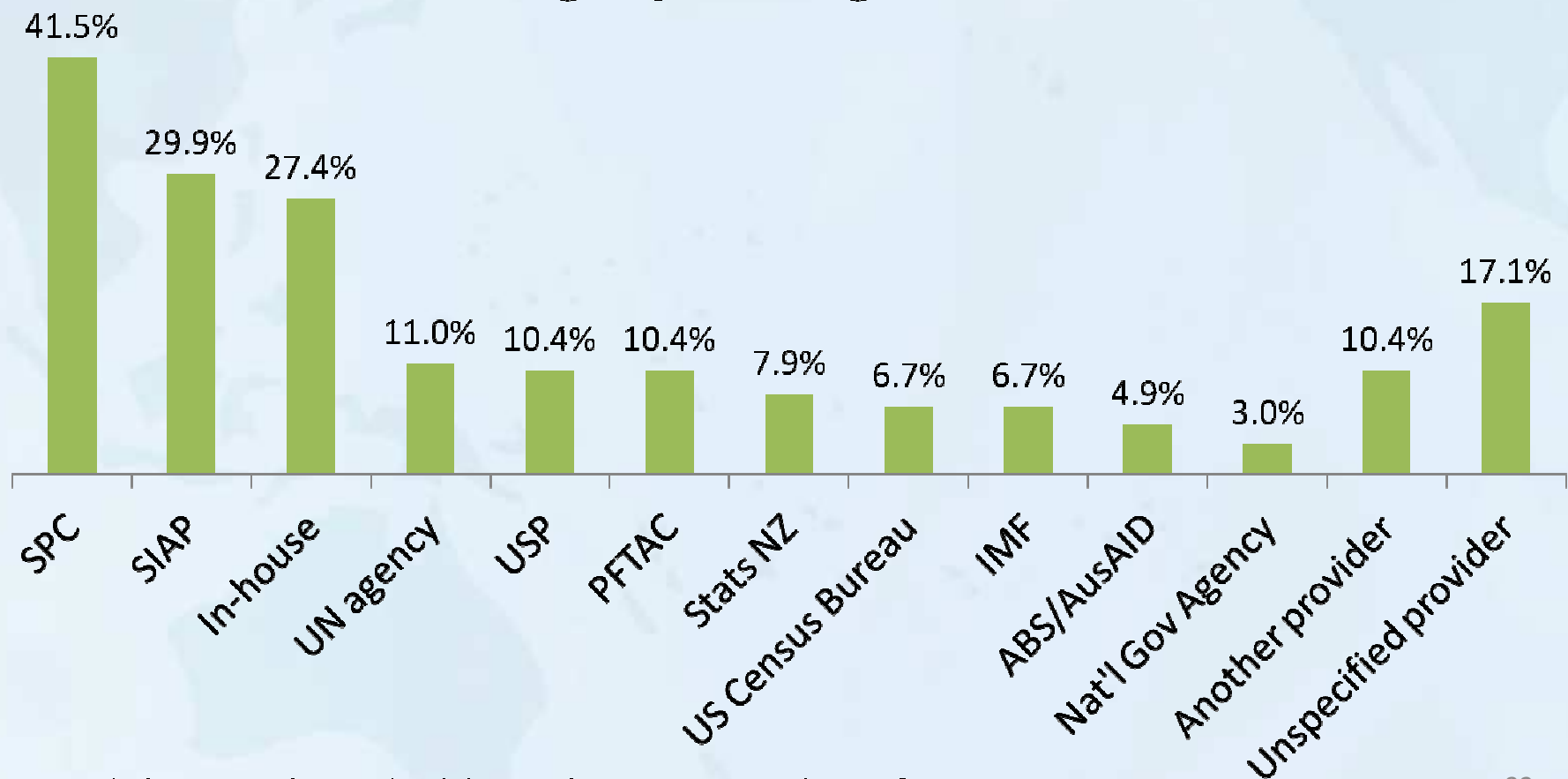
Percent of Job-Specific Trained Respondents by Training Topic



Note: Excludes respondents who did not indicate receiving job-specific training. N=164



Percent of Respondents Who Had Job-Specific Trainings by Training Provider



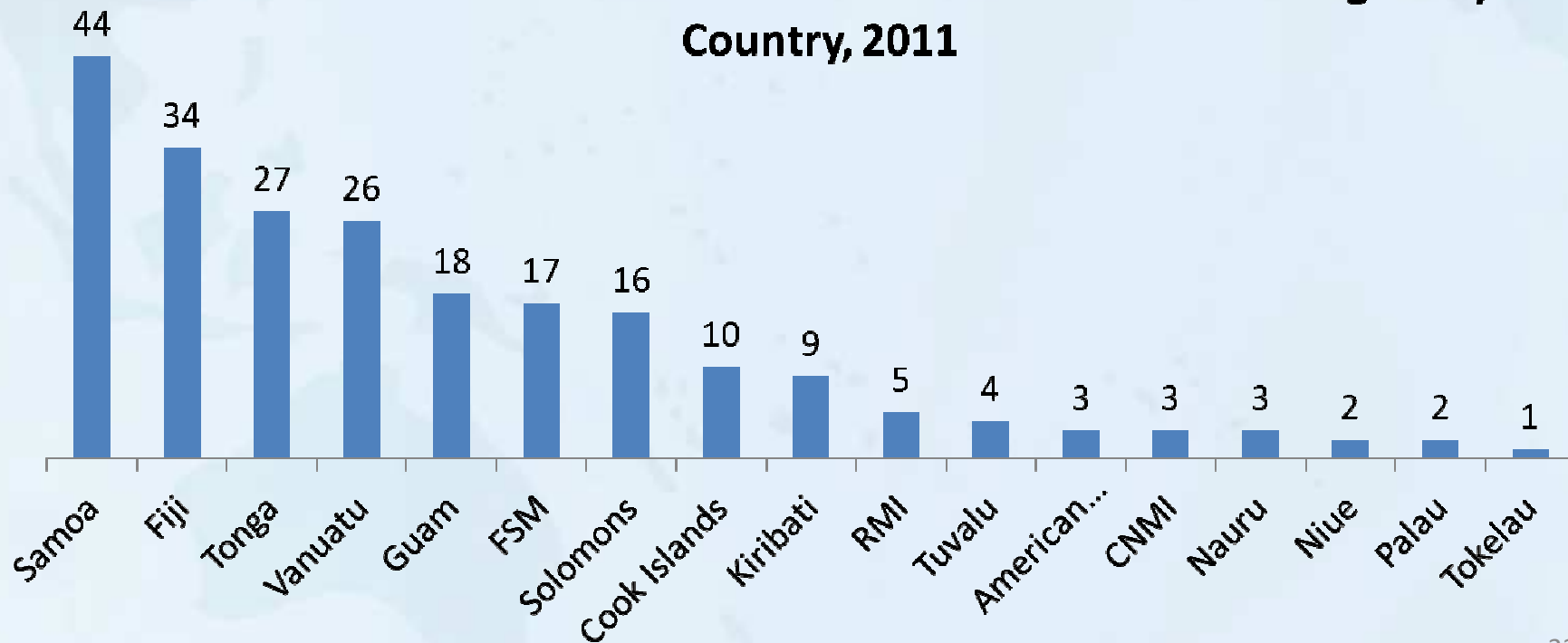
Note: Excludes respondents who did not indicate receiving job-specific training. N=164



Major challenges

- Many offices were understaffed: only 4 NSOs had a staff contingent of 25 staff or more (24%), while 8 of the 17 NSOs surveyed had less than 5 staff (47%).

Staff Numbers in National Statistical Offices in the Pacific Region by Country, 2011





Major challenges

A substantial training gap exists between current professional work undertaken by NSO staff, and formal training received in this particular field of activity.



Table 8.1: Percent of Formal Training Courses Taken by Duty Type*

Duties	Training Taken							
	Leadership/Project management	Census/Survey planning	Database management	Data analysis & report writing	Data processing	Basic computer skills	GIS	Computer prog./Web design
Managerial (<i>N=41</i>)	48.8	63.4	34.1	73.2	43.9	39.0	29.3	12.2
Demographic collection (<i>N=24</i>)	20.8	33.3	29.2	62.5	33.3	41.7	12.5	8.3
Economic collection (<i>N=39</i>)	17.9	41.0	20.5	64.1	33.3	33.3	15.4	15.4
Unspecified collection (<i>N=33</i>)	18.2	42.4	33.3	69.7	39.4	30.3	30.3	9.1
Demographic tabulation (<i>N=27</i>)	22.2	25.9	25.9	66.7	51.9	55.6	22.2	18.5
Economic tabulation (<i>N=72</i>)	19.4	36.1	22.2	54.2	36.1	33.3	12.5	8.3
Unspecified tabulation (<i>N=22</i>)	31.8	40.9	22.7	77.3	45.5	40.9	40.9	27.3
Dem. analysis & report writing (<i>N=19</i>)	15.8	26.3	10.5	63.2	47.4	31.6	21.1	21.1
Econ. analysis & report writing (<i>N=19</i>)	22.8	35.1	19.3	50.9	31.6	31.6	10.5	8.8
Unspecified analysis & report writing (<i>N=23</i>)	21.7	34.8	17.4	73.9	39.1	30.4	21.7	21.7

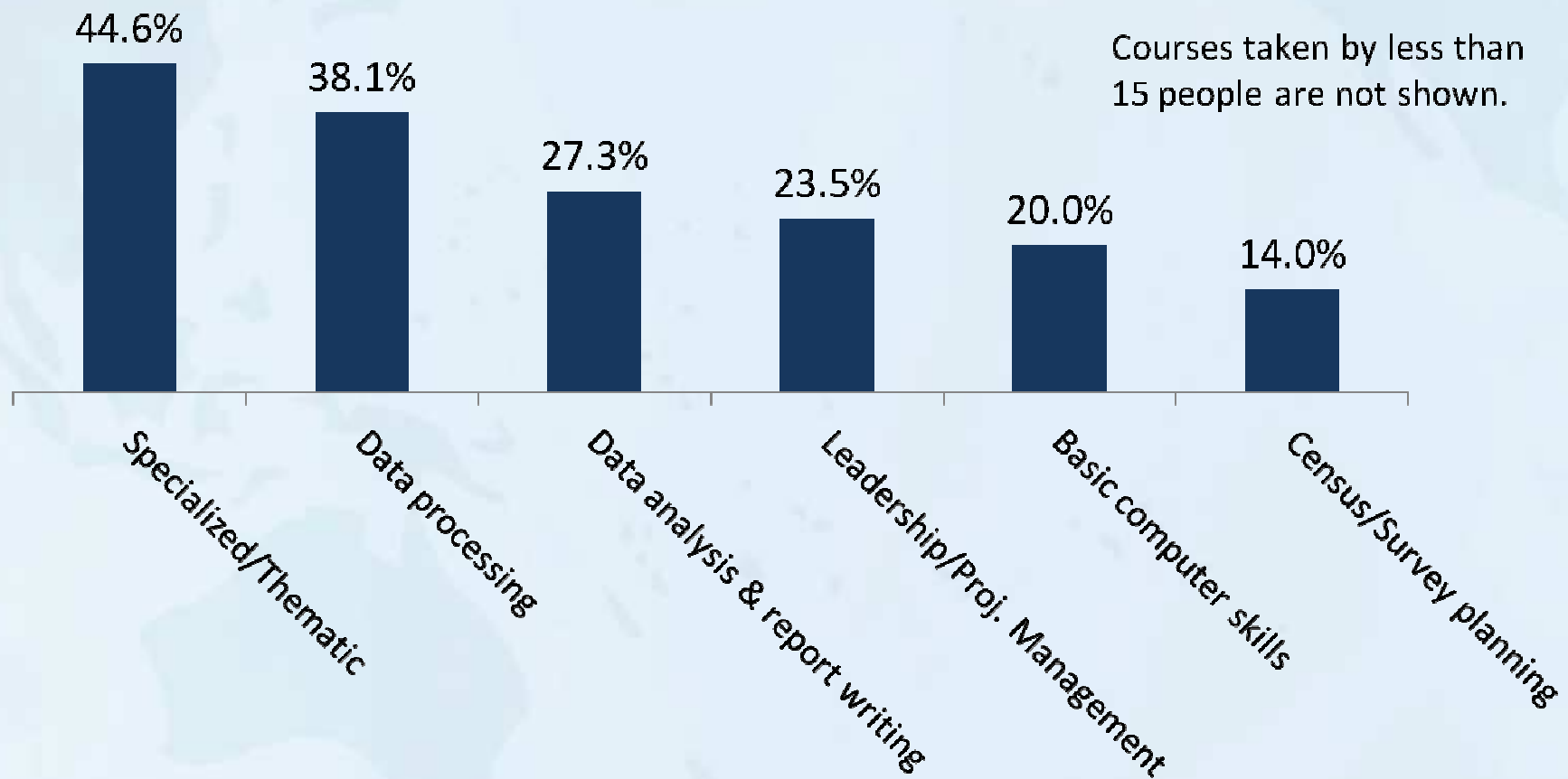


Major challenges

Only one in three staff who received job-specific training (38%) believed this training to be sufficient to do a competent job in their office.



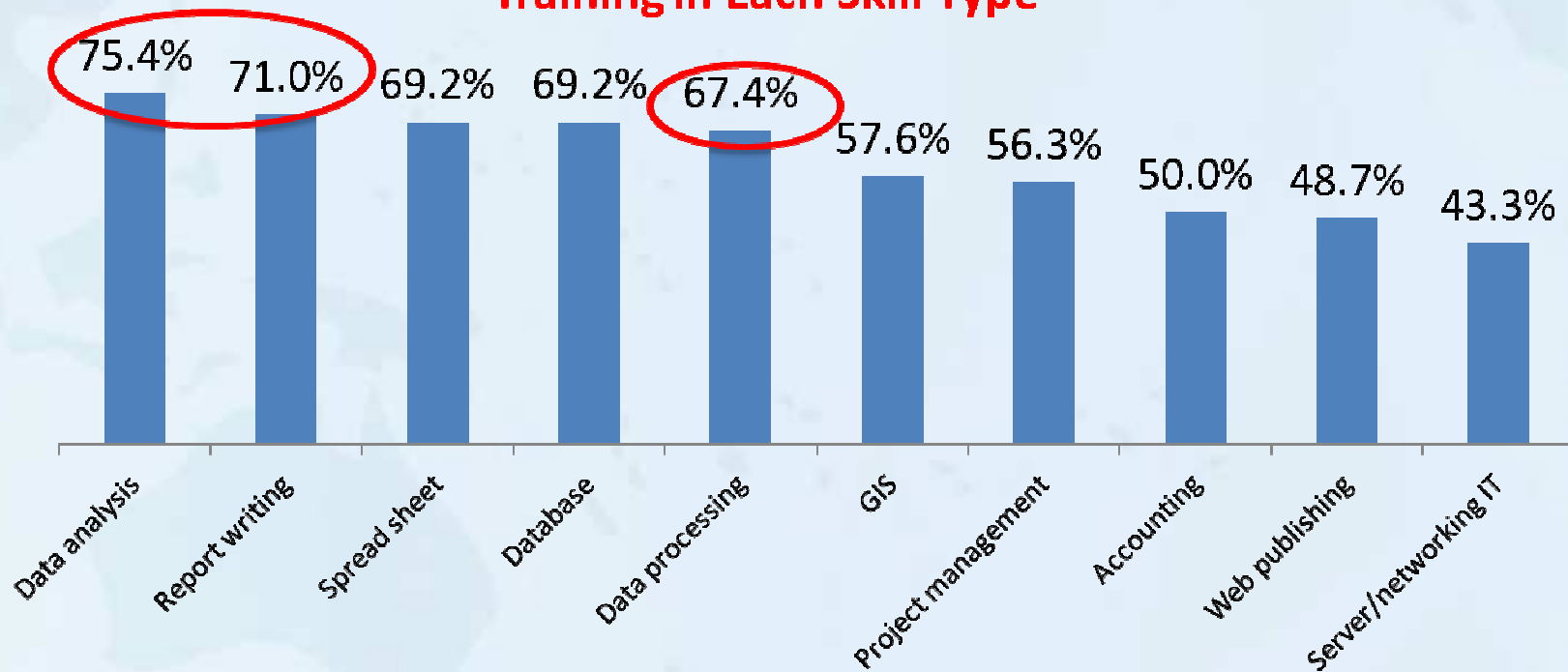
Percent Who Received Job-Specific Training and Required Further Training in **That Same Topic**





How Do We Strategically Plan and Target Our Trainings Going Forward?

Percent of Respondents Who Indicated a Need for Further Training in Each Skill Type





What needs doing

Skills audit to be administered a second time to determine:

If the training gap has increased

Which courses are in highest demand

What staff turnover looks like

In the pipeline:

TWG Training to develop a long-term **Pacific statistical training strategy**

Based on statistical capacity gaps and training needs highlighted in the skills audit, and that builds on the experience of statistical training programs/capacity building undertaken by other developing countries.



DISCUSSION?

A: **National statistical development plan dedicated to Economic Statistics:**

- What are they likely to include given these results?
What emerge as priorities?

B: Coordination of regional support: What needs to be in focus/kept in mind?

C: Relative strengths:

- Any resource countries emerging in different areas/domains?
- Any areas where it is clear that development partners need to step in [Pacific]?
- Any areas where it is clear that support is needed from beyond the subregion?



Thanks for your attention😊