

# UNFPA / Country Support Team

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Population is an integral part of sustainable development. And one of the basic principles which guides the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) states:

*"Everyone has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States should take all appropriate measures to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, universal access to health-care services, including those related to reproductive health care, which includes family planning and sexual health..."*

With UNFPA's thematic focus on reproductive health and gender issues, the UNFPA Country Support Team for the South Pacific (CST) has major role in health promotion and education, especially the education of women and girl child. The CST is a multidisciplinary team which is intended to provide timely, high quality and consistent technical support and backstopping to national and regional population programmes in the Pacific. The team approach ensures greater co-ordination and flexibility in the provision of technical assistance. The complexity of population-related problems demands that countries adopt an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to solving them. The CST embodies this approach.

The CST provides the Pacific with a wide range of high quality technical support services ranging from ad hoc advisory services to planned national and regional training programmes with the aim of developing national self reliance in the population field. Technical inputs are planned jointly by the Governments, the UNFPA Country Directors/Representatives, UN agencies, and the CST Director, with the request for technical assistance channelled through the UNFPA Country Director.

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The services could be in the broad areas of: basic data collection/processing and research in population dynamics; population policy formulation, evaluation and implementation; family planning/maternal and child health; information, education and communication; women, population and development; and sectoral and inter-sectoral programmes. Technical support services in these areas are available from CST to all ministries, national training and research institutions, NGO's etc. Where necessary, the CST will call upon the services of the Technical Support Service staff and other experts at the UN agencies' headquarters, regional offices and ESCAP.

The CST has established close working relationships with local expertise, and thereby helped to speed up the strengthening of national capacity and building up of self-reliance. In addition, the team is compiling a roster of experienced national and international consultants who may be called upon to carry out specific assignments as the need arises.

The terms of reference of the CST are to:

- Assist countries in all stages of programming and in the formulation of projects, their implementation and monitoring;

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- Identify and mobilise national and regional technical resources, e.g. regional and national NGO's, research and academic institutions, etc., for the provision of technical support services;
- Provide active support and backstopping to the in-country pool of national experts;
- Provide ad hoc advisory services, and to identify and secure specialist inputs from UN agencies' headquarters and regional offices in technical support of national programmes and projects;
- Assist Governments in developing strategies for national population programmes;
- Help provide countries with the state-of-the art substantive knowledge and skills in the various technical fields of population;
- Help in the conceptualising and development of regional/sub-regional programme approaches;

- Organise and/or conduct training activities at both regional and national levels' and;
- Play an advocacy role with regard to population issues at the regional level in terms of regional/international forums and programmes of inter-governmental bodies such as South Pacific Commission and funding agencies like the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, and help to integrate consideration of population factors into mainstream programmes and activities of UN agencies.

The CST includes:

- Stephen Chee, Director of the UNFPA CST for the South Pacific
  - Sultana Alam, Adviser on Women, Population and Development
  - William J House, Adviser on Population and Development Planning and Policy
  - Salesi F Katoanga, Adviser on Maternal Child Health and Family Planning
  - Allan K Kondo, Adviser on Population Education
  - Laurence Lewis, Adviser on Population Censuses and Surveys
  - Kandasamy Paramanathan, Adviser on Labour and Population
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