POST-2015 PACIFIC CONSULTATION

Outcome Document

I. Introduction and Background

1.   The UN Secretary General's 2012 annual report, '*Accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals: options for sustained and inclusive growth and issues for advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015*', summarized recent progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and made recommendations to advance consultations towards a Post-2015 development agenda. The outcome document adopted at Rio+20, '*The Future We Want*', also recognized the need for integrating the three pillars – economic, social and environmental – into a sustainable development framework.

2.   The Forty-Third Pacific Islands Forum, held in the Cook Islands on 28-30 August 2012, endorsed the need for countries to take urgent action to accelerate progress and get behind a "final push" to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Leaders also tasked the Forum Secretariat to collaborate with CROP and UN agencies, to work closely with Pacific Island countries to develop a Pacific Position on the post-2015 development agenda/Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to contribute effectively to the relevant global processes.

3.   In line with these decisions, UNDP, ADB and ESCAP in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Asia Pacific Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (APCoP) organised a Pacific consultation workshop on the post-2015 development agenda/SDGs. Government officials, civil society, PIPSO and development partners attended the Post-2015 Pacific Consultation representing 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs)[1].

4.   The Nadi Workshop was the second in a series of regional and sub-regional workshops and consultations on the post-2015 development agenda and the post-Rio+20 process led by the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP regional partnership. The first workshop was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan from 26 to 28 September 2012 with government representatives and other stakeholders from Central and East Asian countries. The next three consultations will be held in Colombo, Bangkok and Siem Reap. These consultations will culminate in the publication and launch of the next ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Asia Pacific Regional MDG Report (2012/13), 'The Post-2015 development agenda in Asia and the Pacific'.

II.   Current Status and Key Issues in Achieving the MDGs

a) Current Status

5.   According to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat's *2012 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report,* the region's assessment of the MDGs is not strictly made against the global targets, as the assessments are contextualised to country realities and supplemented by proxy data and qualitative information. In addition, national sources of data were preferred over the data collected and compiled at the global level by the United Nations Statistics Division.

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[1] Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshal Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

6.   The region's collective results on the MDGs are slow and uneven, with progress for individual countries demonstrating the diversity of the region and the mixed progress of the goals.

7.   Melanesia's[2] progress has been slow and uneven. Most of the region however is on track towards reducing child mortality (MDG 4), with mixed progress recorded for all the other goals. Polynesia's[3] progress is comparatively better than the other sub-regions, as it is on track to achieve four of the goals – achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and ensuring environmental sustainability. In contrast, Micronesia[4] has a mixed picture for all goals, except the poverty goal for which it is off track. The Cook Islands and Niue are the only countries on track to achieve the MDGs.

8.   In the Pacific, poverty is viewed from the perspective of hardship and lack of opportunity, in other words, "poverty of opportunity". However, one in four Pacific Islanders live below national Basic Needs Poverty Lines. The region's progress on reducing poverty/hardship is constrained by generally low economic growth, rising prices and a lack of job opportunities. The food, fuel and financial crisis has exacerbated vulnerability, and revealed gaps in social safety nets. Vanuatu has extended this concept and is adopting alternative measures of wellbeing, which takes into account access to land and other natural resources, the importance of culture and tradition as a social safety net.

9.   In relation to social development, given the characteristics of poverty in the region and the recent food, fuel and financial crisis, the vulnerability of countries and households to external shocks was highlighted. At the household and community level, evidence from sentinel site monitoring in five Pacific Island countries showed a general decline in household's food security, decreases in savings and greater difficulties in meeting daily expenditures.

10.   Even though good progress has been made towards achieving universal primary education, the quality of education and education outcomes remain a concern. Similarly, while the region is close to achieving gender parity in education, progress on gender equality is much slower. The impact of gender-based violence is a common factor that contributes to hindering progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. An estimated six in 10 Pacific women have experienced gender-based violence, some of the highest reported rates in the world, with similarly high rates of violence against children

11.   A number of countries contend that women's representation in parliament is an inadequate measure for women's empowerment, although such representation is exceedingly low in most PICs. In most countries, women are increasingly holding higher-level decision-making positions in government, as well as advancing as entrepreneurs in the private sector. Temporary special measures (including the option of reserve seats for women) to increase the representation of women in parliament are also a contentious issue.

12.   Even though most countries are making good progress towards reducing child mortality, greater attention is required for quality newborn care, prevention of stunting and to address the recent decline in the measles immunization coverage in some countries.

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[2] A grouping of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.
[3] Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, and Tuvalu.
[4] Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands

Furthermore, additional concerted effort is needed in ensuring universal access to comprehensive and integrated reproductive health, including family planning, to improve maternal health and to prevent unintended teenage pregnancies and STIs/HIV. Interventions for maternal and child health are well known in the region but need to be scaled up.

13.   In terms of combating the major diseases, general intervention strategies are in place for most countries. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria continues to be instrumental in assisting countries combat the major diseases. In the region, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in PNG is the largest and the only generalized one but the risk of rapid increase in the other PICs is high as discerned through high rates of teenage pregnancy, pervasive gender-based violence and high prevalence of non-HIV sexually transmitted infections. Malaria is endemic to only PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, while tuberculosis is a major issue for PNG and most of the Micronesian countries.

14.   Although non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are not included under MDG 6, the majority of countries have recognized the crisis facing them and included combating NCDs as an additional target. All countries in Micronesia and Polynesia, as well as Vanuatu, have localized MDG 6 to include NCDs. Even though Fiji did not localize NCDs into the achievement of MDG 6 in its latest national MDG Report, the Fiji Government recognized that NCDs is a major epidemic in the country. The majority of countries in the Pacific face difficulties in combating NCDs due to resource constraints.

15.   On environmental sustainability, assessment for most countries is constrained by data gaps. Nevertheless, there is regional solidarity towards sustainable development. In particular, the Micronesia Challenge is a success story for the conservation of marine and forest resources. In other areas, achieving energy security remains a key priority in the region, as most countries are highly dependent on imported fossil fuels. Access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is a major concern for most countries in Micronesia.

16.   The link between good governance and development effectiveness was highlighted, particularly for achieving service delivery. A number of countries have integrated the MDGs into their national and sectoral development strategies. A concerted effort is required to monitor the progress of these strategies, as well as in linking the budget preparation process with the targets and the indicators that are lagging behind. All countries allocate the bulk of their budget to the social sectors i.e. health and education, although for many countries this has not automatically translated into results and MDG achievement. This highlights the need to better utilize existing resources. The importance of effective capacity development in strengthening country systems and the need for better aid coordination was also stated.

b) Key issues

17.   It was felt that existing macroeconomic policies are not succeeding as enablers to finance MDG achievement and therefore in the future closer attention needs to be paid to the national context, priorities and available data.

18.   For most countries in the region, tracking progress against the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) indicator is difficult – as MMR per 100,000 live births can be misleading for countries with populations less than 250,000 as the statistical impact of an individual event has a magnified effect. However, there are smart statistical approaches that are available for addressing this challenge through annualizing data of small countries over several years.

Furthermore, using the alternative indicator of Skilled Birth Attendants (SBA) during delivery shows that those countries with the lowest SBA rates (Papua New Guinea, Kiribati and Solomon Islands) are also those with the highest estimated maternal mortality rates, confirming the need to continue investing in and strengthening maternal health.

19.   Although the region receives large inflows of aid, there is need for better access to markets for countries' exports.   Dependence on official development assistance is much higher in Micronesia, compared to other sub-regions.   FSM, RMI and Palau are heavily dependent on the *Compact of Free Association* grants from the US.

20.   Reflecting the changing context since the development of the MDGs, migration was raised as both something that is assisting in the achievement of the MDGs in countries receiving high rates of remittances, whilst the 'brain drain' is negatively affecting attaining the MDGs in other countries.

21.   In addition, the impact of the global financial crisis has impeded countries' progress towards the MDGs.

22.   Climate change is an issue that has the potential to deter progress on all goals. Most countries are already feeling the adverse impacts of climate change. There is consensus that climate change is a key priority for Pacific Countries going forward.

23.   Countries called for greater availability, accessibility and utilization of quality data in order to better monitor their progress towards global and national development goals and to inform ongoing policy decisions. This should include the ability to disaggregate data by sex, age, geographic area and disadvantaged groups to ensure inclusive reporting on identified priority issues related to gender, youth and poverty. They acknowledged that significant improvements have been made in national and regional data collection and availability, but that ongoing technical and funding support is required especially for improvements in routine administrative systems, for example in health and education, supported by timely surveys.

III. MDG Acceleration Efforts

24.   The region recognizes that with 3 years remaining to the 2015 deadline, there is an urgent need for a more concerted effort to accelerate progress. The lessons learned are that stakeholders are aware of the general intervention strategies to achieve the relevant MDGs. For example, macroeconomic stability, targeting pro-poor economic growth, creating jobs, access to microfinance and improving social safety nets are key components for reducing poverty.   There are also opportunities that could be further enhanced, such as South-South cooperation and labor mobility within the region.

25.   Governments, with the support of development partners, CSOs and the private sector, need to build upon, sustain or scale up relevant intervention strategies, as well as pursue innovative approaches to accelerate progress towards the MDGs. The catalyst for progress is strong political leadership and resolve. It is easier for progress to happen when Leaders strongly commit to and prioritize the achievement of the MDGs in their national/sector plans.

26.   In 2009, in response to concerns that the region was off-track to achieve the MDGs despite high levels of development assistance, Forum Leaders agreed to the *Cairns Compact*

on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific (now known as the *Forum Compact*). The key objective of the *Forum Compact* is to improve the coordination and use of available development resources with the aim of achieving improved progress against national development goals as well as the MDGs.

27. Recognizing the different stages of development among Pacific countries, much of the work of the *Compact* has focused on knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer learning (Peer Reviews). These are a vehicle for Pacific countries to learn from each other's successes and strengths in advancing national planning, public financial management and aid effectiveness. It has also encouraged development partners to self-reflect and report on the extent that they meet international commitments on development financing and good practice.

28. The *Compact* also provides an opportunity for private sector representatives to engage directly with Pacific Leaders on issues such as private sector financing and more inclusive dialogue in national priority setting, and the Dialogue now is an annual feature of the Forum Leaders meeting. The civil society community, particularly the various NGOs and faith-based organizations, are also recognized for their contributions to development outcomes. Given the limited resources of governments, these organizations fill an important gap in reaching poor, vulnerable and marginalized communities.

29. Forum Leaders' commitment to the achievement of the MDGs was further strengthened in 2010 in the *Port Vila Declaration on Accelerating Progress on the Achievement of the MDGs*. Countries committed to mainstream the MDGs into their national plans and to write national MDG tracking reports, which most countries have achieved.

30. At the same time, it is recognized that there is no single solution to accelerating progress towards the MDGs. Countries are at different stages of progress towards achieving the MDGs. While there are many common challenges (e.g. governance and development effectiveness issues), they differ in degree between countries. At the same time, there are some challenges that are specific to individual or small groups of countries. Thus, each country should continue to develop its own targeted responses.

31. Currently, countries across the Pacific are working on MDG acceleration as part of national, regional and global frameworks and partnerships. All PICs have signed on to accelerating reductions in child mortality as part of a 'Promise Renewed: Committing to Child Survival' and to 'Zero New HIV infections' as part of 'Getting to Zero' by 2015.

32. The most promising acceleration strategy to reduce poverty and vulnerability is Social Protection, usually in the form of predictable direct transfers to individuals and households and universal and fee free access to services. A new study (Michael Sampson, AusAid, 2012) illustrates the potential impact of social grants on poverty in the Pacific, showing that if countries introduced a universal cash grant targeted at children under 5, the proportion of households living in poverty would be reduced by approximately 10%. Such a scheme would be relatively affordable with an estimated cost of 0.7% to 1.7% of GDP.

33. Political and financial commitment to Sexual and Reproductive Health has improved but more needs to be done. A *Regional Pacific Policy Framework for Achieving Universal Access to Reproductive Health* was endorsed by Ministers of Health in 2008 and operationalized by governments: reproductive health policies and strategies are in place in

nine PICs to date. Implementation and close monitoring of these national strategies, which are aimed at addressing MDG 5a and b, is required.

34.   Five countries in the Pacific are undertaking the UNDP MDG Acceleration Framework strategy – PNG to tackle maternal mortality, Tuvalu to improve education outcomes; Vanuatu for sexual and reproductive health, Samoa to address gender equality and Tonga to combat NCDs.

35.   The *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration* made in Rarotonga in August 2012 committed governments to accelerating gender equality through 1) Gender responsive government programs and policies, 2) Decision-making, 3) Economic empowerment 4) Ending violence against women and 5) Health and education.

36.   In the education sector, Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPs) have brought together government development partners to reduce barriers to universal primary education with a focus on 'fee-free education'. In Vanuatu this has been achieved through an ambitious school-grants program.

IV. International and Regional Processes

37.   Global discussion on the post-2015 development agenda began after the UN MDG Summit in 2010 and gathered pace in the second half of 2011. Currently, there are several different models being considered for the post-2015 agenda at the international level including the SDGs (Rio+20).

38.   The international processes recognize the important role of regional and national consultations in developing regional and national perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda. At the national level it is important that not just members of national government are considered stakeholders, but also members of local governments, civil society organizations, private enterprises, and households, including person who represent the vulnerable groups in society. To ensure these national perspectives can feed into and impact the global process, regional organizations and commissions were requested, by the Rio+20 conference, to compile national perspectives and to hold regional implementation meetings to help form regional strategies.

39.   In this process, the Pacific countries are included in the Asia-Pacific region. To ensure the special needs and priorities of Pacific countries are reflected in the post-2015 development agenda, it is important that Pacific countries work together to ensure a united and distinctive 'Pacific voice' is present at regional and global post-2015 development agenda processes. In this regard, a clear link between planned meetings and activities should be made with how they can fit into this process.

40.   The *Pacific Plan Review* is an important opportunity for highlighting the Pacific priorities for consideration in the post-2015 development agenda. In addition, the International Conference for SIDS, to be hosted by Samoa in 2014, is also a platform for developing key issues to be incorporated into the post-2015 agenda.

V. The Emerging Pacific Perspective

41.   The post-2015 agenda is a time for reflection to determine what the region wants from internationally recognised development goals. Certain values, principles and concepts were highlighted as particularly important within Pacific culture, namely "caring and sharing for each other and for the environment". There was consensus that participants wanted these values to be incorporated into the spirit of the goals.

42.   It is important that the region develops a united and distinctive 'Pacific voice', for pushing shared development issues internationally. Throughout the consultation, representatives of PICs made it clear that working with and in support of one another, despite of MDG achievement levels, are vital and important.

43.   The development challenges faced within the Pacific are diverse and complex, and not always universal. Thus, although a country-specific issue may not be incorporated into the 'Pacific voice' there is no reason that individual countries voices cannot also be included in the post-2015 agenda.

44.   There are a number of development issues and priorities that are key to the future we want in the Pacific, including recognising the vulnerability of SIDS, climate change, the protection of oceans, NCDs and youth unemployment. Participants of the 'Post-2015 Pacific Consultation' expressed that it is important that these issues are recognized at all levels, global, regional and national. While at the same time keeping in mind existing global and regional commitments, such as the *Pacific Plan*, the *Mauritius Strategy, the Busan Plan of Action, the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, International Conference on Population and Development* amongst others.

45.   All sub-regions of the Pacific agreed that maintaining the MDGs framework and goals are important after 2015, particularly as they have been integrated into both regional and national development plans and budgets. The MDGs have provided a means to monitor progress and obtain resources, which has led to real development gains in the Pacific.

46.   Where there is a need for the inclusion of additional priorities, countries need to be given time to develop positions through national and existing regional and sub-regional mechanisms. After such consultations, identification of the specific aspects to be lifted up into the global post-2015 framework will be completed. Nevertheless, countries did identify, at a sub-regional level, the possible priority areas for the Pacific.

47.   The benefit of having global targets was discussed by many partners, with mixed views expressed. There were two main positions; firstly that international goals are important for creating political will and for resolving trans boundary issues, while others argued that the focus should be at the regional and national level because of the unique context of the Pacific Islands. One of the lessons of the MDGs in the Pacific was that the application of global goals needed to be contextualised to country contexts, including targets and indicators.

48.   While the MDGs recognised the special case of SIDS, it was more focussed on aid flows. There was consensus over the need to push the agenda of SIDS in the post-2015 agenda and particularly to highlight their unique features and vulnerability, as per the *Barbados Programme of Action*, as well as the importance of protecting the world's oceans.

49.   The context has changed since the MDGs were designed, including and amongst others the increasing concern and awareness of climate change. Climate change is one of the biggest threats to development in the Pacific, as recognized at the 2012 Pacific Islands Forum and was unanimously agreed upon amongst participants.

50.   The Pacific region should 'think outside the box' on key issues to be able to better address development priorities and to maximise development partnerships under MDG 8. The *Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination* was highlighted as an important undertaking to improve development effectiveness. The promotion of inter-regional solutions was also emphasized, especially under South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

51.   In the process of developing global targets, there is a need to consider how these can meet the specific needs of individual countries, how global targets can be incorporated quickly and efficiently into national planning processes, and a clear recognition of the importance of financing, including ODA, for achieving these goals. Considering strategies for achieving goals, as opposed to just setting goals, can minimize the time lag between the adoption of global targets and national implementation.

52.   There was a call by participants to ensure that the post-2015 agenda and its outcome can be transformed so to be understood and utilised by citizens of PICs for their benefit.

a) The monitoring framework

53.   The post-2015 agenda must hold all countries, including developed countries, accountable for agreed upon global priorities, which may require different goals, targets and indicators globally, regionally or nationally. For example, climate change is a priority; goals and targets for some regions may relate primarily to mitigating contributions to global warming and climate change, while for the Pacific the focus is on goals related to adaptation and protection of vulnerable populations. The monitoring framework needs to reflect these distinctions.

54.   There is a need to select and integrate indicators relevant to development priorities to which countries have already committed, using existing global and regional monitoring frameworks. For example: integrating indicators from the UN Climate Change Convention Conference on Parties Monitoring Framework, Sustainable Energy for All

55.   Global development goals should be based on national priorities and thus the associated monitoring framework under the post-2015 agenda should include relevant development indicators from national frameworks for which data is already being collected.

56.   While providing global benchmarks for which countries are accountable, there should be sufficient flexibility to adapt goal and outcome indicators, benchmarks and targets to the local context.
   - For example, in the case of the current MDG education target, enrolment figures do not adequately capture the quality of education or children's acquisition of skills and knowledge.
   - Reporting against indicators should focus on long-term trends rather than annual values, given the instability of indicators measured annually in small populations.

- Relative benchmarks and targets should be incorporated rather than fixed absolute benchmarks and targets to facilitate relevant monitoring of progress for countries with different pace of development and different initial starting points.

57.   Priorities should be included in the post-2015 agenda that are either not or inadequately included in the current MDGs: poverty of opportunity (MDG 1), quality of education (MDG 2), gender based violence (MDG 3), NCDs (MDG 6), climate change and oceans (MDG 7), SIDS vulnerabilities (MDG 8) etc. Consideration should be given to qualitative indicators related to well-being, including customary land ownership for some countries with rural populations.

58.   The monitoring framework, along with the post-2015 agenda, should reflect human rights based approach with reporting disaggregated by sex, age, sub-national geographic areas and special groups to adequately monitor progress for the disadvantaged, disabled and poor, rather than aggregate averages.

59.   Setting baselines and benchmarks especially for continuing MDGs should be revaluated for the post 2015 development agenda, as there have been significant improvements in the data availability since the MDGs inception.

60.   To adequately monitor national development progress, data availability and accessibility needs to be further improved through strengthening routine collection of data vis à vis national administrative processes/ reporting systems (e.g. education and health sectors) supported by relevant and timely surveys in order to capture progress inclusive of civil society.

61.   While there were extensive calls for better data, there was little discussion on the collation and availability of data. For many indicators, countries often have more data than is readily accessible for planning, decision-making and measuring progress. Data availability should be addressed through mechanisms such as the National Minimum Development Indicators Database and National Minimum Environmental Indicators and by ensuring linkage at the national level with national development plans.

b) Strategies

62.   It was suggested by most countries that concrete strategies are required to achieve the targets of the post-2015 development agenda. Such strategies should reflect Pacific priorities, and should also take into account efforts devoted to achieve goals committed in other relevant global, regional, and national frameworks.

63.   There is no one-size-fits-all strategy that would work for all Pacific countries. Therefore strategies to achieve post-2015 development goals should build on the experiences in achieving MDGs, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvements as evidenced through country experiences in the past few years.

64.   Such strategies will involve decision making about trade-offs that are not always politically popular, and they will need to be made in a very constrained policy space. Therefore there is a growing need for innovative plans designed to achieve the new development goals.

65.   The Melanesian countries proposed a strategic plan for achieving good governance, which included civic education, strengthening law and order, accountability and transparency, disaster risk reduction and disaster management. They also saw an improvement in basic services as an important cross-sectoral strategy for improving development results.

66.   The Micronesian countries presented two core strategies for incorporation into the SDGs, educating leaders and policy makers on international goals and human rights, and secondly to incorporate the MDGs into the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit Strategies.

67.   The Polynesian countries presented a four pillar strategy which included (a) Social: youth development, ageing population, labour migration, de-population, employment, NCDs and social safety nets, Gender Equality, Human Rights (b) Economic Growth: energy security, trade and investment, fiscal monetary and macroeconomic policies among others(some of these may not be applicable to PIC's; (c) Environment: climate change, renewable energy, ocean protection and fishing, deep sea mining, land issues, disaster risk management and waste management; (d) Governance: country specific processes, monitoring and evaluation, quantifiable data,   reporting, lack of resources, statistics and non-state actors.

68.   Common among the presentations included a human-rights based approach to development and the importance of peace and security. Given the broadening of the concept of development, the somewhat narrow approach of MDGs is problematic. One of the weaknesses of the MDGs is the absence of peace, security, human rights and justice. The 2000 Millennium Declaration, which set the foundation for the MDGs, emphasises fundamental values, such as the freedom from fear of violence, oppression or injustice and equality. The Declaration also emphasises peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; human rights, democracy and good governance; and protecting the vulnerable.

69.   Building capacity was highlighted as an important area to improve development outcomes. Improving trade opportunities and including labour mobility were also discussed as important strategies for development. Furthermore, green growth has been recognised by the Pacific as an important strategy for incorporating environmental objectives into sustainable development goals and to be mainstreamed into national development agendas and integrated into planning, budgeting and implementation processes. Progress needs to be monitorable through relevant and timely data to enable effective evaluation for policymakers.

c) Key sectors and thematic issues raised
70.   The meeting agreed that the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development, along with governance, peace and security should be seen in a holistic and integrated approach. The pillars are strongly related and policy interventions with an aim to achieve the post-2015 outcomes should focus on these inter linkages for maximum impact

71.   Polynesia as a region agreed that the future they want is one of peace and security, sustainability and resilience. Notably, the kind of national targets and goals that they see as vital include; renewable energy, security, a sustainable economy, climate change adaptation,

governance, law and order, development, ecological sustainability, human resource development, an improvement in education and economic resilience.

72.   The future that Melanesian participants agreed upon was corruption free, environmentally sustainable and climate resilient, green growth poverty free, has access to affordable energy, and a peaceful and empowered Pacific region which includes participation by non-state actors along with good governance, and inclusion of all vulnerable groups.

73.   The key issues for Micronesia were closely related to the priorities put forward by Melanesia and Polynesia. As such, climate change was identified as the most significant priority for the sub-region, alongside maintaining traditions, building resilience, and inclusion and protection of the vulnerable. The Micronesian representatives felt that NCDs and violence against women and children were the two priority areas that should be incorporated into the MDG framework post-2015.

74.   Continued support from donor and technical partners was requested by all sub-regions, particularly to enhance capacity development and to provide support according to national objectives and priorities. A need for an increased level of collaboration between CROP agencies and UN agencies was highlighted Additionally, there was a request for continued support and for the sharing of previous experiences by other regional organizations (outside of the Pacific), which can be adapted to the Pacific context to take on-board lessons learnt through experience from other regions.

Social
75.   Social protection should be included in the post-2015 development agenda. As PICs are highly dependent on imported food and fuel, and exposed to high prices, increased attention to most vulnerable is essential (Fiji). Social safety nets are a priority for social sector and integral to economic growth and poverty alleviation (Polynesia and Melanesia).

76.   The Social Protection Floor (SPF) is a global social policy approach promoting integrated strategies for ensuring access to essential social services and income security for all. The SPF is the first level of social protection in a national social protection system, guaranteeing: (a) universal access to essential services such as health, education, housing, water and sanitation and other services, as nationally defined; and (b) social transfers in cash or in kind, to guarantee income security, food security, adequate nutrition, and access to essential services.

77.   Adequate safety nets are crucial for protecting the population from economic and natural shocks that this region frequently faces. It ensures that a basic set of opportunities are provided to all, and the most vulnerable segment of the population are protected.

78.   In addition to the plea from countries to continue to provide equitable access to basic quality education and health services, NGOs collectively submitted a request through their "*Pacific Commitment to Action for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights*" to ensure that further commitment is placed to achieving universal access to comprehensive and integrated sexual and reproductive health services, particularly in the areas of education, advocacy, services and commodities, within the post 2015 agenda. They recognized the need to ensure gender equity and women's empowerment as well as freedom from violence in the post-2015 agenda.

79.   The changing demography in the Pacific will lead to an increased percentage of elderly and a rising rate of disability. With ageing populations there is a risk of increased poverty at the individual and household level and rising health expenditures for families and governments. Universal old age pensions, health coverage, insurance and cash transfers to poor households can supplement the traditional Pacific way of caring for our people. Thus there was a call for intergenerational support in of older people for the fair "care economy" and social protection.

80.   The ageing population in the Pacific should be utilised effectively for sharing their experience and knowledge. Healthy and productive ageing could contribute to countries reaping greater benefits from the 'demographic bonus'.

81.   Youth is an important demographic group whose importance will continue to grow in the post-2015 scenarios. It will be critical to ensure that Pacific youth and young people are healthy and well educated. Their engagement as productive citizens is essential to realising the "demographic bonus" and requires sufficient and suitable employment opportunities. Youth employment will provide development dividends to contribute to the achievement of new development goals. The post-2015 development agenda should have space set aside for youth participation, add a youth focus to existing development objectives, and include specific youth targets, particularly for employment.

82.   The recent Forum Disability Ministers meeting outcomes called for disability inclusive development targets and indicators to be included in the post-2015 agenda. This is in recognition of the one million people in the Pacific with disabilities. The Pacific as a region has been quite successful at taking action on disability-related issues, the region should continue to do so and be recognized for this at the international level. This is an issue that was raised by both government and CSO representatives.

83.   The Pacific Island Forum Gender Equality Declarations highlights the importance of gender equality in the Pacific. While gender equality is included in the current MDGs, there are gaps, for example, gender based violence and women's engagement in the private sector. There was consensus amongst participants that maintaining a gender equality goal was important

84.   The prevalence of NCDs, and the premature deaths and disabilities resulting from NCDs, represents a critical challenge for the Pacific islands. The current health crisis should be recognized at the highest level and acted upon, with emphasis on both proven interventions and preventative measures. Similarly, the related issue of stunting in children is an issue within PICs, children need to be well nourished and have access to early childhood care and education to help in developing their capacities.

Environment
85.   Environment targets must be contextualized. In addition to global targets there must be room for regional and sub-regional, and national targets with allowance for the special nature of SIDS.

86.   There are numerous environmental goals and mechanisms already in place at the international level that should be incorporated into the post 2015 agenda.

87.   Environmental challenges cannot be solved at just one level. The fundamental notion of shared ownership of and responsibility for environmental action involving all stakeholders – government, civil society, private sector, individual citizens - must be promoted. Serious attention should be given to building capacity of all stakeholders to understand the environmental issues and its linkages to sector activities.

88.   Pacific island countries should use climate change funds effectively and tie it to infrastructure development and other adaption activities that can help achieve the post-2015 goals.

89.   The Pacific Ocean provides the countries in this region with enormous opportunities. These prospects provided by the marine and oceanic resources of the ocean could be sustainably used; using green economic policies, to meet social and economic goals. The protection, preservation, management and development of oceans should be included in the post-2015 agenda.

90.   Achieving energy security is and will be increasingly important for PICs. For this to occur policy instruments for sustainable energy production need to be implemented, access to energy needs to increase (particularly in Melanesia), fuel supply arrangements and energy efficiency need to be improved

Economics (including macroeconomic policies)

91.   Integrated analysis of the economic, environmental and social spheres of development is necessary to holistically understand society and the issues it faces; especially in terms of urbanization, migration, the use of natural capital, women's empowerment and poverty reduction.

92.   Labour mobility has the potential to provide benefits to both receiving and sending countries. They also expand economic and social opportunities available to Pacific island citizens, and make the Pacific an interconnected region. Thus labour mobility should be further considered for inclusion into the post-2015 agenda.

93.   Migration and its subsequent 'brain drain', and the related issues of capacity development were highlighted by PICs as areas of concern. Migration is significantly affecting population demographics in home countries; with huge consequence of brain-drain but at the same time it provides an avenue for increased levels of remittances. Efforts towards capacity development are offset by a lack of capacity retention. Thus, whilst capacity development continues to be required, governments and employers must take measures towards better retention throughout the region particularly in areas of basic service delivery.

94.   Prudent macroeconomic management for macroeconomic stability is important for achieving post-2015 goals, looking not only at traditional fiscal and monetary tools but also at national strategies and the ability to link national planning and budgets. The structure of growth is as important as the rate of growth, and private sector development is an important part of economic growth and employment, along with structural policies such as land reforms.

95.   The development of better partnerships with the private sector was highlighted as a way to increase economic growth and improve development results.

96. The current system of international trade disadvantages SIDS, consequently there were calls for donor partners and the global north to alter the status-quo, so as to ensure the effects of globalisation are beneficial for all, which mirrors the themes of the *Millennium Declaration.*

97. The Pacific as a region is net-importers of energy, which impinges on all other sectors. A strategy needs to be developed to secure energy more efficiently in the future.

Governance and the effective delivery of services
98. Experience in the Pacific has shown that policy implementation capacity is often weak therefore a post-2015 strategy should look into strengthening policy implementation capacities of government in the region.

99. Peace, security and rule of law underpin all aspects of a society. These should be seen as prerequisites for development and included in the post-2015 development agenda.

100. Good Governance provides the fundamental basis for the effective delivery of services on the ground. Governments with sound governance structures will be able to maximize the benefits that the MDGs and the post-2015 agenda have to offer its citizens. A key element of a good governance structure is the role of the public sector management system where the components of planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation must work in a focused manner to deliver on national objectives.

101. Currently as per estimates from the Pacific Island Forum, up to 75 percent of ODA falls outside the direct purview of country systems and thus is largely donor driven. This does not ensure sustainability or strengthening of country systems, and a representative questioned how PICs were going to be able to become sustainable whilst having such a reliance on ODA.

102. Aid fragmentation and lack of coordination amongst donors has exacerbated the problems making aid management more complex and costly for countries in the Pacific. Experience in implementing the MDGs has highlighted challenges of mainstreaming MDGs into national objectives; ensuring that planning process is inclusive and cascades MDG outcomes into actionable items; allocating sufficient resources through the budgetary process to the MDG targets; building implementation capacity to deliver resources on the ground; and undertaking monitoring and evaluation to provide reliable and timely information on achievement of targets.

103. It is crucial that public sector reform agenda and associated capacity development be innovative and driven by an assertive Pacific leadership. Together with strong partnerships with other development players, this should ensure that proposed outcomes are; nationally owned and primarily home-grown with a clear understanding of the deliverables to be achieved. Donor support must be aligned to national priorities.
- Formulated using a bottom-up approach involving all stakeholders including voluntary institutions, and academia at all levels. Outcomes should ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for all citizens.
- Tailored to the local socio-economic context and demonstrate pragmatic improvisation to make services work. Where necessary the appropriate human resource gaps, the policy environment deficiencies and the weaknesses in processes must be appropriately addressed.

- Mainstreamed into the country's public sector management system to ensure the outcomes are sustained, financially (with adequate resources, timely released), and administratively (with bureaucratic commitment sustained by champions of reform).
- Implemented, monitored and evaluated with realistic and well-defined targets and goals, that is evolutionary in nature, learning from first-hand and others' experiences.
- Supported by the international community through mutual accountability agreements , with efficient, harmonized and predictable support that ensures sustainability through strengthened country public sector management systems

VI. Concluding Observations

104.   The consultation highlighted the need for all stakeholders to work together effectively and to build strong partnerships. This included between UN and CROP agencies so that there is no overlap in the process towards a post-2015 agenda. Additionally, between development partners to protect and improve on development outcomes.

105.   National level consultations will be vital for ensuring that the post-2015 agenda reflects the issues, challenges and values of PICs. They are particularly important for determining what has and has not worked to date. Furthermore, collation, disaggregation and usage of quality data at the national level to inform policies and for identifying key issues and concerns was considered vital by participants.

106.   The uniqueness of the Pacific needs to be recognized at the international level. For this to be achieved, a common and united voice needs to be agreed upon within future consultations and later reflected at the international level for inclusion as the united and distinctive "Pacific Voice" in the post-2015 agenda. Despite the importance of a regional position, the diversity of challenges faced by PICs is should also be recognized. Thus, the regional position in no way supersedes or replaces the potential for individual country positions to be voiced and negotiated in post-2015 agenda.

107.   The particular vulnerabilities of SIDS are a significant issue for PICs and this will be an important component in the Pacific Perspective going forward. Among the main issues that were raised by participants throughout the consultation were climate change, NCDs and youth unemployment.

108.   There is a need for the Pacific region to improve on service delivery so as to achieve the future they want, particularly for the most vulnerable groups within society, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, minorities and youth.