

Pacific Health Information Network

Strengthening Health Information Systems and Digital Health

INFORMATION DOCUMENT: 2.2 Healthy Islands for the Pacific

1. BACKGROUND

In 1995, the Pacific Health Ministers declared the Healthy Islands vision in the Yanuca Island Declaration. Healthy Islands are envisioned as:

- Children are nurtured in body and mind,
- Environment invite learning and leisure,
- People work and age with dignity,
- Ecological balance is a source of pride, and
- The ocean which sustains us is protected.

Twenty years after its declaration, [a review](#) of the Healthy Islands vision revealed that it remains the unifying theme to guide health development in the Pacific but its implementation has been slowed given the lack of a accountability framework. During the [11th Pacific Health Ministers Meeting](#) (PHMM) in 2015, it was agreed that a governance and accountability framework based on country plans and indicators is needed to monitor progress and report actions towards the Healthy Islands vision. Moreover, the PHMM mechanism could be leveraged to hold Pacific island countries and areas (PICs) accountable.

2. ACTION TAKEN

Development of Framework

Pacific health ministers were tasked to lead development of an accountability framework that would monitor the implementation of the Healthy Islands vision, with the support of development partners. Using the Sustainable Development Goals indicators and targets as the backdrop, technical experts revised and refined the framework over the course of the next two years. The final Healthy Islands Monitoring Framework (HIMF) consists of 48 core indicators that span four pillars corresponding to the Healthy Islands visions:

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1. Strong leadership, governance and accountability.
2. Avoidable diseases and premature deaths are reduced.
3. Children are nurtured in body and mind.
4. Ecological balance is promoted.

To date, HIMF remains the singular framework designed to monitor the health development needs of the Pacific. At the regional level, HIMF ensures that each PICs are committed and held accountable for progressing towards the Healthy Islands vision. At the country-level, HIMF can generate high-quality evidence to health officials to identify emerging health concerns and to manage national health priorities, from the growing burden of non-communicable diseases to health impact of climate change.

Healthy Islands Monitoring Framework Implementation

Pacific Health Ministers have committed to reporting progress towards the Healthy Islands vision biennially at the PHMM. Two HIMF progress reports have been completed and presented at PHMM; [first in 2017](#) and the [second in 2019](#). The third HIMF progress report will be tabled at the 15th Pacific Heads of Health meeting in 2023.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Healthy Islands vision remains the unifying aspiration for health development in the Pacific. To ensure each PICs is committed to the Healthy Islands vision implementation, the HIMF was developed as a governance mechanism and for each PIC to report their progress in a systematic manner. Tailored to the Pacific experience, the HIMF also generates valuable information that could guide country actions to address emerging and urgent health priorities. As such, increased efforts are needed to promote the use of HIMF data at the country-level to inform policy and programme decisions. Best practices on HIMF data use may be shared through PHIN, to guide interventions such as conducting policy-oriented analysis and developing narratives and information products to effectively communicate data insights to different target audiences.

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As HIMF was created for the Pacific, its implementation should also be PIC-led. PHIN members are in a unique position to lead their PICs to successfully complete each HIMF progress review, given their health information technical expertise. With support from WHO and SPC, PHIN members could lead coordination across ministries, conduct data quality and validity assessments, and ensure timely reporting during each HIMF progress review cycle.