



PACIFIC PUBLIC HEALTH SURVEILLANCE NETWORK (PPHSN) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Public Health Surveillance is a core public health function that contributes to making the Vision of Healthy Islands¹ a reality.

The Goal of PPHSN is to improve Public Health Surveillance and Response in the Pacific Islands, in a sustainable way.

The current focus of PPHSN is outbreak-prone communicable diseases (CDs). This will remain the priority focus while non-communicable disease (NCD) surveillance is being better defined and resourced.

PPHSN Strategies

- ✓ Harmonisation of surveillance data and development of appropriate surveillance systems (with priority given to outbreak surveillance and response)
- ✓ Publication/dissemination of timely, accurate and relevant information, in various forms
- ✓ Training in applied epidemiology and public health surveillance, adapted to regional needs
- ✓ Extension of the electronic communication network to new partners, new services and other public health networks (telehealth)
- ✓ Development of relevant and cost-effective computer applications

PPHSN operational axes of development

Early Warning and Communication	Identification and confirmation	Response, including preparedness
<p>PacNet</p> <p>Email (and fax) listserv for a network of health practitioners and decision-makers interested or working in the Pacific Islands. It allows rapid overall communication, especially early warnings for epidemic threats, and consequently makes it possible to raise awareness and preparedness levels in the region. It also gives access to resources, including technical expertise.</p>	<p>LabNet</p> <p>A three-tier network of public health laboratory services:</p> <p>Level 1 (L1): National/territorial laboratories</p> <p>Level 2 (L2): Four public health laboratories from the Pacific Island region that have agreed to provide selected diagnostic services to neighbouring countries or territories according to their individual capacity</p> <p>Level 3 (L3): Reference laboratories</p>	<p>EpiNet</p> <p>The response arm of the network, consisting of multi-disciplinary national/territorial (and regional) outbreak response teams, the EpiNet (or equivalent) teams.</p>

Recommendations of sub-regional EpiNet workshops I, II & III (Guam, Noumea & Apia, December 2001 – March 2002)²

1. "Healthy Islands are places where children are nurtured in body and mind, environments invite learning and leisure, people work and age with dignity, the ecological balance is a source of pride, and the ocean is protected." – Madang Commitment, March 2001 (building on the Yanuca Declaration of 1995).
2. Recommendations yet to be implemented will be prioritised and compressed into realistic and manageable activities that are practical to implement during the life of this Strategic Framework

PPHSN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2003-2006

Purpose	Key Strategy	Expected Outcome
To strengthen communicable disease (CD) prevention and control	PPHSN as a strong link between PICTs, and between PICTs and relevant experts	Reduced impact from communicable diseases, especially the outbreak-prone ones

Operational Objectives	Key Strategies	Expected Outcomes/Results
I. To maintain and improve surveillance systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WHO and SPC leadership at regional level ✓ Clinical and laboratory-based surveillance for emerging and re-emerging diseases <p><i>See also specific objectives hereunder</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Early warning of outbreaks and emerging CDs
II. To develop, improve and maintain appropriate response systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finalise and adapt national/territorial EpiNet (or equivalent) team Terms of Reference (TOR) ✓ Organise a Regional EpiNet team as a potential regional response tool with appropriate TOR <p><i>See also specific objectives hereunder</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EpiNet (or equivalent) teams fully operational ✓ Regional EpiNet team fully operational
III. To develop, improve and maintain appropriate support for laboratories in PICTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Key areas of expertise identified among L2 and L3 labs in relation to PPHSN target diseases ✓ Strengthening of L2 laboratory role ✓ Support from L3 laboratories, training institutions or agencies and other partners <p><i>See also specific objectives hereunder</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Formalised functional relationships between PPHSN LabNet and regional L3 laboratories and, within the network, between L1 and L2 laboratories. ✓ Plan for development of L1 and L2 laboratories.

Specific Objectives ³	Key Strategies/Activities	Expected Outcomes/Results
SO1. To maintain and reinforce coordination of PPHSN activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PPHSN Coordinating Body (CB) meeting annually, and conducting regular ad hoc "virtual" meetings by email and teleconference ✓ Specialist Working Groups ✓ Using PacNet and other electronic communications to keep members informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CB role maintained and reinforced ✓ EpiNet team response coordination role maintained and reinforced
SO2. To monitor and evaluate PPHSN services and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Audit ✓ Evaluation Questionnaires ✓ Automated reports on the use of mailing lists and websites ✓ Publications ✓ Mock Exercise – Hypothetical ✓ Quality Assurance Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PPHSN services and activities adapted to the changing and evolving contexts, and more efficient
SO3. To secure: a) political will and commitment, and b) multi-sectoral commitment and participation for CD control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advocacy in the context of regional ministerial meetings and political forums ✓ National/territorial advocacy for PPHSN development ✓ Ongoing dialogue with multi-sectoral partners ✓ Inclusion of other sectors, including private enterprises, in outbreak response planning ✓ Use economic analysis, outbreak simulations/ modelling and SARS stimulus as advocacy tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Specific communication and advocacy strategy ✓ Appropriate resourcing of PPHSN, including sustainable funding and support mechanisms ✓ Disease surveillance, prevention and control on the national political agenda ✓ Stronger intersectoral collaboration for outbreak control ✓ Communication and advocacy strategies included in epidemiology teaching (pre-service and post-graduate) at the Fiji School of Medicine and University of Papua New Guinea

3. Each Specific Objective is related to one or more Operational Objective.

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Specific Objectives ³	Key Strategies/Activities	Expected Outcomes/Results
SO4. To strengthen communication and information sharing mechanisms to support disease surveillance, prevention and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Active sharing of information among PPHSN members ✓ A pre-approved national/territorial focal person disseminating information rapidly through PacNet ✓ Information on PPHSN projects posted through PacNet and on Website ✓ National and regional CD database development ✓ Improvement and reinforcement of communication channels between laboratories ✓ Active media management and partnership strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PacNet and PacNet-restricted utilisation improved ✓ More efficient in-country, inter-country and regional information dissemination through electronic and other media ✓ Range of tests available at L2 and L3 laboratories, and technical data regarding specific tests, posted on PPHSN website and reviewed and updated regularly ✓ Regular and clear communication between laboratories within the network ✓ National and regional CD databases established and linked ✓ Guidelines for dealing with the media during outbreaks
SO5. To adequately train the workforce in public health surveillance and response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PPHSN to conduct a regional training needs analysis (TNA) ✓ PPHSN to devise and implement regional training plan to address the needs highlighted by the TNA ✓ PPHSN to establish a regional epidemiology training and response centre/system as a resource for all member countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A baseline assessment of existing training needs in the region ✓ Increased capacity by all PICTs to conduct and respond to public health surveillance ✓ Availability of necessary expertise to support regional surveillance and response
SO6. To strengthen infection control measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support and advocacy for capacity building for infection control practitioners (ICPs) ✓ Strengthen institutional linkages with regional and national expert bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional network of ICPs established ✓ Capacity building for ICPs included in national training plans ✓ Exchange programme with supporting institutions
SO7. To promote appropriate legislation and regulations to assist prevention and control of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support for revision and adaptation of current CD and public health legislation ✓ Testing and adaptation of the proposed new International Health Regulations (IHRs) in the PICT context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Flexible, responsive and culturally appropriate legislation and regulations for infectious diseases ✓ IHR appropriately adapted to PICT settings
SO8. To strengthen the surveillance and environment health monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support capacity building in environment health ✓ Identify key indicators for environmental health that can be measured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SMART (i.e. Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Reliable and Timely) indicators to better address environmental risk factors and reduce the likelihood of CD outbreak occurrence
SO9. To extend the PPHSN activities to include other relevant priority CDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stronger PPHSN capacity to realistically include other CDs ✓ Priority CDs carefully selected for the region ✓ Taking advantage of existing opportunities, including other regional programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inclusion of two additional relevant priority CDs
SO10. To develop appropriate disease-specific guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Models of strategised, step-by-step preparedness and response to diseases of international public health importance ✓ Active Influenza Specialist Group ✓ Create awareness of existing outbreak management manuals/procedures and provide training in the use of these manuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PPHSN guidelines for PPHSN target diseases ✓ Regional Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan ✓ Appropriate and measurable response



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Specific Objectives ³	Key Strategies/Activities	Expected Outcomes/Results
<p>SO11. To strengthen technical linkages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ between L1 laboratories and their supporting L2 laboratories, ✓ between L1 / L2 laboratories and L3 referral laboratories, ✓ with identified experts, professional societies and organisations within the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Key individuals identified at L1, L2 and L3 labs as points of contact for LabNet ✓ Sharing of information on quality assurance / quality control (QA/QC) through PacNet-Lab ✓ Training, including increased use of in-country training and distance education models ✓ Participation of PICT laboratory delegates in regional conferences ✓ Sharing of technical advice regarding new diagnostic technologies, including their use in PICT conditions and environments through PacNet-Lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Electronic list of L1, L2 and L3 lab focal points and identified experts, professional societies and organisations involved in LabNet available ✓ Sharing of QA strategies and manuals between L1 and L2 labs, leading ultimately to a PPHSN QA/QC plan and manual ✓ Training plan, including initial training and continuous education possibilities and using L2 and L3 capacities developed for laboratory health professionals ✓ Clear channels of support and advice for L1 and L2 laboratories considering introduction of new tests and equipment. ✓ Hawaii L3 Public Health laboratory added to network
<p>SO12. To develop laboratory surveillance for PPHSN target diseases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Functional surveillance channel for the timely sharing of lab results on specific CDs between the national/territorial EpiNet (or equivalent) team and the national/territorial laboratory(ies) ✓ Timely data sharing between L1 and L2 laboratories, through PPHSN focal point ✓ Similar participation of L3 laboratories (for specimens originating in PICTs – referrals or travellers) ✓ Secure and confidential communication respecting political sensitivities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pilot activity commenced for laboratory-based surveillance of at least one PPHSN target disease
<p>SO13. To identify sustainable mechanisms of funding for support and further development of LabNet activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Based on TNA (above) for training and technical support ✓ Active dialogue with development partners and donor agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ National and Regional health development activities include strengthening laboratory services ✓ Policies of L2 and L3 laboratories regarding cost recovery for testing ✓ Sustainable sources of funding identified at national and regional levels
<p>SO14. To protect ethical and intellectual property (IP) aspects of CD research undertaken in PICTs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ethical and IP aspects identified and included in all PPHSN activities and external relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ethical and IP guidelines developed and appended to all participatory agreements

Additional Objective	Key Strategies/Activities	Expected Outcome/Result
<p>To promote the NCD-STEPS framework as a foundation for NCD surveillance in the PICTs, and to explore specific strategies and activities to accomplish its integration within the PPHSN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create a PPHSN NCD committee ✓ Explore the creation of a PacNet-NCD listserver ✓ Include the Pacific NCD-STEPS focal point within the work of the PPHSN-CB ✓ Identify existing sources of data and specific statistical indicators ✓ Conduct a stocktake of existing public health policies and programmes targeting NCDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At least one relevant aspect of NCD surveillance included under PPHSN umbrella

This strategic framework is to be converted into individual operational plans by PPHSN members.

It is available on the PPHSN website at <http://www.spc.int/phs/PPHSN/>.

