

CHAPTER TWO: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Census or complete enumeration of a population was thought to be the only way to collect reliable information about that population. However, the resources required are enormous and the respondent burden is great. The development of sampling theory over the last 50 years or so, has overcome this problem. Today, sample survey are universally accepted as providing reliable information about the entire population with much less resources.

For statistical purposes, Samoa is divided into four Regions; Apia Urban Area (AUA); North West Upolu (NWU); Rest of Upolu (ROU); and Savaii (SAV). These four regions are further sub divided into Faipule District, which are further sub divided into villages. Villages are further sub divided into Enumeration Area (EA), 878 in total.

The 2002 Agricultural Survey was based on a ten percent (10%) sample selected systematically. That is, every tenth enumeration block was selected from a random start, and all households in the selected blocks were included in the sample.

The above methodology relies on the enumeration areas being of similar size to ensure that when the weights are applied to the household and individual counts, the population counts of households and individuals are closely approximated.

Unfortunately, this was not the case. The number of households and persons in each enumeration area varies enormously.

To overcome this problem, the initial sample selection weights were adjusted to benchmark them to the official number of households per region from the 2001 Population Census.