



# COOK ISLANDS STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

2015 - 2025



**SPC**  
Secretariat  
of the Pacific  
Community



**Cook Islands Strategy  
for the Development of Statistics (CSDS)**

**2015–2025**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

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It is my pleasure to introduce the Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS). The Cook Islands government is fully committed to developing our national statistical system with the objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that 'serve the public good.' Official Statistics is a public good that informs the people of the environmental and socio-economic state of the Cook Islands. It provides the necessary information for encouraging public discussion on current affairs.



The strategy aims to deliver more value from official statistics and the National Statistics System and to ensure the ongoing reliability and relevance of the statistics it produces. More than ever, statistics is going to play a vital role in the development of the Cook Islands. This strategy is designed to make that happen.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of all those that were involved in the design of the Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics. I would like to thank the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and PARIS21 for the technical advice and the financial support they provided, the members of various government agencies and NGOs that provided their unique insights in the design process and lastly, to the Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) for leading the whole process.

Meitaki Maata e Kia Manuia



Honourable Henry Puna  
Prime Minister

## MESSAGE FROM TE KAUMĀITI NUI

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*“E taiki-rapa-tu! Ka rama i te marae nui o taku ui-tupuna”*

I am pleased to be asked to provide an initial remark to the Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS). This recognises the leadership of the Ui Ariki and Te Aronga Mana to support the wellbeing of the people of the Cook Islands.



Our traditional leaders have a variety of roles in their matakeinanga, being the storehouse of tribal knowledge, genealogy and traditions, acting as guardians of Māori customs, providing leadership and helping resolve disputes. I constantly think about the quality of education our children receive, about the way our elderly are treated, about the availability of jobs for our youth entering the workforce, degradation of our land, depleting marine life and various other issues Cook Islanders are facing today.

These concerns are usually brought to my attention through word of mouth, but I have learned to compliment this by asking for the numbers that is needed to get a clearer picture of these issues. Statistics allows me to make informed decisions about the severity of societal problems and provides direction for action.

Let us look at the state of Te Reo Maori. Having good data on literacy can make the difference between gently encouraging parents in the village to improve their children’s school results or approaching the Minister of Education to discuss ways of reversing wide spread language loss in the Cook Islands. Over time, statistics then allows me to keep an eye on the progress made, on whether literacy gets better or not and to hold parents, politicians and everyone involved accountable for the promises of improvement.

Meitaki Maata e Kia Manuia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Travel Tou Ariki'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Travel Tou Ariki  
President of the House of Ariki



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This document is the Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS). It was created out of the ever growing demand for high quality, timely, accessible statistical information needed for evidence-based policy formation and of monitoring development progress in the Cook Islands. The development of this strategy was officially endorsed by Government in 2013 giving recognition to the importance of having a sound and modern statistical system in place to cater to these needs.

The CSDS presents the vision, mission, core values and objectives that are going to guide the National Statistical System (NSS) for the next ten years, from 2015-2025.

This CSDS provides the strategic planning framework for all agencies producing and using statistical data and its implementation will result in the timely and regular supply of important information to facilitate evidence-based policy making to help improve people's lives. The plan also contains estimated costs of achieving the activities for each of the strategic objectives.

Statistical data and information on the economic, social and demographic status of the Cook Islands guides government in developing national policies strategies and interventions designed to further socio-economic development with sustainable environmental management. Statistical data:

- provides the necessary benchmarks for policy and planning;
- provides unambiguous evidence for priority setting, as well as monitoring and evaluating progress – across sectors, across different geographic areas, targeting specific population groups such as youth, the unemployed, the elderly, and the poor;
- alerts policy makers where progress is off track and prompts investigation to re-align policy for better results; and
- ensures that limited resources are used in an effective and efficient manner, and highlight where additional resources are needed.

The need for more and better coordination is highlighted together with the need for a central access point to statistical information and analysis in light of scarce resources for data collection and limited capacity in data analysis. More dialogue and understanding is needed between users and producers of statistical information. An issue related to this is the need for harmonising standards and definitions across surveys conducted by different organisations to make the results comparable and increase the usefulness of the information.

# STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

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The purpose of this strategy is to guide the production and dissemination of reliable official statistical information in a timely manner which will contribute to the development of the nation, in particular it:

- responds to the needs for information of planning authorities;
- improves macro-economic and financial management by better reflecting the structure and tendencies of the economy; and
- provides improved information for users in general.

It is envisioned that this national strategy will, in the long term, develop a coordinated and coherent statistical service and ensure user needs are met in a systematic and transparent way in accordance with the *United Nations* fundamental principles for official statistics<sup>1</sup>. This is critical that a statistical system has the confidence of national and international users of statistics. The development of this strategy, which has been endorsed by Cabinet, will be followed by biannual work and implementation plans, developed and endorsed by all agencies producing and using statistics in the Cook Islands.

This strategy also deals with the organisation of the National Statistical System (NSS) and the 'division of labour' (responsibilities) between the various organisations constituting the NSS. Special emphasis is given to the role and organisation of the National Statistics Office – the Cook Islands Statistics Office (CISO). The CISO administers the Statistics Act 1966, the only legislation for statistics in the country, and CISO has been the focal point for this strategy and will continue to be a key player in monitoring its implementation.

The preparation of a strategic plan to produce these statistics on an ongoing, sustainable basis through improving or developing information management systems to facilitate evidence-based decision-making and regular monitoring of policy performance and development progress recognises the cross-cutting nature of official statistics and their relevance across government in:

- providing a quantitative basis for informed decision-making in socio-economic and environmental development planning and for monitoring development programmes and projects; and
- evaluating the impacts and outcomes of development programmes and projects.

## Background and rationale

This Strategy has been developed over a two year period which has been one of transition for statistical systems nationally, regionally and globally. The drafting of the CSDS was a time consuming and laborious process; during which hard choices were made and priorities spelt out and agreed upon. This process was essential in the realisation of this final product, serving both as a concise strategic document detailing streamlined data collection and analysis systems across the country's entire (national) statistical system, and as a solid tool for advocacy and mobilisation of resources. This

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix

national ownership will continue to be paramount to ensure that the CSDS is implemented and the various action plans are monitored and evaluated.

The overall objective of the Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS) is to provide strategic directions and appropriate mechanisms for guiding and accelerating the development of sustainable statistical capacity and promote evidence-based policy formulation, planning and decision-making in support of the national, regional and international development agenda in pursuit of better development outcomes.

The CSDS is a comprehensive framework for advocating for statistics, assessing and meeting user needs, building capacity at all levels (with added focus on sectors), enhancing data quality, and, for mobilising and leveraging resources (national, regional and international). The CSDS is not a wish list spelling out desired statistical activities, but is the result of a participatory process inclusive of all stakeholders with links to the development planning and policy process.

### ***International Statistical Initiatives***

The 2004 Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) sets a target for all low-income countries to have a national strategy for the development of statistics (NSDS) to have a national set of statistical data and information of a high quality, locally produced, to monitor progress towards the achievement of the development goals. Likewise, the 2011 Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Bussan, Korea, highlighted the importance of “partnerships to implement a global Action Plan for Statistics to enhance capacity for statistics to monitor progress, evaluate impact, ensure sound, results-focused public sector management, and highlight strategic issues for policy decisions.” Most recently, the ‘Post 2015 Development Agenda’ calls for a ‘data revolution’ to improve the quality of statistics and information available to people and governments to ensure that we **Leave No One Behind** in the post-2015 agenda. One of the mechanisms required to achieve this is the establishment of “a Global Partnership on Development Data that brings together diverse but interested stakeholders – government statistical offices, international organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs), foundations and the private sector”.

### ***Basic principles in the design of the CSDS***

The CSDS follows four internationally agreed principles, these are to:

- be integrated into national development policy processes and context, taking account of regional and international commitments;
- be developed in an inclusive way, incorporating results-based management;
- be comprehensive (covering all data producers) and coherent, and provide the basis for the sustainable development of statistics with quality; and
- show where the statistical system is now, how it needs to be developed and how to accomplish this.

The CSDS has five key objectives, they are to:

1. improve the flow of information among users and producers of statistics;
2. develop and strengthen legal and policy responsibility for the Cook Islands NSS;
3. develop and strengthen statistical capacity in the NSS;

4. provide a framework for monitoring and evaluation for national planning processes (this includes reporting mechanisms to national, regional and international conventions); and
5. provide strategic directions and appropriate mechanisms for guiding and accelerating the development of sustainable statistical capacity.

At the national level two factors will affect the implementation of the CSDS: the Bill to Amend the Statistics Act of 1966 should be passed by parliament in 2015; and the development of the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020.

### ***Statistics Bill 2015***

The CSDS places an emphasis on the need to immediately update the Cook Islands Statistics Act mandating the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistical information of all agencies in the Cook Islands statistical system. The proposed amendments create the Statistics Advisory Council, the ultimate body with oversight for the Cook Islands statistical system. It will be the mechanism to improve coordination by bringing users and producers of statistics together to discuss supply and demand issues. One of the key functions of the Statistics Advisory Council will be to finalise the prioritisation of activities and monitor the implementation of the CSDS across all sectors. The Statistics Advisory Council will meet discuss the ongoing work program of statistical agencies based on the CSDS, emerging issues and statistical releases.

The Statistics Bill will update the 1966 Act to reflect the data needs, collection modalities and governance mechanisms for the Cook Islands and is based on international best practice.

The 'data revolution' as well as the technologies for collecting and analysing statistical data and information has evolved to levels which were not envisaged fifty years ago. The amendments foremost protect and safeguard the rights of individuals to the confidentiality of information collected under the authority of the Government Statistician, while allowing for the use of the many 'digital' forms of data now available to compile official statistics. The bill also increases the penalties for non-compliance and refusals to provide the statistical information requested by the Government Statistician.

The most significant amendment for the purposes of this strategy is the formation of the Statistics Advisory Council, which will be responsible for oversight of the official statistics produced by all agencies in the national statistical system. The members of the Statistics Advisory Council will comprise both the providers and users of statistical information from the public and private sector as well as representatives from community based organisations; with secretariat services will be provided by the CISO. This strategy will act as the Statistics Advisory Council's main mechanism for monitoring the progress made by agencies to provide the information needed from the national statistical system as well as providing the statistical framework for reassessing priorities and emerging issues of importance to the country.

### ***Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020***

During 2015 the Office of the Prime Minister will conduct sector reviews, consult with stakeholders and adapt regional and international development frameworks to the Cook Islands priorities for sustainable development. The Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020 (NSDP) will reflect the statistical production strategies contained here, with indicators that are outcome based, derived from policy statements at the outcome or impact level.

The CSDS also addresses gaps in the output and outcome indicators which are required to evaluate whether agencies are actually delivering their outputs and contributing towards outcomes annually so that progress towards achieving development goals can be measured.

The NSDP will align with regional and international development agendas including the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 (MDG) agenda, the 2014 Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway), the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the Waigani Convention and international human rights conventions. In light of this, one of the CSDS strategic actions for 2016 will be the incorporation of new national priorities arising from the new NSDP 2016 – 2020.

## **The National Statistical System (NSS)**

### ***The Concept of a NSS***

A NSS brings all agencies which are involved in data collection and production to work together as a team, along with the users of statistics. This consequently results in the generation of coherent, reliable and demand-driven data products in an efficient manner to support management and development initiatives including policy formation and critical decision making.

Statistical production including dissemination and usage of statistical products is a venture that requires collaborative effort (teamwork) with a broad spectrum of the population (the society) being involved in different functions. The team consists of producers, users and suppliers/providers of data/statistics, who compile, use and supply the raw data respectively. It should be noted however, that each group is involved to a varying degrees in the functions.

The significant entities within these broad categories and their inter-related functions constitute the NSS of a country. The national statistical agency (Cook Islands Statistics Office) of the NSS has the responsibility to coordinate all key players institutionally, technically and with respect to their programmes and budgets in order to organize an integrated system of socio-economic statistics for the country.

The NSS is usually categorized according to whether an agency (or individual entity) is a:

**Producer:** These include data producing agencies in the public sector – the Statistics Office, the statistical units in line ministries and public institutions such as regulatory authorities and statutory bodies. There are other producers of statistics in the private sector, NGOs, CSOs and training and research institutions.

**User:** These cover policy formulation and/or decision making institutions and development framework practitioners across government and other public institutions as well as private sector companies, NGOs and CSOs, researchers, development partners and international organisations, regional organisations and individuals in society. Other users of statistics and data within the NSS include the media due to its involvement in advocacy and information dissemination through the publication of press releases, analytical research and briefings.

**Supplier/Provider:** These include establishments and/or institutions in the public sector, business establishments in the private sector, NGOs, CSOs, informal sector establishments, private households and people within the society.

**Training Institution:** Statistical training institutions or centres contribute to skills development for both the producers and users of statistical data.

**Characteristics of a NSS**

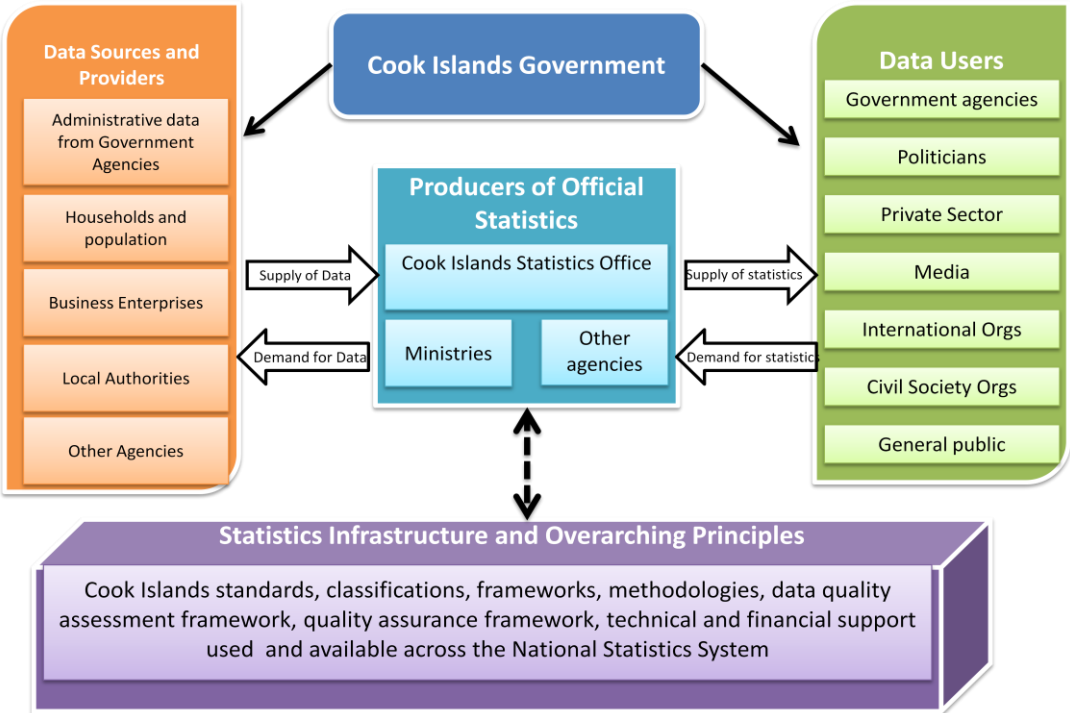
The NSS typically has relatively uniform capacity for generation and use of statistics in its constituent parts. The system operates with impartiality in data collection and releases, ensures confidentiality of supplied data, and acts with objectivity, transparency, integrity and independence in all its operations. The elements of the system produce relevant data (through users and producer interaction), turn data into information through policy and research analysis and ensure timeliness of data release as a result of good cooperation between, and responsiveness of, suppliers to the producers.

Extensive statistical advocacy about the importance of statistics to society and wide spread dissemination of data to the public are roles carried out by the media and key agencies like the statistics office, while training institutions ensure that there is effective and relevant capacity building. The entire NSS players are quality conscious in that, data being generated in the system pass the assessment tests across all the quality dimensions – relevance, accuracy, completeness, consistency, timeliness, accessibility and appropriate levels of disaggregation.

**Cook Islands NSS**

In the Cook Islands the NSS, both users and producers, does not have the capacity much less the resources to conform to this model. Statistical data collections and administrative data are not of sufficient quality, timeliness or serviceability to ultimately inform timely decision making. On the demand side, users do not have the statistical literacy to utilise the statistical information to its maximum nor are they able to voice their needs for statistical information. This strategy contains the strategic objectives and statistical production strategies to reform the NSS.

**Figure 1: Cook Islands National Statistical System**





## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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### VISION

- TO ACHIEVE STATISTICAL EXCELLENCE FOR AN EVIDENCE-INFORMED COOK ISLANDS

### MISSION

- TO DELIVER QUALITY STATISTICAL INFORMATION

### CORE VALUES

- Integrity
- Commitment to Excellence
- Accountability and Transparency
- Responsive service delivery
- Collaboration and Inclusiveness

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Legislation and Policy
- Access, Use and Communication
- Knowledge management
- NSS Coordination
- Institutional and Human Resources Development

### PREREQUISITES OF QUALITY

- Legal and Institutional Environment
- Resources
- Relevance

## Vision

The vision the Cook Islands national statistical system aspires to achieve in the implementation of the CSDS is:

**To achieve statistical excellence for an evidence-informed Cook Islands.**

## Mission

The mission is the core business of the national statistical system. The data must be of high quality, reliable and timely to assist the government and the community to make better informed decisions. Statistical systems must be strengthened and developed to meet emerging needs in the social and environment areas. This will rely on building and maintaining relationships with key providers and users of statistics. To continually improve, the national statistical system must monitor past and current performance to plan well and build a stronger future. Our vision will guide our united journey and efforts to achieve our mission:

**To deliver quality statistical information.**

## Values

The CSDS values reflect the guiding principles and behaviours stakeholders in the statistical system believe in as a national statistical service including:

- integrity (ethical, honesty; trust, respect for people, culture, equality, religion, environment, confidentiality);
- a commitment to excellence (timely, efficient, reliable, consistency, professionalism);
- accountability and transparency;
- responsive service delivery; and
- collaboration and inclusiveness

## Five Strategic Objectives

The CSDS is grounded in the strategic objectives to improve the national statistical system through a sound legislation and policy framework for statistics; better access to, use and communication of statistics; enhanced knowledge management; effective coordination across all agencies in the national statistical system; the implementation of a continuous programme of institutional and human resources capacity building.

- 1. *Legislation & Policy:*** Ensure the CSDS addresses domestic information and policy demands, in particular for the NSDP and the national budget process.
- 2. *Access, Use and Communication:*** Improve awareness of the value and use of statistics in evidence based policy.
- 3. *Knowledge management:*** Improve data and information management.

4. ***NSS Coordination:*** Improve collaboration, coordination, and consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
5. ***Institutional and Human Resources Development:*** Ensure sufficient and sustainable human, financial and physical capacity to deliver statistical outputs and services.

## **Prerequisites of Quality**

The strategic goals were identified through the sector assessments of the prerequisites of quality required in the national statistical system. In general, across the NSS, there is a need for better coordination and resource sharing between agencies with mandates for collecting, compiling and disseminating statistical information and integrating statistics across the economic, social and environment spheres to provide a more complete and rounded analysis of the situation in the Cook Islands. More resources are required to define quality standards for statistics and make these assessments known to the users of the statistics. The wide range of statistical information produced by government agencies is generally not presented in a way that makes the statistics easy to understand by the general public: in general, statistics are produced by government for government. Increasing access to statistics which are transparent in method and made use of by the general public is a long term process.

In order to ensure high quality data is available for sharing, processes for assessing the quality of the data need to be established across the NSS. At this strategic level for the CSDS, stakeholders recommended:

- All stakeholders within the Cook Islands National Statistics System develop an understanding of what the NSS is, how it should function, and its role in promoting improved collection and use of high quality statistical information in order to improve evidenced-based decision making across government.
- Guiding principles be developed that promote an integrated approach, foster cooperation, maximise the efficient use of existing facilities, staff and resources, draw on the expertise of those outside the sector .
- Objectives and outcomes are set that are based on international and national standards and contribute to monitoring the progress towards achieving NSDP results.
- Support and resources are mobilised to implement CSDS strategies.

These prerequisites of quality assessment derived from the sector reviews cover the following elements:

- Legal and institutional environment
- Resources
- Relevance

### ***Legal and Institutional Environment***

- The Statistics Act 1966 has been reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects the full picture of the institutional infrastructure for official national statistics as well as current expectations and future directions. It is currently with the Crown Law Office for final drafting before submission

to Cabinet then to parliament. The amendment bill strengthens sector level management of statistics where currently little policy and legal parameters exist.

- The legislation of agencies in the national statistical system needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect changing functions and cross sectoral sharing of information as well as the inclusion of a provision mandating the reporting of statistical information.
- CSDS priority activities for implementation to be included in the 2015/16 Budget submission process and agency business plans include a medium term expenditure framework for activities related to statistics.
- The review of NSDP goals and indicators in 2015 will ensure sector strategies are aligned with specific sector statistical priorities in line with the CSDS as well as outcome and impact indicators in the NSDP.

### ***Resources***

- Agencies must allocate and mobilise budgetary resources to future statistical development based on identified statistical needs and priorities as well as report on current expenditure on statistical information collection and management.
- Coordinate and consolidate statistical resources (human, equipment, facilities, software and hardware platforms) to build a core of technology and expertise to provide a full range of essential quality statistical information management services, a platform for monitoring and reporting development results.
- Long term efforts must be made to build and retain a core contingent of statistical analysts in government.
- Conduct a 'training needs analysis' across all agencies in the national statistical system. This includes identification of priority statistical training needs and training opportunities matched to key job descriptions and incumbents.

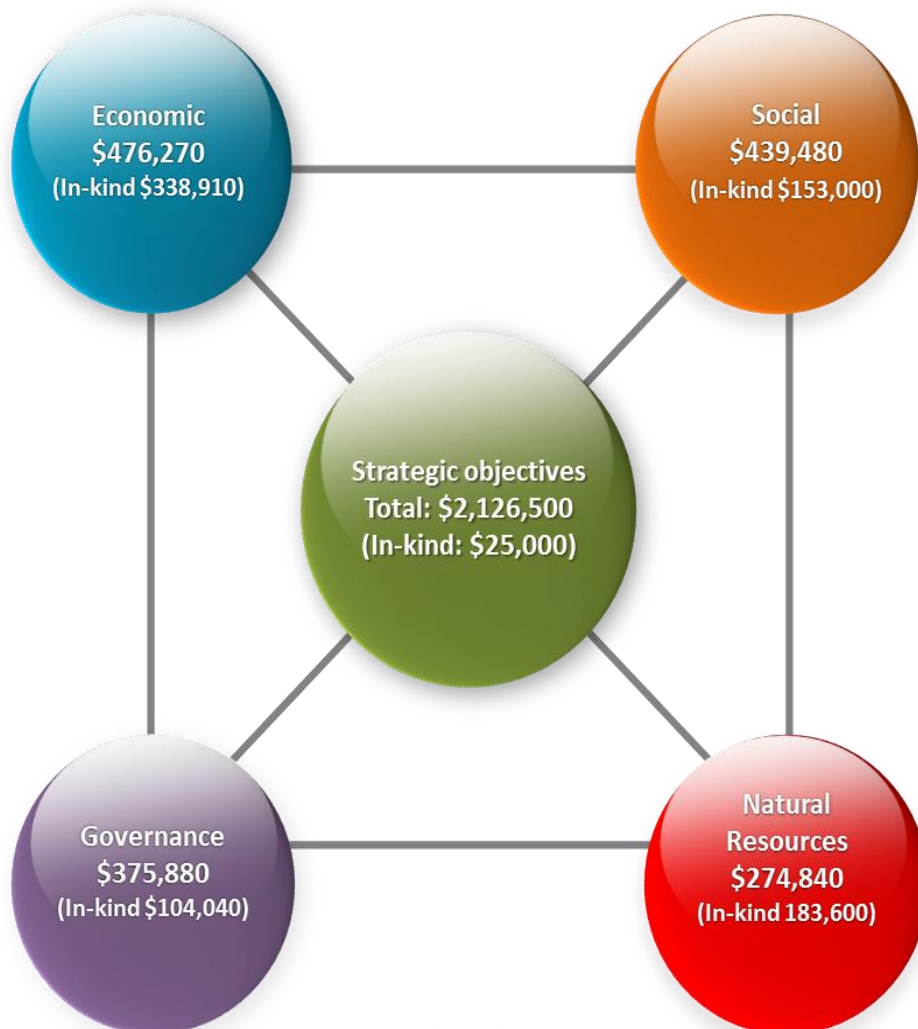
### ***Relevance***

- Agencies in the national statistical system and CISO in particular to regularly survey users to ensure that available statistics meet users' needs, assess gaps and evolving data needs.
- Sector agencies in the national statistical system to meet regularly through organized committees for economic, social and natural resources statistics to ensure core national datasets are made available and frequently reported. .
- Develop and implement protocols to enable the sharing of appropriate statistical information between producers and users in the national statistical system for use in planning and decision making. Data producing agencies to periodically review data quality and put in place validation procedures and include information about these in statistical releases, for transparency.

## STATISTICS PRODUCTION STRATEGIES

It is estimated that the implementation of the CSDS will require an investment of about \$3.7 million over a period of five years (2015-2020), with just over one-third of this, \$1.4 million, provided through ongoing development partner technical assistance and capacity building at no cost to the Government of the Cook Islands. Almost another one-third (\$1.2 million) of estimated costs represent the household and enterprise based surveys required to achieve the strategic objectives with data from the surveys being used across all sectors. The detailed level budgets and expenditure forecasts from agencies was not available to use in the cost estimates, so the extent of Government funding under its current and ongoing budget allocations to agencies in the national statistical system for numerous initiatives are not included in these cost estimates (again because the detail required was not available).

**Figure 2: Summary of the estimated costs of CSDS components**



**Figure 3: Summary of the CSDS sectors, costs and major activities**

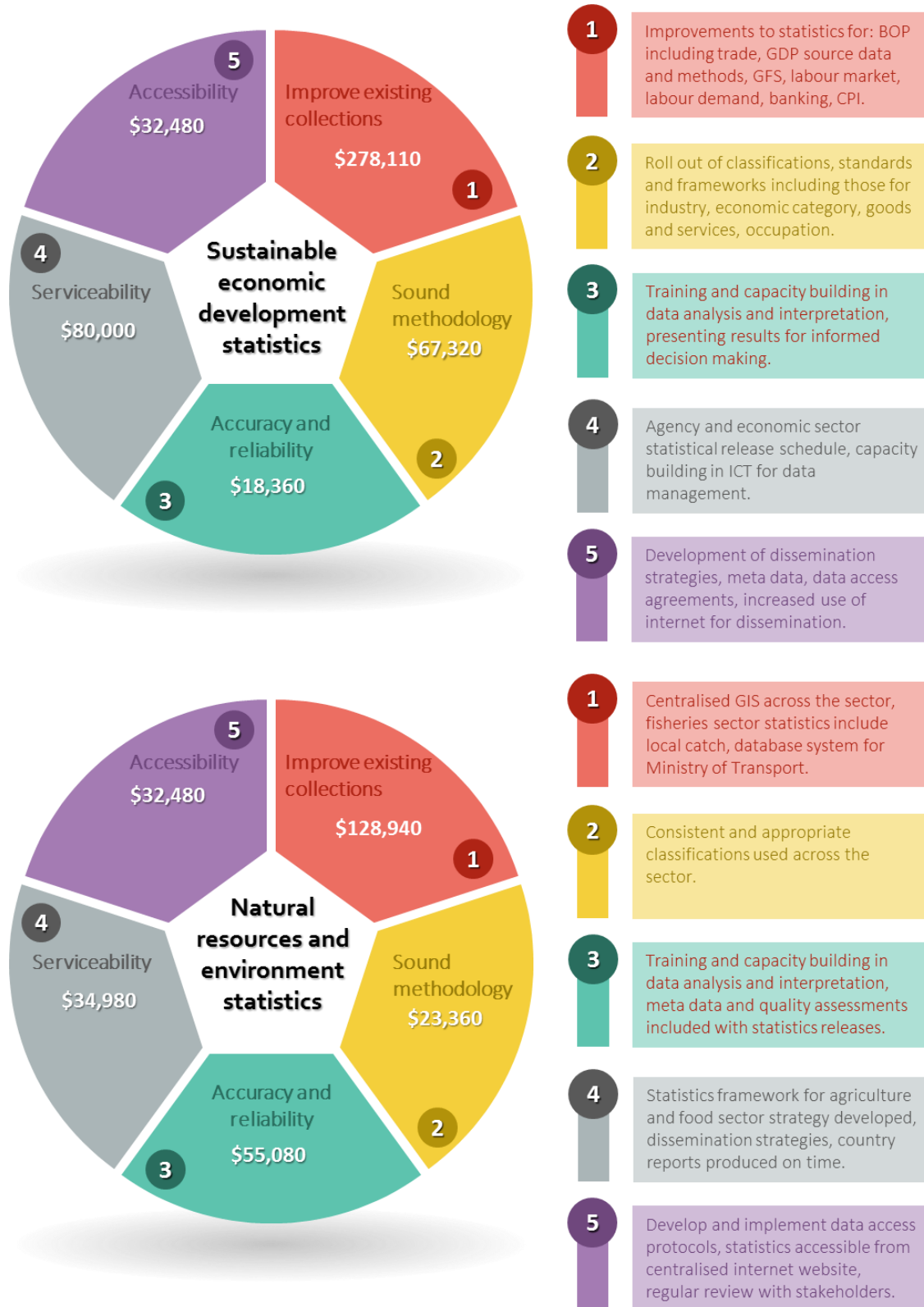
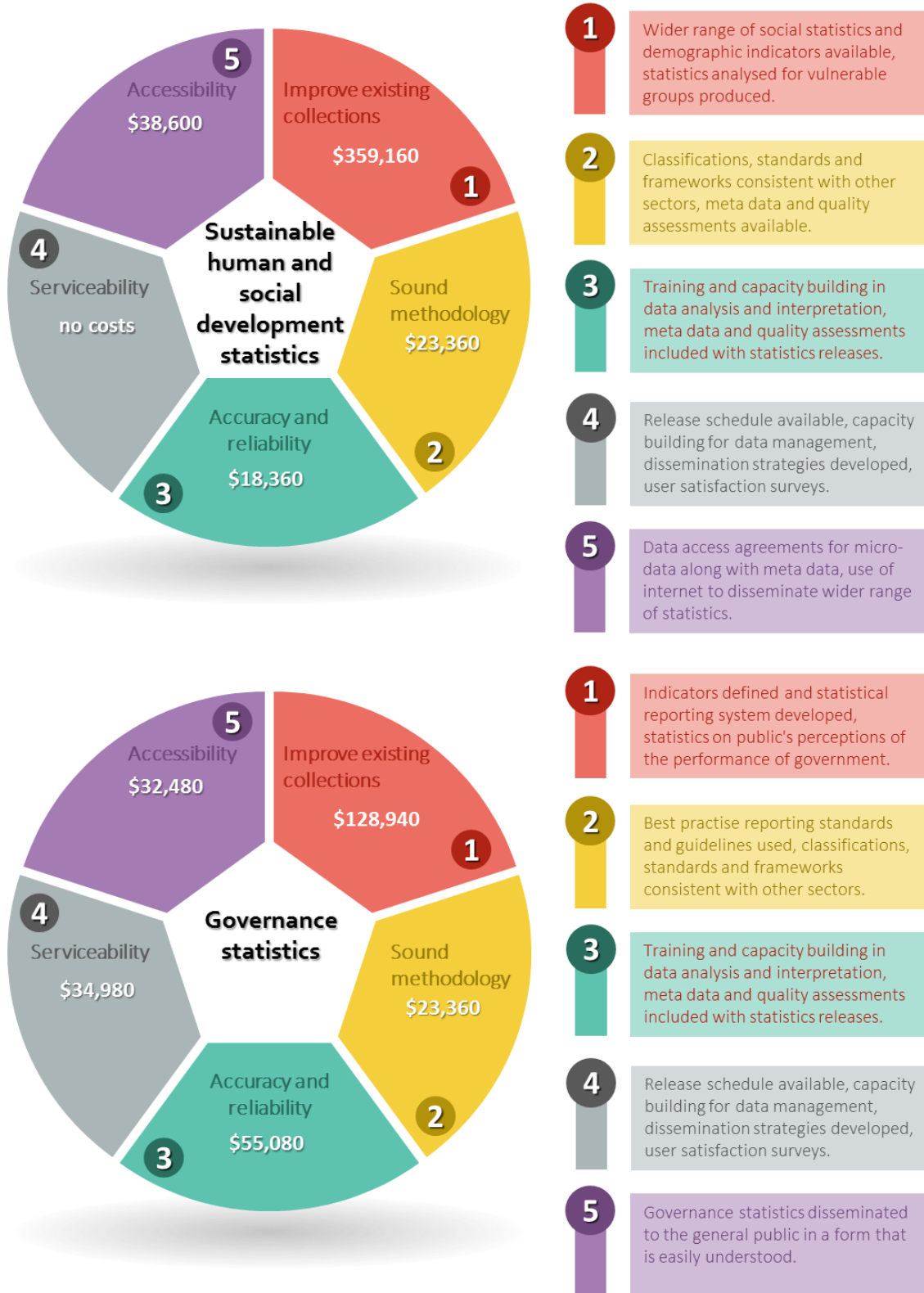


Figure 3: Summary of the CSDS sectors, costs and major activities (cont'd)





## Achieving the Five Strategic Objectives

The estimated budget to achieve the five strategic objectives is approximately \$2.1 million over five years. This cost estimate includes the cost of statistical data collections (major surveys) estimated to cost \$1.2 million, or just over half of the cost estimates (58%).

The most resource intensive is the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) which requires visits to households throughout the Cook Islands over a two-week period, rather than one visit like the Census. The HIES is estimated to cost \$500,000 but is used extensively for economic statistics (household sector estimates for national accounts and GDP, poverty and wellbeing, reviewing and revising the CPI, earnings); social statistics (access to education and health centres, household resources) and the primary sector (household engagement and profits from agriculture, fisheries, livestock, food security and resilience to environmental shocks).

The other significant cost centre to achieve the strategic objectives is for knowledge management, at 33% or \$700,000, of which 97% is for three full time scholarships per year for five years at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji; with government contributing approximately one-third of the scholarship funding. Returning graduates in statistics will provide the NSS with a wider level of statistical expertise.

The government will be asked to mobilise just over one-quarter (28%) of the estimated costs, noting that many of the activities to achieve the strategic objectives are contained in existing agency or sector plans and strategies and the statistical survey programme for 2015-2020. The data and results of the statistical surveys will be made use of by all statistical agencies with increased cost estimates for disseminating a wider range of statistical 'products' aimed for different audiences, such as island communities.

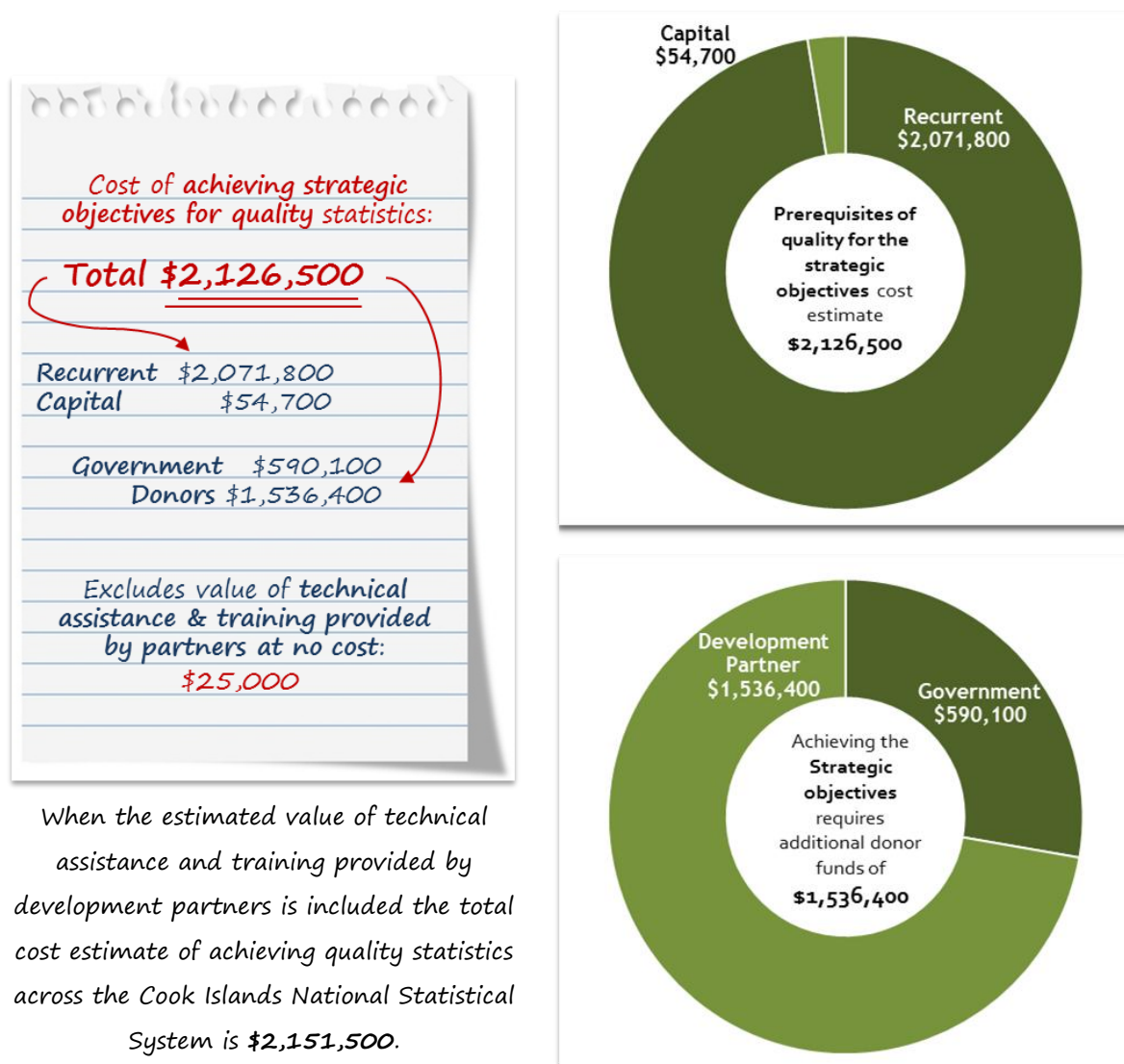
This cost estimate excludes training and technical assistance to be provided by development partners at no cost to the Cook Islands government, estimated value at \$25,000.

**Table 1: Summary of estimated costs of achieving the activities for each strategic objective, 2015-2020**

Strategic objective	Estimated Cost	Percent
1. Legislation & Policy	\$22,000	1%
2. Access, Use and Communication	\$121,500	6%
3. Knowledge management	\$699,000	33%
4. NSS Coordination	\$1,234,000	58%
5. Institutional and Human Resources Development	\$50,000	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,126,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

- The cost estimates are based on the action plan (appendix 1) to achieve the strategic objectives.

**Figure 4: Cost estimates to achieve the prerequisites of quality strategic objectives in the NSS**



**Table 2: Summary of estimated costs of statistical data collection programme, 2015-2020**

Data collections required	Estimated Cost	Timing
HIES	\$500,000	2015-2016
Labour market	\$100,000	2017
Census - Population, Housing & Agriculture	\$300,000	2016
Labour market	\$100,000	2020
Tourism expenditure survey	\$3,000	2018
STEPS (NCD) survey	\$200,000	2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,203,000</b>	

These statistical production strategies are the result of the four detailed sector assessments contained in this report. The recommendations for improvements in statistics were developed by sector task force members in a participatory way and incorporate the requirements of medium- and long- term national development aspirations as well as providing direction in terms of the required governance arrangements, improvement of infrastructures, human resource requirements as well as funding of statistical activities. How the CSDS will address shortcomings and improve existing sectoral statistical systems, capacity, infrastructure, and information management systems follows.

## **Sustainable Economic development sector**

The Cook Islands has a relatively small economic base due to its limited primary resources and isolation from key global markets. It is largely dependent on tourism where its natural comparative advantage lies. Tourism continues to be the cornerstone of the economy followed by other sectors such as the financial services, trade services and construction. Development within the sector is promoted by the 'Cook Islands Tourism Corporation' who regularly collects data on tourist expenditure behaviour. Tourism is most likely to remain the main driver of economic growth especially in Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

Despite being one of the most remotest countries in the world, and one of the smallest (even by Pacific standards), the Cook Islands is one of the most prosperous countries per capita in the Pacific, behind New Zealand and Australia. The economy has evolved from one where growth was mainly driven by public sector expenditure to now largely private sector driven. Growth in the Cook Islands economy in 2011 was 3.0 per cent in nominal terms (1.0 per cent in real terms). The Cook Islands has enjoyed a sustained period of economic prosperity following the rapid growth of the tourism industry and a series of public sector reforms following the economic crisis of the mid-nineties. The economic dependency on tourism has benefitted the Cook Islands greatly. Despite this success, the lack of economic diversity or economies of scale can make any progress fragile and reversible.

Labour market constraints across various areas of the economy still present major limitations on economic growth. The Cook Islands also has a heavy reliance on imported goods.

Agencies within the sector collect a range of information largely from administrative data, although some survey data is also collected (MFEM, CITC, and FSDA). The CISO is a division of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and its core function is the provision of timely and appropriate official statistics for the use in effective policy and decision making, and monitoring national development for the Cook Islands. As such, it plays a proportionately larger role in the collection and dissemination of official statistics than the other agencies within the Sustainable Economic Development Sector.

Absence of a Central bank and the adoption of the New Zealand dollar limit the Cook Islands government's ability to control interest rates (and inflation?) Instead the Government rely on the Financial Supervisory Commission to monitor and regulate the commercial banks operating in the country.

### ***Statistical outputs for sustainable economic development sector***

A total of 40 datasets and outputs were identified from the seven agency audits conducted in the economic sector. A large proportion of data sets and outputs (19 in total) are managed by the Ministry

of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) divisions – Treasury Management Division, Revenue Management Division, Development Coordination Division and Statistics Office.

A new Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) is urgently needed in order to update or provide a baseline for several National Development indicators and the rebasing of major economic statistics like the National Accounts, Consumer Price Index, economic hardship statistics, to name but a few.

**Table 3: Summary of statistical outputs for sustainable economic development sector**

Common needs across the sector	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
<b>Improve existing collections</b>			
Improved financial data from all government agencies	2	'16 →	MFEM, Audit
More accurate, timely and regular GDP data	1	'15 →	CISO
More accurate, timely and regular BOP data	1	'16 →	CISO, RMD, FSC
More accurate CPI data and participation in the International Comparison Programme (ICP)	1	'15 →	CISO
More regular (minimum annual) and accurate labour market data	2	'16 →	Labour Office
Improved domestic visitor expenditure data	2	'17 →	Tourism
More detailed banking data	2	'17 →	CISO, FSC
Improve data about local businesses and need for comprehensive business register	2	'16 →	CISO
Improve data analysis and interpretation skills for economic statistics	2	'16 →	CISO, all agencies
Improve dissemination and communication of data other than at sector/industry level	2	'16 →	CISO
Data provider non-compliance and non-response	1	'15 →	CISO
<b>Sound methodology</b>			
Review NSS classifications in use or could be used to ensure consistency across official statistical outputs	1	'15 →	CISO, all agencies
Adopt consistent and appropriate classifications as well as coding and concordance systems across the NSS	1	'16 →	CISO, all agencies
NSS to continue to work with IMF PFTAC to meet GDDS standards for metadata with regular updates	1	'15 →	CISO, all agencies
<b>Accuracy and reliability</b>			
All agencies need to improve their data analysis and interpretation capabilities	1	'15 →	CISO, OPM (ICT), OPSC, all agencies
Put in place a clear and transparent procedures for assessing and validating the quality of information and make available to the public through metadata documentation	2	'17 →	CISO, all agencies
<b>Serviceability</b>			
Agencies should prepare and disseminate a publication release schedule and adhere to it	1	'15 →	Statistics Advisory Council

Common needs across the sector	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
All agencies should ensure statistics staff have a minimum set of skills in basic data management software packages, such as MS Excel and MS Access.	2	'16 →	OPM (ICT), OPSC, CISO
<b>Accessibility</b>			
All agencies should develop dissemination strategies for public information to ensure wide use of important information	2	'17 →	CISO, all agencies
All agencies should establish and adopt standards to ensure timely dissemination of publications by appropriate means	2	'17 →	CISO, all agencies
All agencies producing and disseminating statistical information should continue to improve metadata and make it available to users	2	'16 →	CISO, all agencies
Statistics producing agencies enter into data access agreements and licences	1	'15 →	CISO, all agencies
Utilise agency websites to disseminate information as widely as possible, aggregating data, where necessary, to protect confidentiality	1	'15 →	CISO, All agencies

### *Cost estimates for sustainable economic development sector*

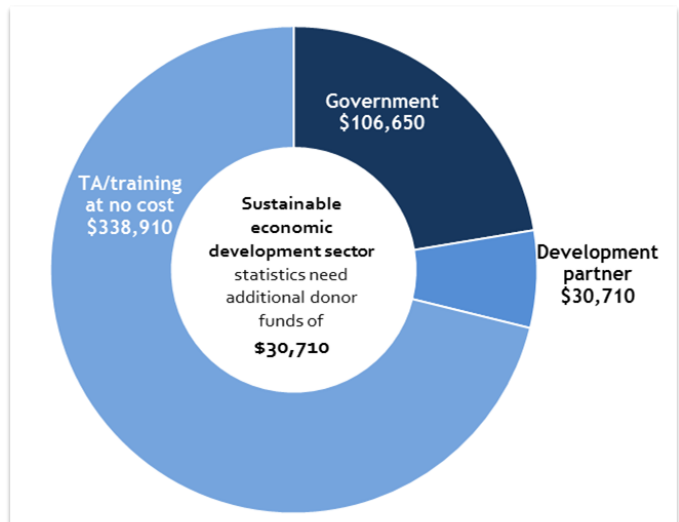
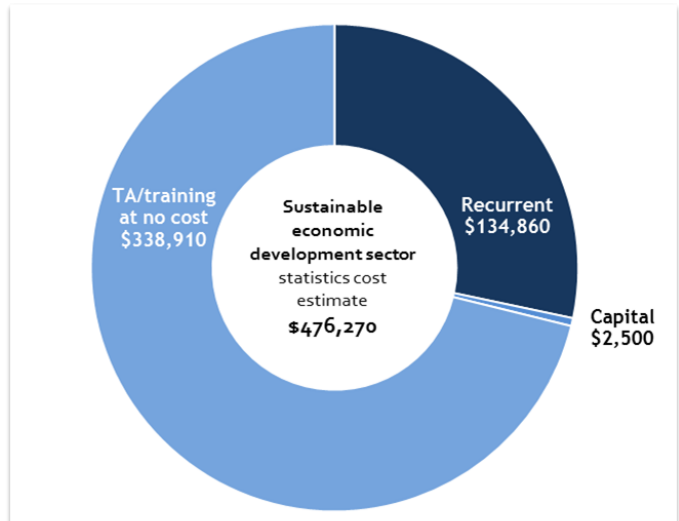
The total cost estimate to achieve the objectives in the sustainable economic development sector for all agencies involved in producing statistics over the period 2015–2020 is \$476,270. Of this, it is estimated that almost three-quarters (71%) will be provided through ongoing technical support, capacity building and training provided by development partners at no cost to the Government of the Cook Islands (Fig 5).

Most of this support will be to improve the quality, methodology, timeliness, accuracy and relevance of economic statistics. The balance of funding required is \$137,360, of which it is anticipated that the Government of the Cook Islands will provide \$106,650 as part of its ongoing budgetary allocation to NSS agencies (Table 4). Development funds will have to be mobilised for the balance of \$137,360, most of which is training and capacity building in the sector. There is an estimate for \$2,500 for capital investment in computers and ICT equipment.

**Table 4: Summary of cost estimates to produce each area of sustainable economic development sector statistics**

Need	TA/Training available from development partners	No current funding	Total
Improve existing collections	234,870	43,240	278,110
Sound methodology	67,320		67,320
Accuracy and reliability	18,360		18,360
Serviceability		80,000	80,000
Accessibility	18,360	14,120	32,480
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$338,910</b>	<b>\$137,360</b>	<b>\$476,270</b>

Figure 5: Cost estimates of sustainable economic development sector statistics



The Cook Islands Government will need to receive the equivalent of \$339,000 over the period 2015–2020 in training and technical assistance provided by regional development partners to produce the core national set of economic statistics.

## Sustainable Natural resources and environment sector

The Cook Islands environment, although considered extremely important and critical to the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the Cook Islands, does not have the real time data and information that recognises the value of the environment and its resources for our economy as well as effective risk management tools to support appropriate management systems. The Cook Islands economy is largely based on its natural environment – whether it be tourism for our beaches, biodiversity, birds, mountains and scenery which are highly valued by overseas visitors, or agriculture and fishing and the sustainable livelihoods of our people. Our environment is very important from all perspectives – economic, social and cultural.

Agencies in the natural resources and environment are a mix of mature established agencies such as Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) and the Meteorological Service (Ministry of Transport - MOT) that have formal, well established data collection systems to new agencies such as the Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority (CISBMA), the Renewable Energy Development Division (OPM REDD) and Climate Change Cook Islands (OPM CCCI) divisions in the Office of the Prime Minister. With the support from development partners, in 2011 MMR began to centralise and improve its databases and information systems into the Integrated Marine Resources Fisheries Information Management System (MRFIMS) for improved management and decision making. This system makes MMR a leader in this sector in terms of statistical production strategies, with obvious potential for the basic design and accessibility principles of the ‘MRFIMS model’ to be replicated and adapted to meet the majority of the sector’s needs.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) has begun to develop a new long-term strategic plan and policy, with an initial discussion document “Agricultural & Food Sector - After MDG Vision” disseminated for consultation with stakeholders in early 2015. The Agricultural & Food Sector - After MDG Vision considered numerous existing primary sector studies, reviews and research suggesting ways to strengthen and develop the sector, with the following themes emerging for possible strategic objectives:<sup>2</sup>

1. Agricultural production moves from high chemical inputs to agro-ecological production modes;
2. More efficient livestock activities for niche markets underpins the green value chain;
3. Healthy food habits contribute to reduced NCD incidence;
4. Small and local geared agri-ventures are commercial reality in the Cook Islands;
5. Ensuring future generations of farmers through education and training in agriculture and business management as well as providing access to credit and finance;
6. The overall governance of the agricultural sector is sector driven; and
7. The institutional framework is supportive of the agricultural sector development.

The discussion document notes that the agriculture sector concerns food, it concerns sustainable natural resources management and it concerns quality of island life. The finalisation of the strategy will require the engagement of all stakeholders with the farming community and the MOA to identify priorities and the detailed strategies required. These then need to be reflected in the revised NSDP for

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<sup>2</sup> Agricultural & Food Sector - After MDG Vision, Draft – January 2015 (<http://www.agriculture.gov.ck/downloads>). Note that strategic objective 5 has been paraphrased.



the strategy to be implemented. At the time this strategy was prepared it was not possible to make technical assistance and capacity building cost estimates for the agriculture and livestock sectors, still very much in the early stages of development.

The outcomes from the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Samoa in 2014 contained recommendations for improving data and statistics and called on development partners.

*“To elaborate appropriate indices for assessing the progress made in the sustainable development of small island developing states that better reflect their vulnerability and guide them to adopt more informed policies and strategies for building and sustaining long-term resilience and to strengthen national disaggregated data and information systems as well as analytical capabilities for decision-making, the tracking of progress and the development of vulnerability-resilience country profiles.”<sup>3</sup>*

It is anticipated that the next national development strategy for the Cook Islands (NSDP 2016-2020) will have a stronger focus on resilience, or the ability of communities to resist, absorb, cope with and recover from the effects of hazards and to adapt to longer term changes without undermining food security or wellbeing. Resilience can be thought of as the capacity to endure shocks and stresses and bounce back; individuals or communities that can ride out the difficulties that life might bring without their overall situation deteriorating. Even when affected by significant hazard events, or by longer term negative trends, resilient communities are able to recover or adapt their livelihoods and continue to improve their lives and associated wealth and wellbeing, or not experience the same level of hardship.

It is also anticipated that the NSDP will include relevant natural resources and environment related targets and indicators from the Sustainable Development Goal framework, including the sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems, conservation of coastal and marine areas, expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services. The SDG framework recognises the need to “build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.”<sup>4</sup> This resilience paradigm shift will require a more holistic, integrated approach addressing sustainable livelihoods, disaster management and climate change to understand the mix of factors that contribute to peoples’ vulnerability in the Cook Islands, including exposure to hazards and stresses; sources of livelihoods; future expectations; and governance structures. It will obviously require the wider use of a broader range of statistical information across social, economic and environment domains. Some agencies do not have the statistical data required for and will need to strengthen data collection, compilation and dissemination systems to provide the required information for monitoring our primary sector and environment. Technical data collection, compilation and reporting statistical capacity and production building strategies have been designed to leverage of the skills of the MMR, the ‘Statistics champions’, in this sector.

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 115 (c) in the outcomes document reference A/CONF.223/3 (<http://www.sids2014.org/content/documents/358A-CONF-223-5%20ENGLISH.pdf>)

<sup>4</sup> SDG Target 1.5.

*Statistical outputs for natural resources and environment sector*

**Table 5: Summary of statistical outputs for natural resources and environment sector**

<b>Common data needs across the sector</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Improve existing collections</b>			
A core national set of indicators and associated timeliness, range and accuracy guidelines is developed for the environment, DRM, energy, agriculture, fisheries, livestock and biosecurity, meteorology and land use at island level	1	15→	OPM CCCI, OPM EMCI, OPM REDD, MOA, MMR, MOT, NES,
A centralised Geographic Information System is used across the sector for land use including environment, climate change, disaster risk reduction and the agricultural sector	1	15→	OPM ICT, OPM EMCI
MMR report on fisheries sector as per regional and international agreements and continue to improve domestic catch statistics	1	15→	MMR
MMR develop national reporting system for environmental health indicators	2	16→	MMR, NES, MoH
The transport sector develop a statistical data collection, compilation and dissemination system to inform the NSDP	1	16→	OPM CPPO, MOA, MMR, MOT, NES,
<b>Sound methodology</b>			
Adopt consistent and appropriate classifications as well as coding and concordance systems across the NSS	1	'16 →	CISO, all agencies
Put in place a clear and transparent procedures for assessing and validating the quality of information and make available to the public through metadata documentation	2	'16 →	CISO
<b>Accuracy and reliability</b>			
All agencies need to improve their data analysis and interpretation capabilities	1	'15 →	all agencies
Statistical releases and analysis include meta data and quality assessment	2	'17 →	all agencies
<b>Serviceability</b>			
The Agriculture and Food sector strategy and associated implementation plan is finalised with consultations from stakeholders and communities	1	'15 →	MOA
All agencies should develop dissemination strategies for public information to ensure wide use of important information	1	'15 →	All agencies, Statistics Council
All agencies should ensure statistics staff have a minimum set of skills in basic data management software packages, such as MS Excel and MS Access	2	'16 →	OPM (ICT), OPSC, CISO
All agencies are able to report on regional and international agreements and conventions on a regular and timely basis	2	'17 →	Statistics Council, all agencies
<b>Accessibility</b>			
All agencies in the sector develop and implement data access protocols	2	'16 →	CISO and All agencies
Develop systems that allow for easy access using a	3	'18→	All agencies, OPM ICT

Common data needs across the sector	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
depository and central clearing house that will ensure data is accurate and reliable with metadata, including a centralised GIS			
Data dissemination strategies are required to ensure that stakeholders are aware of where and how information can be accessed and that information is packaged to meet the needs of stakeholders	2	'18→	All agencies, CISO, OPM ICT

### *Cost estimates for natural resources and environment sector*

The total cost estimate to achieve the objectives in the natural resources and environment sector for all agencies involved in producing statistics over the period 2015 – 2020 is \$274,870 which does not include cost estimates for the surveys conducted with funding under the strategic objectives which will be used and analysed by the natural resources and environment sector<sup>5</sup>. Of this, it is estimated that about two-thirds or 67% will be provided through ongoing technical support, capacity building and training provided by development partners at no cost to the Government of the Cook Islands. The balance of funding required is \$91, 240, of which it is anticipated that the Government of the Cook Islands will provide \$18,230. Development funds will have to be mobilised for the balance of \$73,010 which mostly involves an ongoing programme to improve the accuracy, reliability and timeliness of the domestic fishery and the stakeholder consultations needed for the final drafting of the Agriculture and Food sector strategy. There is a modest estimate of \$2,500 for capital investment in computers and ICT equipment for meteorology statistics.

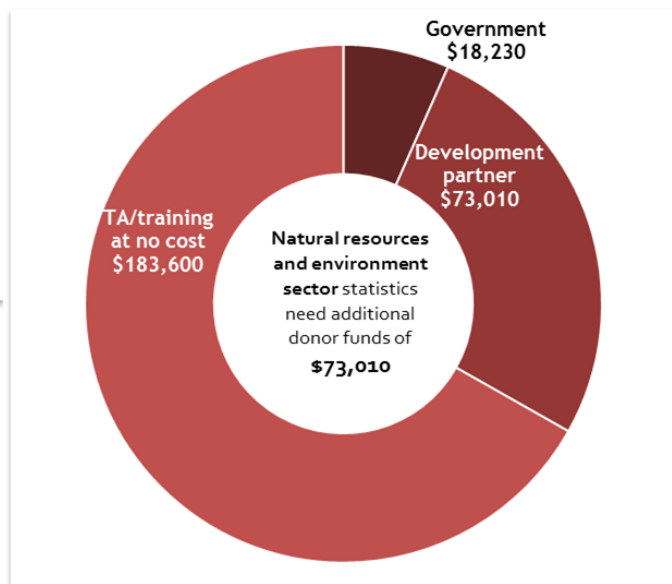
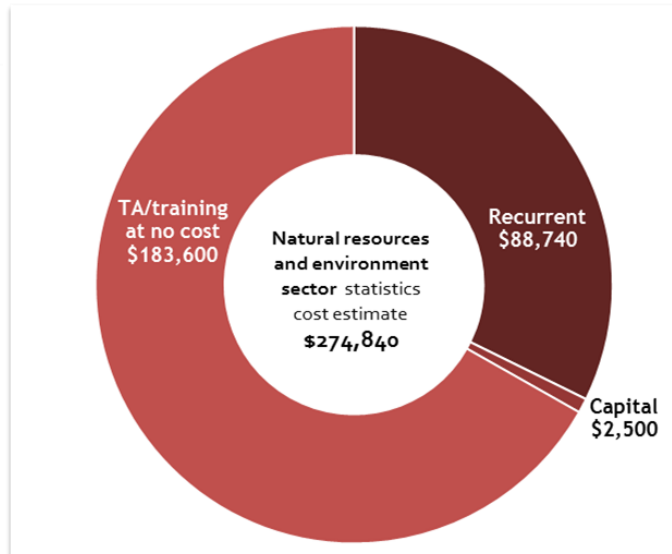
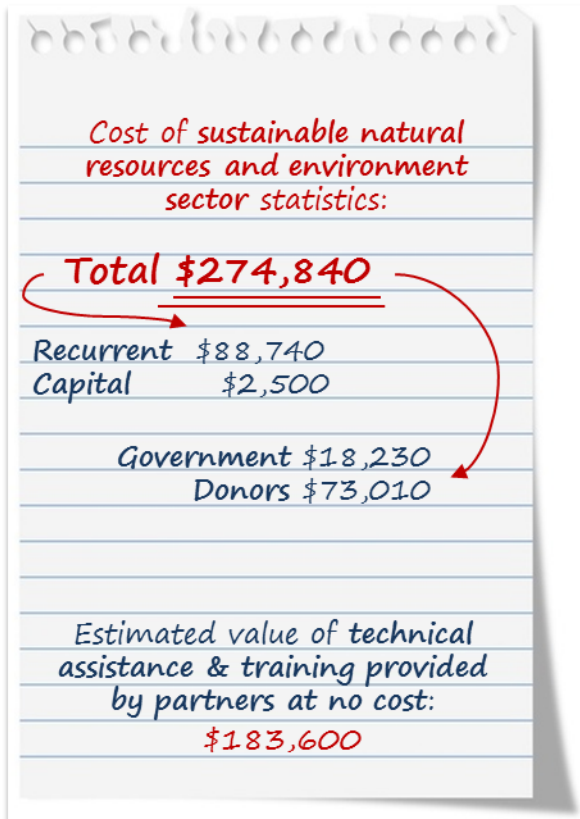
The costs of improving existing data collections are the most significant cost for natural resources and environment sector statistics, at \$128,940; which includes \$7,500 per year for domestic fisheries statistics and establishing a comprehensive statistical reporting system for the Ministry of Transport, including climate statistics. The range of technical assistance, training and capacity building available for this sector from UN and regional organisations is reflected in the estimates for development partners.

**Table 6: Summary of cost estimates to produce each area of natural resources and environment sector statistics**

Need	TA/Training available from development partners	No current funding	Total
Improve existing collections	67,320	61,620	128,940
Sound methodology	18,360	5,000	23,360
Accuracy and reliability	55,080		55,080
Serviceability	24,480	10,500	34,980
Accessibility	18,360	14,120	32,480
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,600</b>	<b>91,240</b>	<b>274,840</b>

<sup>5</sup> This estimate does not include the funds for climate change mitigation or disaster risk management activities currently managed by the Office of the Prime Minister as it was not possible to make an estimate of the 'statistics' components of these projects.

Figure 6: Cost estimates of natural resources and environment sector



Natural resources and environment sector statistics will be improved with support from ongoing technical assistance and training from regional agencies including WHO, FAO, SPC, FFA, SOPAC and SPREP

## Sustainable human and social development sector

A range of legislation and policies provide the regulatory framework for the sector, including international and regional treaties and conventions along with strategic policy instruments that provide each agency with its operating mandate and functions. The core agencies in the social sector are the Ministry of Internal Affairs (INTAFF), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of Cultural Development.

In general, agencies have limited capacity and processes in place to assess and validate the quality of their outputs – reports and publications and have problems releasing statistics in an accessible format in a timely manner. Triangulation of data with other source data is carried out in some areas, such as the Police checking their data against Ministry of Health data or the CISO checking survey school enrolment rates with those of the Ministry of Education. In addition, to develop the core set of official statistics, social sector agencies need to work with economic, environment and governance sector agencies in areas like sustainable livelihoods, the social and economic determinants of health, wellbeing, vulnerability and risk statistics and so on.

Capacity for statistical collection, compilation and analysis varies across the sector. The Ministry of Education is the only agency producing a statistical report on an annual basis. The Ministry of Health has not had a timely, reliable and regular statistical reporting system since the MedTech32 records management system was introduced, nor does it have the capacity to develop the statistical database required to interface with the records system to produce the information. The Health Information Strategy outlines the requirements to develop a statistical reporting system; but the strategy requires a fully costed implementation plan and the staff to do the required work including a database programmer and a graduate level data analyst or epidemiologist.

In the crime and justice sector, the Cook Islands Police Force are implementing a project to improve the timely reporting of police complaints statistics from its case management system. The Ministry of Justice has recently begun including statistical information on court cases in its annual report, with the information compiled manually from court records.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is custodian of a number of important datasets for social statistics, including welfare payments and beneficiaries, the register of persons living with disabilities, compliance activities of the Commissioner for Labour and projects funded under the Social Development Fund. None of these departments have reliable and robust database systems much less reporting and analytical capacity. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is mainstreaming the implementation of policies for gender, youth and disability across the whole of government and the system for the ongoing sector reviews, analysis and data collection, compilation systems for monitoring progress towards equality have not been established.

The Cook Islands is implementing a Civil Registration and Vital Statistics strategy to improve the timeliness and quality of official reporting of births and deaths, as well as coordinating data sharing between the key players (health, justice and statistics). Technical assistance and training for this is provided by the SPC and the Brisbane Accord Group (BAG).

## *Statistical outputs for sustainable human and social development*

**Table 7: Summary of statistical outputs for sustainable human and social development sector**

Common data needs across the sector	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
<b>Improve existing collections</b>			
Improved range and accuracy of demographic indicators including population estimates and life expectancy at island level	1	'15 →	CISO, MOH, MOJ
Statistical indicators on economic empowerment, labour force and human resources regularly collected and released	2	'17 →	INTAFF, OPM CPPO, CISO, MFEM, OPSC, MOE
Questionnaire module developed for use in household surveys to accurately assess numeracy and literacy levels	2	'16 →	CISO, MOE
Analysis of household survey data (Census, HIES, Labour Market, STEPs) for vulnerable groups (youth, disabled, older persons, women)	1	'16 →	CISO, INTAFF, OPM CPPO
Statistics on crime and justice are regularly compiled and released	1	'15 →	CIPF, MOJ, CISO
Statistics on social protection, including welfare payments, NGO service providers and cost of dependent care, are regularly compiled and released	1	'15 →	INTAFF, CISO, OPM CPPO
Statistics on cultural industries and traditional knowledge are regularly compiled and released	1	'16 →	MOCD, MOE
The health information system provides annual statistics for monitoring progress towards the goals in the national health strategy	1	'15 →	MOH
Statistical indicators and information for measuring progress in sector policies regularly compiled and released (gender, youth, disability)	1	'15 →	All agencies
<b>Sound methodology</b>			
Adopt consistent and appropriate classifications as well as coding and concordance systems across the NSS	1	'16 →	CISO, all agencies
Put in place a clear and transparent procedures for assessing and validating the quality of information and make available to the public through metadata documentation	2	'16 →	Statistics Council, CISO
Integrated household survey programme implemented to minimise cost of household surveys and make sure households selected are rotated	1	'16 →	Statistics Council, CISO
<b>Accuracy and reliability</b>			
All agencies need to improve their data analysis and interpretation capabilities	1	'15 →	CISO, OPM ICT, OPSC, all agencies
Statistical releases and analysis include metadata and quality assessment	2	'17 →	CISO, all agencies
<b>Serviceability</b>			
All agencies should develop dissemination strategies for public information to ensure wide use of important information.	1	'15 →	All agencies, Statistics Council

<b>Common data needs across the sector</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
All agencies should ensure statistics staff have a minimum set of skills in basic data management software packages, such as MS Excel and MS Access.	2	'16 →	OPM ICT, OPSC, CISO
User satisfaction surveys regularly conducted and results disseminated	2	'17 →	Statistics Council, all agencies
<b>Accessibility</b>			
CISO, ministries of Education and Health develop detailed level datasets and associated metadata for research and analysis accessible through data access agreements and sharing arrangements	3	'18 →	MOE, MOH, CISO
Improve and utilise agency websites to disseminate information to wider audience than sector stakeholders or members, aggregating data, where necessary, to protect confidentiality	1	'15 →	All agencies, Statistics Council

### *Cost estimates for sustainable human and social development*

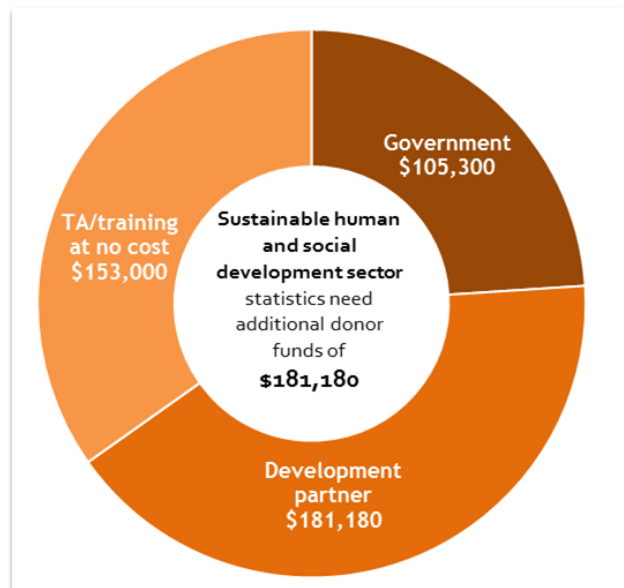
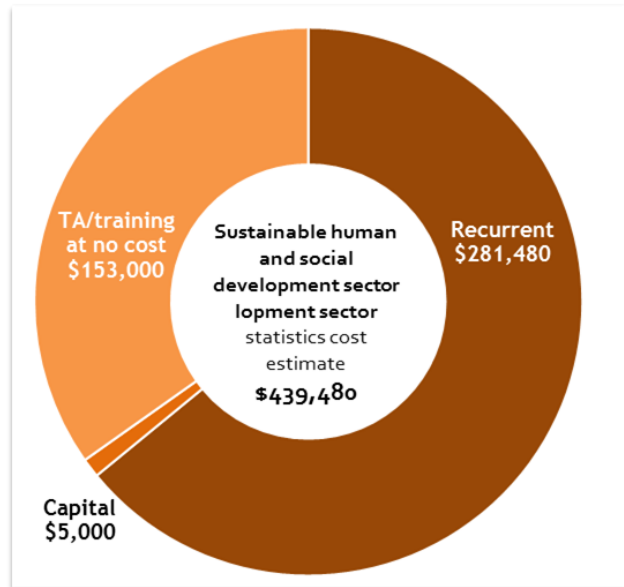
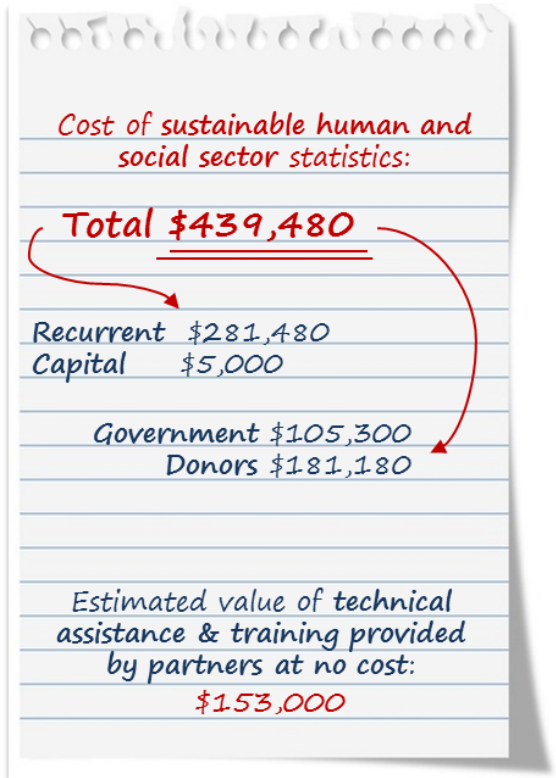
The total cost estimate to achieve the objectives in the sustainable human and social development sector for all agencies involved in producing statistics over the period 2015 – 2020 is \$439,120 which does not include cost estimates the surveys conducted with funding under the strategic objectives which will be analysed by the human and social development sector. Of this, it is estimated that 35% will be provided through ongoing technical support, capacity building and training provided by development partners at no cost to the Government of the Cook Islands. The balance of funding required is \$286,480, of which it is anticipated that the Government of the Cook Islands will provide \$105,300. Development funds will have to be mobilised for the balance of \$181,180 which mostly involves establishing the statistical reporting systems required by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice. There is a modest estimate of \$5,000 for capital investment in computers and ICT equipment.

The costs of improving existing data collections are the most significant cost for sustainable human and social development sector statistics, at \$359,160; which includes \$160,000 for a graduate level data analyst or epidemiologist from 2016-2020, implementing the Health Information Strategy (\$60,000) and approximately \$30,000 for designing, developing and implementing information systems in the Ministry of Justice (Table 8).

**Table 8: Summary of cost estimates to produce each area of sustainable human and social development sector statistics**

Need	TA/Training available from development partners	No current funding	Total
Improve existing collections	91,800	267,360	359,160
Sound methodology	18,360	5,000	23,360
Accuracy and reliability	18,360	0	18,360
Serviceability		0	0
Accessibility	24480	14,120	38,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>153,000</b>	<b>286,480</b>	<b>439,480</b>

**Figure 7: Cost of sustainable human and social development sector statistics**



Social statistics will be derived from the Household Income and Expenditure Survey and Labour Market surveys and basic statistical training funded under the CSDS Strategic Objectives.



## Sustainable Governance sector

The Cook Islands governance sector as specified in the NSDP includes 10 agencies divided into three sub-sets: law and order, central agencies and regulatory agencies, ranging in size from small to medium sized agencies, with some providing direct services to the public while others provide services mainly to government. A number of these agencies have national mandates and outreach which include the *Pa Enua* island councils and administrations.

The legal and institutional environment for statistical information collection for governance is guided by a range of legislation, policy mandates and international conventions. A few key pieces of legislation provide a framework for all ministries and agencies. These include the Public Records Act 1984 and the Official Information Act 2008. The Public Records Act 1984 provides for the National Archives to ensure the preservation of public records and gives instructions on how long documents need to be maintained, and the circumstances under and methods by which they can be disposed. The Official Information Act 2008 provides a clear definition of 'official information' and outlines a clear principle of availability, unless there is good reason for withholding it. These two key pieces of legislation establish the foundation on which data management and availability are built and are relevant to all agencies.

The Cook Islands government is a 'State Party' to a number of human rights conventions it has ratified, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as its reporting obligations for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the Common Core Document (CCD). The Ministry of Internal Affairs is mandated to report against CRC, CEDAW and CRPD; and very few of these official reports have been presented according to the requirements contained in the conventions. The human rights conventions reporting requires the government to report on measures taken in 'progressive compliance' with the convention as well as providing the statistical information required by the Committee's 'concluding comments' on recommended actions. There is currently no specialised agency for human rights in the Cook Islands, with the Office of the Ombudsman largely responsible for this role. In addition, the Cook Islands government is obliged to report against a number of regional international initiatives such as Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals (and subsequent Sustainable Development Goals), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration and so on.

The Cook Islands government recognised its obligation to report to its people on both the performance of the government itself as well as elected leaders when it localised the MDG framework to include an additional goal for governance; with the same principles included in the NSDP. However it has struggled to define what governance means to the people of the Cook Islands and has not made significant inroads on developing monitoring and reporting systems. Progressive reforms have been introduced to recognise government's obligation to ensure people have decent work and are not exploited; budget processes are transparent and accountability mechanisms are in place; and laws, policies and regulations have been implemented to safeguard human rights, as some examples. However there are no mechanisms in place to assess progress on a regular basis and make this information publically known; nor has there been any systematic research and statistical information on the public's perceptions on government performance.

*It is anticipated that the 2016 NSDP review and redesign process will address these gaps, and a coherent framework of goals, targets and indicators will be developed for reporting progress. The sector data needs presented here are in no way final but have been included to provide indicative cost estimates for the kind of statistical information that can be provided from this sector.*

### **Statistical outputs for sustainable governance sector**

**Table 9: Summary of statistical outputs for sustainable governance sector**

<b>Common data needs across the sector</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Improve existing collections</b>			
Statistical reporting system developed to monitor government ministry/agency business plans and annual reports (financial reports and narratives) timely submission and contents for legal requirements	2	'17→	OPSC, OPM CPPO, MFEM, CLO
Crown Law Office develop monitoring system for act amendments requested, new legislation, bills submitted forwarded for review, bills presented to parliament select committees and bills submitted to parliament on an annual basis	1	'15→	CLO, Clerk of Parliament
Statistical reporting system developed to facilitate government compliance with 'state party' obligations reporting against human rights treaty obligations including UPR, CCD, CEDAW, CRC, CRPD, State of the Environment and so on	1	'16→	OPM CPPO, INTAFF, MFAI
Statistical reporting system developed to monitor reporting of Statutory Office Holders (Ombudsman, Electoral Commissioner, Auditor General, Solicitor General etc) against legislative requirements for reporting	2	'17→	CLO, Clerk of Parliament
Statistical reporting system developed to monitor complaints made for the code of conduct and other key policies	1	'16→	OPSC, INTAFF, Ombudsman
Statistical reporting system developed to monitor type and number of requests made under Freedom of Information Act	1	'16→	OPM CPPO, Ombudsman
<b>Sound methodology</b>			
Sector agencies apply best practise reporting standards and guidelines including using consistent and appropriate classification frameworks.	3	'18→	OPM CPPO, OPSC, Ombudsman
<b>Accuracy and reliability</b>			
Statistical reporting processes are developed and implemented for report review processes, consultations and public perceptions of the reliability of the information	3	'18→	OPM CPPO, Ombudsman
<b>Serviceability</b>			
Formalise the regular review of statistical procedures	3	'19→	OPM CPPO, OPSC,

Common data needs across the sector	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
and data of each agency using agreed sector-wide protocols (once being produced)			Ombudsman
Prepare and implement a consolidated publication release schedule for the individual sector agencies based on the sector-wide protocols	2	'18→	OPM CPPO, OPSC, Ombudsman
<b>Accessibility</b>			
Establish and adopt standards to ensure dissemination of official government reports to the general public in a form that is easily understood	3	'19→	OPM CPPO, OPSC, Ombudsman, INFAFF

### *Cost estimates for sustainable governance sector*

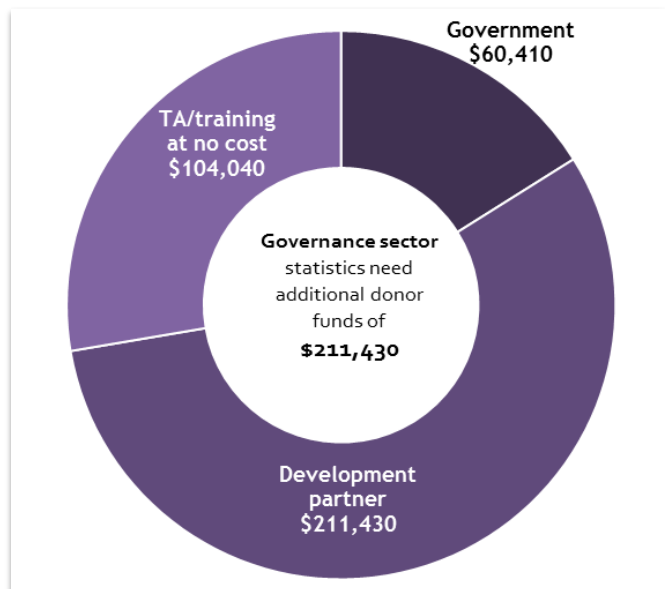
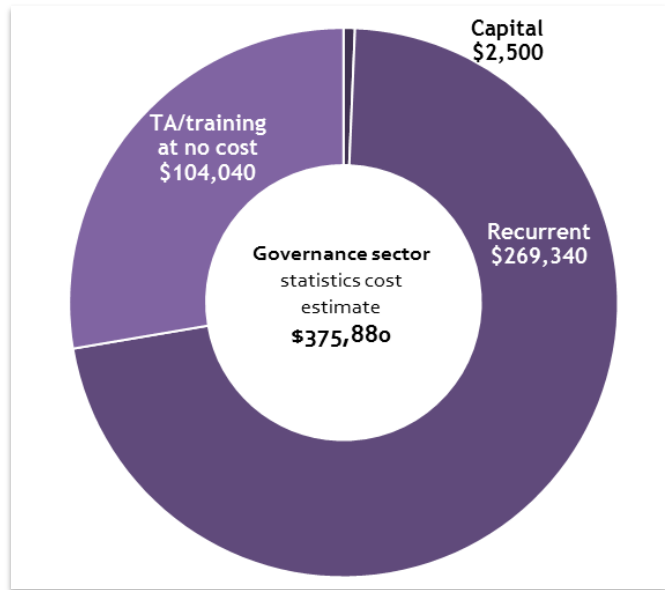
The total cost estimate to achieve the objectives in the governance sector for all agencies involved in producing statistics over the period 2015 – 2020 is \$375,880; noting that the governance sector statistical framework will be developed in late 2015 and early 2016. Of this, it is estimated that about 28% will be provided through ongoing technical support, capacity building and training provided by development partners at no cost to the Government of the Cook Islands. The balance of funding required is \$277,960 of which it is anticipated that the Government of the Cook Islands will provide \$60,410. Development funds will have to be mobilised for the balance of \$211,430, which mostly involves establishing the statistical reporting systems and training people how to use them.

The costs of establishing data collections are the most significant cost for governance sector statistics, at \$314,540; which includes finding funds for the design of systems and training staff how to use them with support from regional development partners (Table 10).

**Table 10: Summary of cost estimates to produce each area of sustainable governance sector statistics**

Need	TA/Training available from development partners	No current funding	Total
Improve existing collections	67,320	247,220	314,540
Sound methodology	24,480	0	24,480
Accuracy and reliability	6,120	10,500	16,620
Serviceability	0	0	0
Accessibility	0	20,240	20,240
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,920</b>	<b>277,960</b>	<b>375,880</b>

**Figure 8: Cost of Sustainable Governance sector statistics**



The costs of governance sector statistics are indicative only and can be finalised when the next national sustainable development strategy is finalised.

# IMPLEMENTATION, COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

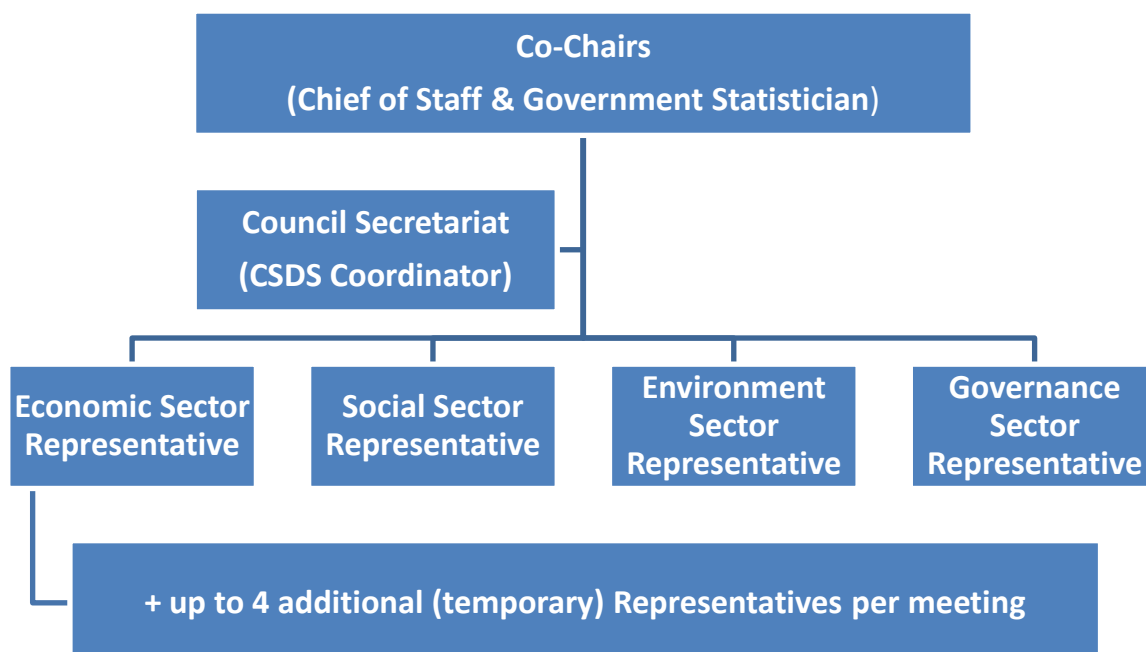
## Implementing and coordinating Agencies

All agencies within the National statistical system will have a role to play in the implementation of the CSDS, whether that is a supporting role, main role or a combination of both. A more detailed Implementation plan based on the CSDS will be created on an annual basis to clarify what is expected of each agency. There will be an accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework developed alongside the implementation plan to successfully measure progress made on a more regular basis.

The Statistics Office will be responsible for the overall coordination of the CSDS with a dedicated full time CSDS Coordinator position newly created and reporting straight to the Government Statistician.

In order to stay up to date with the evolving data needs of all stakeholders, one of the actions in the CSDS is the formation of a Cook Islands Statistics Council. The Statistics council will provide the NSO with external feedback and to help monitor CSDS progress made on a regular basis. Each member will be charged with representing the issues their various sectors face and to provide advice and guidance on including any new statistical issues not currently covered in the CSDS. Figure 8 outlines the *proposed* structure for the Statistics Council.

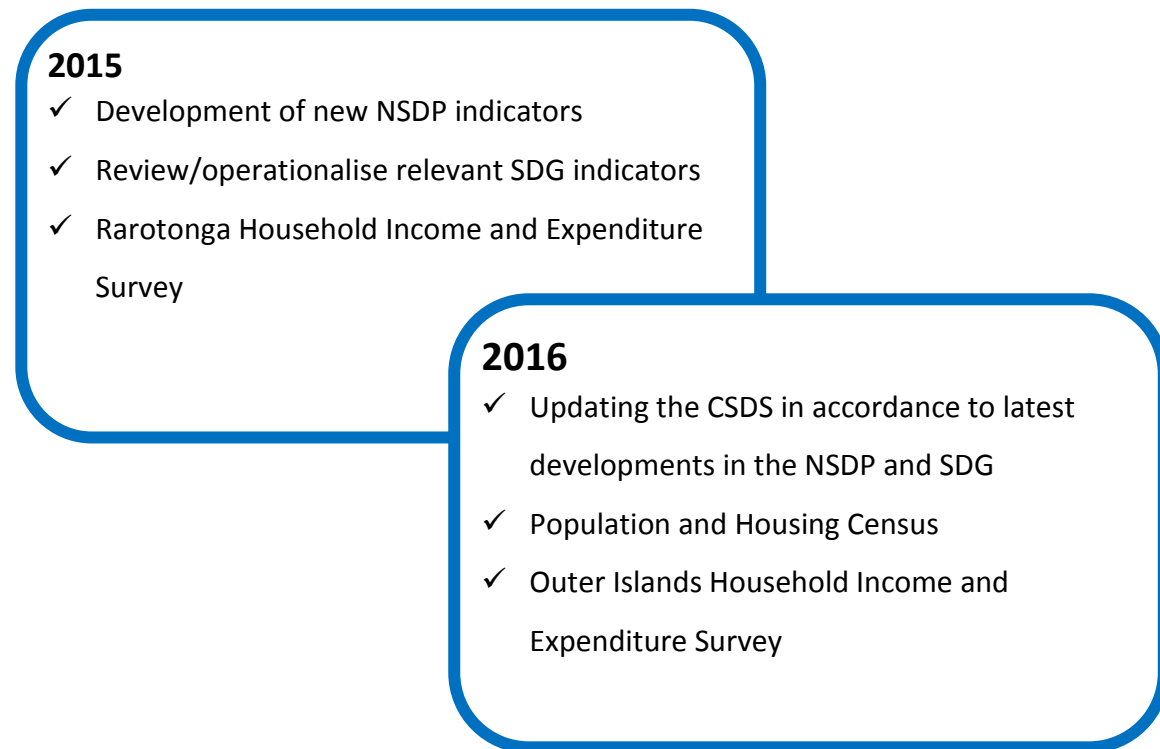
Figure 9: Proposed Structure for the Statistics Council



The composition of the council will be made up of with 6 long-term members to ensure continuity, a permanent general secretariat for dealing with the administrative and reporting duties and up to 4 temporary members brought in on an ad-hoc basis for complicated issues that require expert opinion. The

figure below outlines upcoming statistical activities that will require the active participation and recommendations of the Council.

**Figure 10: Tentative CISAC major statistical activities**



## **Responsibility and protocols for updating the CSDS**

The CSDS will be treated as a living document in order to give the National statistical system the flexibility needed to adapt to constantly changing national and international development priorities.

The authority to make changes to the CSDS will sit with the Government Statistician. All operational changes to the CSDS must be documented and reported to the Statistics Council, including the justification(s) for change. Time permitting, any high level strategic changes must first be submitted to the Statistics Council for discussion and their recommendations must be taken into consideration before any decision is made by the Government Statistician.

The following important points have been identified during the CSDS design phase and will need to be reviewed and included into the CSDS as soon as more complete information become available.

Strategic issues identified and planned for review in the near future:

- adjusting the CSDS budget depending on the availability of government and donor funding
- Incorporate the new National Development Indicators for monitoring progress of the NSDP
- Selection and Addition of SDG indicators into the CSDS
- Evaluating CSDS priorities and reorganization of NSO resources pending on the year funding is secured for a Household Income and Expenditure Survey

## Conclusion

In government's ongoing efforts to develop a framework for the management for development results, the CISO has supported the design, implementation, and monitor the Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS). Assistance was provided by SPC and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21). This strategy was developed based on comprehensive assessments made of data and capacity needs across four sectors – sustainable economic development, sustainable human and social development, natural resources and environment governance. Extensive information gathering and consultation was involved in this process to ensure that this strategy reflects the needs of the Cook Islands national statistical system and is grounded in all of the needs of users of statistical information.

The statistical development strategies for the different sectors are similar, with the need for better coordination in the sectors, consistency between statistics collected and disseminated with the goals and outputs in the national sustainable development plan, better interpretation and analysis of statistics, more regular reporting, increased transparency in statistical processes and availability and use of common technology, classifications, standards and frameworks. Some agencies have considerable expertise and a long history of producing high quality statistical information, while for many others this is a relatively new responsibility.

The strategic objectives will provide direction for an integrated approach, fostering cooperation, maximising the efficient use of existing facilities, staff and resources, while drawing on the expertise of those outside the sector within the national statistical system of the Cook Islands as well as from development partners. The systematic use of international and national standards will contribute to monitoring the progress towards achieving NSDP results as well as integrated platforms for analysing the sustainable economic and social development of the Cook Islands.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Strategic framework action plan, 2015-2020

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. Legislation &amp; Policy:</b> Ensure the CSDS addresses domestic information and policy demands, in particular for the NSDP and the national budget process	1.1 Long term statistical strategy	Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics (CSDS) in place to guide the long term development of statistics in the Cook Islands to support evidence informed decision making	1	Short term	CISO to lead, OPM
	1.2 Operational new legislation (Statistics Act) to support official statistics	Statistics Act 1966 reviewed to ensure required legislative environment is in place, taking into account the Public Records Act and Official Information Act. Revised Statistics Act drafted includes updated statistical protocols, including mandate and composition of the Statistics Advisory Council	1	Short term	CISO and CLO
		Amendments to Statistics Act endorsed by Parliament	1	Short term	CISO and CLO
	1.3 Statistics for evidence decision making	Integrate CSDS into the national development policy processes and context (NSDP M&E framework, budget, donor programmes, OPSC performance review, etc.) to facilitate evidence-based decision making and planning	1	Long term	Central Agencies to lead, All agencies
	1.4 National development indicators consistent with NSDP priorities	Develop core set of economic sector statistics	2	Medium term	MFEM (Treasury and CISO), BTIB, MOA, FSC, MMR, Tourism, INTAFF, OPM
		Develop core set of social sector statistics	2	Medium term	MOH, MOE, INTAFF, CISO, MOA, OPM
		Develop core set of natural resources sector statistics	2	Medium term	NES, CCCI, CISO, OPM (CPPO)
		Develop core set of governance sector statistics	2	Medium term	OPM, OPSC, Ombudsman, MOJ, INTAFF
		Produce annual reports on national development indicator progress (including NSDP indicators)	2	Medium term	OPM (CPPO), all agencies



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>2. Access, Use and Communication:</b> Improve awareness of the value and use of statistics in evidence based policy.	2.1 Improved availability and usefulness of statistics	Publish inventory of publicly available statistics	1	Short term	CISO and All agencies
		Establish central repository for statistical and analytical reports and databases	2	Medium term	OPM ICT, CISO, MOCD (Archives) and all agencies producing statistics
		Conduct regular review of all statistical products with key stakeholders to make sure information needs are being met	2	Medium term	Statistics Advisory Council, CISO and all agencies producing statistics
		Develop and make available documentation and metadata for users	2	Medium term	CISO and all agencies producing statistics
		Make data available in the most useful and accessible format for a range of users in a timely fashion	1	Short term	CISO and all agencies producing statistics
	2.2 Improved dissemination	Develop a public calendar for publication releases and meet dates, for agencies regularly producing information	2	Medium term	CISO and all agencies producing statistics
		Establish protocols on data dissemination in line with statistics legislation	2	Medium term	CISO, CLO
		Develop style guide which establishes the standards for preparation and dissemination of statistics	3	Long term	CISO, all agencies producing statistics
		Improve data dissemination through the Internet and other means to make the information accessible to all Cook Islanders and external stakeholders	1	Medium term	CISO, OPM ICT, all agencies producing statistics
	2.3 Improved communication	Use a broad range of advocacy methods to develop public awareness of official statistics and outreach programme for improving statistical literacy	1	Long term	Statists Advisory Council, All agencies
	2.4 Data access and sharing	Develop protocols for data access and sharing across all agencies	1	Medium term	CISO, Statists Advisory Council, All agencies
		Develop standardised confidentiality agreements to safeguard Micro data	1	Short term	CISO, Statists Advisory Council, OPM Research Council
		Investigate the usefulness of a national unique identifier to enable improved data integration and coordination	2	Long term	Statists Advisory Council, CISO, All agencies

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>3. Knowledge management:</b> Improve data and information management	3.1 Sound and effective methodologies for collection ensured	Develop and review operations handbooks or guides outlining procedures for ensuring quality of data collection and management	1	Long term	CISO and all statistics producing agencies
		Develop and strengthen the use of international classifications, standards, concepts and definitions, modified where applicable to meet Cook Islands needs	1	Long term	Statistics Advisory Council, CISO, individual agencies
		Adhere to agreed national and International statistical definitions, classifications, and standards	2	Long term	CISO, Statistics Council, all statistics producing agencies
		CISO to establish resource/toolkit for improving data quality	1	Medium term	CISO
		Provide opportunities for statistical staff to participate in international workshops/ seminars in order to stay up to date on current statistical developments related to improving methodologies and new frameworks.	2	Long term	CISO, OPSC, all statistics producing agencies
	3.2 Improved maintenance, security and archiving of records	Agencies develop plans for record creation, management, storage, preservation, archiving, electronic security and destruction policies in line with legislation	1	Long term	All agencies, MOCD (Archives), CLO
		Ensure archiving practices meet regional standards through training in Pacific Regional Branch for International Council on Archives tool kit	2	Medium term	MOCD (Archives), Ombudsman, CISO
		Agencies to review and update plans (SOPs) for disaster risk management to safeguard statistical databases, metadata and information	1	Short term	OPM ICT, EMCI, OPSC
		Agencies to implement disaster risk management plans statistical databases, meta data and information and regularly test recovery systems	1	Medium to long term	OPM ICT, EMCI, OPSC
	3.3 Participation in international initiatives	Subscribe to the IMF General Data Dissemination System (GDDS)	2	Short term	CISO
		Review feasibility of subscribing to the Special Data Dissemination System (SDDS)	3	Long term	CISO

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>4. NSS Coordination:</b> Improve collaboration, coordination, and consultation with internal and external stakeholders	4.1 Improved stakeholder engagement	Agencies establish processes for regular assessments of internal and stakeholder information needs and make the results available	1	Long term	Statistics Advisory Council, all agencies producing statistics
		Agencies regularly engage and collaborate with stakeholders in order to increase their understanding and/or participation in essential statistical processes, issues, concepts and frameworks like data collection, availability, validation, dissemination, revisions to methodology etc	1	Long term	Statistics Advisory Council, all agencies producing statistics
		Agencies work together to ensure data is useful, high quality and meets user needs	1	Long term	Statistics Advisory Council, all agencies producing statistics
		Regular user/producer forums held (consider in conjunction with other forums)	2	Medium term	Statistics Advisory Council, all agencies producing statistics
		Official Information Act register is regularly maintained and kept up to date, and readily accessible on the internet and in other formats	2	Medium term	OPM, Ombudsman's Office
	4.2 Improved NSS coordination	Statistics Advisory Council established and providing guidance and advice for statistical development	1	Short term	Statistics Advisory Council, CISO, NSDC
		NSS Stakeholder Engagement Plan developed and endorsed	1	Short term	Statistics Advisory Council, CISO, NSDC, OPM
		Develop and set up statistical survey clearing house (including development partner funded activities)	2	Short term	Statistics Advisory Council, CISO, NSDC, OPM
		National and international reporting requirement framework developed to facilitate integration and coordination of statistical information for reporting	1	Short term	OPM, MFA, all agencies producing official reports
		Develop formal arrangements with overseas counterparts for information sharing, strengthen existing relationships as per the framework for Pacific Regionalism	3	Long term	OPM, MFA
		Develop integrated household and enterprise survey programme including the Census (population and agriculture), household and enterprise surveys (economic, health, labour, tourism, etc.)	1	Short term	CISO to develop and overseen by Statistics Advisory Council (all agencies)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>5. Institutional and Human Resources Development:</b> Ensure sufficient and sustainable human, financial and physical capacity to deliver statistical outputs and services.	5.1 Improved databases	Agencies to review and identify statistical database needs and outline required database development in line with Cook Islands ICT Policy	1	Short term	OPM (ICT), all agencies producing statistics
		Government ICT department to provide technical assistance in database creation and management to facilitate system compatibility between government agencies	2	Medium term	OPM (ICT), all agencies producing statistics
		Training staff in use and maintenance of statistical database	2	Medium - Long term	OPM (ICT), all agencies producing statistics
	5.2 Increased analytical capacity	Identify and evaluate statistical capacity building needs	1	Medium Term	OPSC, OPM to lead, all agencies producing statistics
		Job descriptions for policy analysts, planners, and data and information managers to specifically reflect minimum technical skills in data analysis	1	Long term	OPSC, OPM
		Format of annual business plans includes core national statistical indicators for NSDP and sector strategy output indicators	1	Long term	OPSC, OPM, MFEM, all agencies producing statistics
		Develop and run training programme to improve statistical interpretation and analysis capacity	1	Long term	CISO, Statistics Advisory Council, OPSC, all agencies producing statistics
		Strengthen partnerships with regional and international agencies and institutions for statistical training opportunities	3	Long term	CISO, Statistics Advisory Council, all agencies producing statistics
		Users and producers of official statistical information have a clear understanding of NSS and the services provided by CISO	2	Medium term	Statistics Advisory Council CISO, OPM, all agencies producing statistics
	5.3 Knowledge and tools shared across the NSS	Identify opportunities for collaboration and transferring technical knowledge and skills between government agencies	2	Medium term	OPSC, Statistics Advisory Council

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITY	Priority (1-3)	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
	5.4 Information technology effectively maintained	Following development of a national ICT Policy, review current systems, network, software, databases, backup processes and hardware	1	Long term	OPM (ICT)
		Government agency Business Plans include requirements for IT procurement of statistical systems, including capital replacement in the short- to medium-term	1	Long term	OPSC, OPM (ICT), MFEM
	5.5 Human resources developed	A human resource development plan and career pathways guarantee a functional national statistical system	1	Medium term	OPSC, all agencies producing statistics
		Succession plans in place to minimise key person risk	1	Long term	OPSC, all agencies producing statistics

**Note:** Priority 1 is the highest priority. The Time Frame indicates how long it will take to achieve the outputs – so a high priority output can take some time to achieve.

## Appendix 2: Summary of Recommendations for Statistical Processes and Outputs from Sector Reviews

Sector	Sound methodology	Accuracy and reliability	Serviceability	Accessibility
<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector agencies should consult with CISO to identify with a view to adopt consistent and appropriate classification codes.</li> <li>• CISO should actively engage with sector agencies to review what classifications are in use or could be used to ensure consistency across official statistical outputs.</li> <li>• CISO should continue to work with IMF PFTAC to meet GDDS standards for metadata.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All agencies expressed an interest in improving their data analysis and interpretation capabilities. Opportunities to improve these skills across the public service should be encouraged. CISO should consider what assistance it can provide in improving agency's data management capabilities – for example, annual or six-monthly MS Access training workshops.</li> <li>• Clear and transparent procedures for assessing and validating the quality of information should be put in place and made available to the public through metadata documentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies should consider preparing and implementing a publication release schedule. This could then be consolidated for a sector wide release schedule.</li> <li>• All agencies should seek opportunities to up skill their staff in basic data management software packages, such as MS Excel and MS Access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other agencies that produce statistical information for the public, such as CITC Visitor Survey, should continue to improve metadata and make this available to users.</li> <li>• All agencies should develop dissemination strategies for public information to ensure wide use of important information. Establish and adopt standards to ensure timely dissemination of publications by appropriate means.</li> <li>• Utilise agency websites to disseminate information to wider audience than sector stakeholders or members.</li> <li>• All agencies should ensure that adequate metadata information is available for publically released data. CISO in particular should continue to develop thorough and complete metadata that is easily accessible by the public.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural resources &amp; Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more holistic approach to understanding internationally accepted standards or good practises is required for implementation across all the agencies for national reporting as well as regional and international reporting.</li> <li>• Consider using the MMR IMS model of assessing the data needs of each of the agencies and designing an integrated IMS similar to MMR with consideration being given to integrating IMS across the sector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sector requires a coordination mechanism designed to better support data collection processes, sharing and dissemination.</li> <li>• Training in data analysis for policy formulation is essential</li> <li>• Transport is a key sector that must be addressed appropriately in the NSDP</li> <li>• Water Information Management Systems must be managed as a priority if there is a likelihood of water charges being contemplated in the near future.</li> <li>• Marine Resources includes the new CISBMA that requires technical as well as policy support to ensure that the development follows international best</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSDP is the cornerstone policy document of the Government and therefore management of its implementation and results must not only be aligned with agency business plans but the outputs and indicators identified in the business plans must inform what, how and when the NSDP result will be achieved and by whom. Currently there is a lack of alignment between NSDP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data access protocols established for each agency and across the sector</li> <li>• A sector review of data that could be shared and develop systems that allow for easy access using a depository or central clearing house that will ensure data is accurate and reliable</li> <li>• Data dissemination strategies that will ensure that stakeholders are aware of where and how information can be accessed.</li> <li>• Data is currently collected for international and regional reporting and should be included as an output of agencies and all datasets developed for international and regional reporting should also be captured in the business planning process.</li> </ul>

Sector	Sound methodology	Accuracy and reliability	Serviceability	Accessibility
		<p>practise – further collaboration of these two agencies might be necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPM to provide support across sectors that will address natural hazards and risks and engages with all communities and the business sector</li> </ul>	<p>and agency mandates.</p>	
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector agencies should consult with CISO to identify with a view to adopt consistent and appropriate classification codes.</li> <li>• CISO should actively engage with sector agencies to review what classifications are in use or could be used to ensure consistency across official statistical outputs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All agencies expressed an interested in improving their data analysis and interpretation capabilities. Opportunities to improve these skills across the public service should be encouraged. CISO should consider what assistance it can provide in improving agency’s data management capabilities – for example, annual or six-monthly MS Access training workshops.</li> <li>• Clear and transparent procedures for assessing and validating the quality of information should be put in place and made available to the public through metadata documentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies should consider preparing and implementing a publication release schedule. This could then be consolidated for a sector wide release schedule.</li> <li>• All agencies should seek opportunities to up skill their staff in basic data management software packages, such as MS Excel and MS Access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All agencies should develop dissemination strategies for public information to ensure wide use of important information. Establish and adopt standards to ensure timely dissemination of publications by appropriate means.</li> <li>• Agencies that produce statistical information for the public should ensure that adequate metadata information is available for publically released data.</li> <li>• Improve and utilise agency websites to disseminate information to wider audience than sector stakeholders or members, aggregating data, where necessary, to protect confidentiality.</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector agencies consult with CISO to identify consistent and appropriate classification codes with a view to adopt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set clear and consistent procedures in place to assess and validate the quality of data publications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalise a revision practice for each individual sector agencies linked to agreed sector-wide protocols.</li> <li>• Prepare and implement a consolidated publication release schedule for the individual sector agencies linked to agreed sector-wide protocols.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and adopt standards to ensure timely dissemination of publications by appropriate means.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Definitions

<b>Accessibility</b>	The ease and conditions under which statistical information can be obtained.
<b>Administrative data</b>	Information primarily collected for the purpose of record-keeping, which is subsequently used to produce statistics. Some examples include data from registrars, hospital morbidity data, housing assistance data and child protection data.
<b>Agency</b>	Denotes either a Ministry, Authority, Department, State Owned Enterprise or Division of a Department
<b>Data capture</b>	The process by which collected data are put into a machine-readable form.
<b>Data revision</b>	Any change in a value of a statistic released to the public by an official statistical agency. Preliminary data are revised when more and better source data become available. "Data revision" describes the policy and practice for identifying the revision status of the data, as well as the availability of revision studies and analyses.
<b>Data security</b>	The measures taken to prevent unauthorized access or use of data.
<b>Data validation</b>	Process of monitoring the results of data compilation and ensuring the quality of the statistical results. Data validation describes methods and processes for assessing statistical data, and how the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to improve statistical processes. In this process, two dimensions can be distinguished: (i) validation before publication of the figures and (ii) validation after publication.
<b>Dissemination</b>	Distribution or transmission of statistical data and metadata to users. Dissemination covers all activities by statistical producers aiming at making data and metadata accessible to users. For data dissemination, various release media are possible, such as electronic format including the internet, CD-ROM, paper publications, files available to authorised users or for public use; fax response to a special request, public speeches, press releases.
<b>Impartiality</b>	An attribute confirming that statistical authorities develop, produce and disseminate statistics in a neutral manner, and that all users must be given equal treatment. A critical pre-requisite for production of high quality statistics.
<b>Institutional environment</b>	Set of rules and the organisational structures that are used as the basis for producing statistics.
<b>Metadata</b>	Data that defines and describes other data.
<b>Methodological soundness</b>	The extent to which the methodology used to compile statistics complies with the relevant international standards, including the professional standards enshrined in the Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics.
<b>National statistical system</b>	The national statistical system (NSS) is the ensemble of statistical organisations and units within a country that jointly collect, process and disseminate official statistics on behalf of the national government.
<b>Periodicity</b>	Frequency of compilation of the data (i.e., the relevant period covered by a data



	observation, e.g., annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily, etc.).
<b>Prerequisites of quality</b>	Institutional conditions for the pursuit of data quality.
<b>Relevance</b>	The degree to which statistics meet current and potential users' needs. Relevance is concerned with whether the available information sheds light on the issues that are important to users. In assessing relevance, one approach is to gauge relevance directly, by polling users about the data. Indirect evidence of relevance may be found by ascertaining where there are processes in place to determine the uses of data and the views of their users or to use the data in-house for research and other analysis. Relevance refers to the processes for monitoring the relevance and practical usefulness of existing statistics in meeting users' needs and how these processes impact the development of statistical programmes.
<b>Reference period</b>	The period of time or point in time to which the measured observation is intended to refer.
<b>Respondent burden</b>	The effort, in terms of time and cost, required for respondents to provide satisfactory answers to a survey. This burden can lead to providers experiencing annoyance, anger, frustration, etc., at being requested to participate, with escalation of these feelings generated by the complexity, length and/or frequency of surveys.
<b>Revision policy</b>	A policy or set of policies, aimed at ensuring the transparency of disseminated data whereby preliminary data are compiled that are later revised when more and better source data become available. Data may also be subject to ad hoc revisions as a result of the introduction of new classifications, compilation frameworks and methodologies which result in the compilation of historical data that replaces previously released data.
<b>Serviceability</b>	Set of practical aspects describing how well the available data meet users' needs. Serviceability is a term that captures the practical aspects of usability of data. The emphasis on "use" thus assumes that data are available. Thus, key aspects of usability include relevance, timeliness and frequency, consistency, revision policy and practices and availability of metadata.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	People or organisations with an interest in the output and various other aspects of an agency.
<b>Standards</b>	Documented agreements containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics, to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose. Documents, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provide, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.
<b>Statistical data</b>	Characteristics or information that have been collected for statistical purposes, or processed from non-statistical sources, to contribute to the production of official statistics.
<b>Statistical</b>	The complete set of sub-processes needed to support statistical production.

<b><i>process</i></b>	
<b><i>Statistical output</i></b>	Results from a statistical process to be accessed by the final users. Can take the form of aggregate statistics, analysis, and micro data releases and can include different forms of media (e.g. the Internet and paper reports).
<b><i>Timeliness</i></b>	Length of time between data availability and the event or phenomenon they describe. Timeliness refers to the speed of data availability, whether for dissemination or for further processing, and it is measured with respect to the time lag between the end of the reference period and the release of data.
<b><i>User</i></b>	Recipient of statistical information, who transforms it into knowledge needed for decision making or research. The ultimate client of the statistical authority, who will make the judgment as to whether the data or services are fit for purpose.
<b><i>User needs</i></b>	Data or metadata requirements of persons or organisations to meet a particular use or set of uses. User needs refers to the description of users and their respective needs with respect to the statistical data.

## Appendix 4: UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

*Adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission 1994*

<p><b>Principle 1:</b> Relevance, impartiality and equal access</p>	<p>Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the Government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.</p>
<p><b>Principle 2:</b> Professional standards and ethics</p>	<p>To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.</p>
<p><b>Principle 3:</b> Accountability and transparency</p>	<p>To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.</p>
<p><b>Principle 4:</b> Prevention of misuse</p>	<p>The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.</p>
<p><b>Principle 5:</b> Sources of official statistics</p>	<p>Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents.</p>
<p><b>Principle 6:</b> Confidentiality</p>	<p>Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.</p>
<p><b>Principle 7:</b> Legislation</p>	<p>The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.</p>
<p><b>Principle 8:</b> National coordination</p>	<p>Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.</p>
<p><b>Principle 9:</b> Use of international standards</p>	<p>The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.</p>
<p><b>Principle 10:</b> International cooperation</p>	<p>Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.</p>

## Appendix 5: List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BOP	Balance of Payments
BTIB	Business Trade and Investment Board
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSDS	Cook Islands Strategy for the Development of Statistics
CIPA	Cook Islands Pearl Authority
CISBMA	Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority
CISO	Cook Islands Statistics Office
CITC	Cook Islands Tourism Corporation
CLO	Crown Law Office
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DOL	Department of Labour
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FSC	Financial Supervisory Commission
FSDA	Financial Services Development Authority
GDSS	General Data Dissemination System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFS	Government Finance Statistics
GIS	Geographic Information System
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
ICI	Infrastructure Cook Islands
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTAFF	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MMR	Ministry of Marine Resources
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOCD	Ministry of Cultural Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOT	Ministry of Transport includes Meteorological Service
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
NES	Cook Islands National Environment Service
NHT	Natural Heritage Trust
NSDC	National Sustainable Development Committee
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSS	National Statistical System

OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
OPM CPPO	Office of the Prime Minister – Central Policy and Planning Office
OPM CCCI	Office of the Prime Minister – Climate Change Cook Islands
OPM EMCI	Office of the Prime Ministers– Emergency Management Cook Islands
OPM ICT	Office of the Prime Ministers– Information and Communication Technologies
OPM REDD	Office of the Prime Ministers– Renewable Energy Development Division
OPSC	Office of the Public Service Commission
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
PFTAC	Pacific Financial and Technical Assistance Centre
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community

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