



GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

COOK ISLANDS NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

Back to Basics for Youth

15-24yrs

2015-2020



GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

COOK ISLANDS NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2015 – 2020

JUNE 2015

Compiled by
The Youth Division at the Ministry of Internal Affairs
In collaboration with our Partner Agencies¹

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Youth Division, Te Tango Ropianga - Ministry of Internal Affairs, Rarotonga, COOK ISLANDS

¹ Agencies include all those who have been a part of the consultation process – you can find this in Key Stakeholders consulted.

Acronyms and abbreviations:

CI	Cook Islands
CV	Curriculum Vitae
INTAFF	Ministry of Internal Affairs
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NYP	National Youth Policy
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infections
YD	Youth Division

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations:	3
Foreword.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	6
Why develop a National Youth Policy?	7
Purpose of this Policy.....	7
Scope.....	7
Monitoring and Evaluation	8
Youth National Vision	9
Policy Principles	9
Policy Priority Areas	10
<i>Priority Area 1 - Family Relationships</i>	11
<i>Priority Area 2 - Education and Economic Opportunities</i>	12
<i>Priority Area 3 – Empowering youth through community, cultural, spiritual and personal development</i>	14
<i>Priority Area 4 – Supporting young people to achieve optimal health</i>	16
<i>Priority Area 5: Improving Wellbeing and Welfare</i>	18
<i>Priority Area 6: Youth Risk and Resilience</i>	20
Appendix	21
Situational Analysis- Youth	21
Youth Definition	21
Youth Profile	21
Influencing Factors.....	23
Supporting Documents:	24
Key Stakeholders consulted	25

Foreword

Kia Orana to the young people of the Cook Islands

Kia Orana to those who are working diligently to support our young people

Kia Orana

It is with great pleasure that I present the 'Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2015-2019: Back 2 Basics', our roadmap to building brighter futures for and with our young people in mind.

This policy has been formulated with input from young people² across our country through the completion of surveys and discussions. Those surveyed have indicated the various challenges young people in the Cook Islands are facing, with some suggestions on possible solutions to improve outcomes for young people.

We all have a role to play in improving the lives of young people – Government, the various agencies who work with and for young people, our families and most importantly, the young people themselves. Whatever your contribution may be, it matters.

We need to take note of the priority areas contained in this document and target our **investment** towards improving the lives of our youth population. Our Government is committed to investing in young people and their wellbeing, from developing career guidance programmes through to targeted health programmes for young people specific to their needs and issues.

To the young people of the Cook Islands, I encourage you to take an interest in your personal development – **Dream Big! Set your Goals! And achieve them!** I hope that this policy provides some guidance and support to you in achieving those dreams, but ultimately, your role is most important because it requires **action from you, for you**. Your decisions help to shape your future and those decisions have an impact on our development as a nation.

There are numerous opportunities for young people to develop themselves, so why not find out more by contacting the Youth Division at the Ministry of Internal Affairs on 29-370.

In youth we learn; in age we understand – Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach

Hon Albert Nicholas
Minister for Internal Affairs

² Young people refers to the sample of youth who completed surveys from: Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Atiu, Mauke, Mitiaro, Mangaia, Manihiki, Rakahanga, Penrhyn and Pukapuka (including scholarship students from Pukapuka who are currently studying on Rarotonga).

Acknowledgements

The Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2015-2020 has been developed with the support and assistance of many.

Firstly, to our Heavenly Father who has had a hand in the development of this document, thank you!

It is with heartfelt appreciation that we thank the following contributors:

- All the young people of the Cook Islands who participated throughout the consultation process – completing surveys, participating in discussions and contributing their thoughts
- All youth groups who responded to our request for assistance, those whom we visited and those who took time to complete surveys and provide valuable information
- Government Agencies who took time out of their busy schedules to provide feedback on the templates extracted from the 2007-2010 Cook Islands National Youth Policy (NYP) and provided feedback
- Pa Enea Governments who responded to our urgent requests for feedback with the Youth Surveys; your support is very much appreciated and we hope the information collected is helpful to your administration
- Non-Government Organisations who have supported and contributed to the development of this policy

We hope this document is a useful resource for our young people, their families, our communities and the agencies who work with and for young people – let's bring it to life with some action!

To our Political Leaders, we hope this policy will better inform you about the various factors that are a part of a young person's world. Some say 'it's very different to our days' and that's one of the challenges that we are faced with. How do we maintain our culture and values from erosion by competing external influences and distractions of this day and age? How can our young people stay focussed when their role models seem to be easily distracted?

It is essential that we identify what values we want to retain and take the necessary steps to ensure that we can maintain these values over time. We need to identify and uphold them ourselves, firstly so that we are modelling the behaviour that we would like our children and their children to exhibit (positive role modelling) and we need to teach these values to our children and our grandchildren and so on. Our children and youth need models, not critics.

We would like to also give special recognition for the commitment and the extraordinary efforts of Vania Kenning who had primary responsibility as Youth Director in developing the policy over the past several years.

To all those who have contributed to the development of this policy with your time, finances, expertise and commitment, Meitaki Ranuinui!

Why develop a National Youth Policy?

The Cook Islands National Youth Policy aims to provide a guide to the key areas of youth development that require strengthening and support from all sectors of society, whilst highlighting the uniqueness of our islands for which a 'blanket' policy approach is not necessarily the best option.

The Policy is informed by young people, NGOs and Government agencies through consultation. It calls for action to enhance the status of young people, by providing opportunities for growth, supporting their cause to become responsible citizens through participation and dialogue.

In 2011, the Youth Division within the Ministry of Internal Affairs undertook to start a review of the Cook Islands National Youth Policy in order to track the progress of our young people. This has been done within the existing and limited resources that were available to the division³.

Consultations were conducted, where and when possible, via surveys and discussions with youth, NGOs, Government agencies and relevant stakeholders⁴. Following consultations, feedback was compiled and common responses were grouped according to theme.

To achieve the vision outlined in this policy, partnerships between Government, Non-Government Organisations, Private Sector Establishments and Individuals are essential.

Government is committed to supporting the establishment of relevant mechanisms that will assist the young people of the Cook Islands to develop their full potential.

Purpose of this Policy

To provide guidance to the various agencies, ministries, stakeholder groups, and implementing agencies that engage with young people on issues concerning or relating to youth.

Scope

This Policy focuses on young men and women between the ages of 15 - 24 years of age living in the Cook Islands, taking a comprehensive view of all the issues facing young people.

This policy is a living document that attempts to address challenges around youth in the Cook Islands both in the short and long term. As a living document this policy needs to be reviewed regularly with this policy expected to be reviewed in 2018.

³ No additional budget allocation was sought in the 2013/14 Financial Year due to the reduction in government budgets for the previous 2 Financial Years.

⁴ See appendix ___ for list of stakeholders who were consulted

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is critical for measuring the nation's progress towards youth.

A five year policy implementation plan encompassing the responsibilities of relevant stakeholders across Government and in our communities is being developed to assist with the achievement of the policy objectives of this youth policy.

The youth division within the Ministry of Internal Affairs will have primary responsibility to monitor progress of the implementation of the policy. Annual reporting to stakeholders and the Minister of Internal Affairs will support monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

The monitoring and evaluation report will contain:

- Updates on the implementation of the various policy initiatives
- Outline performance measures, targets and indicators
- Success stories
- Problem areas
- Proposed solutions

Youth National Vision

*Young people who are actively and effectively
engaged in our community,
enabling them to reach their full potential*

Policy Principles

In applying this policy we will take into account:

Youth Ownership – Youth will be engaged in the development and implementation of this policy.

Equity of Opportunity – All Cook Islands youth, regardless of where they reside, will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential as emerging adults.

Respect – This document recognises the value and contribution of youth both collectively and as individuals in the broader development of the country.

Collective Responsibility – We recognise that the broader Cook Islands community has a social responsibility to assist, provide support for, and protect youth who are disadvantaged and disaffected.

Anti-discrimination – This policy recognises youth in the Cook Islands of all genders, races, religions and sexual orientation.

Stewardship – This policy will provide a guiding hand for agencies and society in ensuring the youth of the Cook Islands are supported to achieve their full potential.

Innovation & Creativity – We recognise the creative potential of Cook Islands youth and their ability to create change on a community, national and global level.

Cultural Identity – We recognise the importance of youth being grounded in their culture, understanding the value and significance of their heritage.

Uniqueness/Individuality – We recognise that every young person is unique and this policy document respects and value their uniqueness.

Policy Priority Areas

The priority areas are recognised as the key strategic areas to be addressed by this policy during the policy period.

Realising that there are processes already established by Government and non-government organisations which address some of the issues, it is important that these too are maintained and strengthened.

Following extensive consultations, a number of priorities were identified that form the basis of this policy, these are:

- Priority Area 1: Family Relationships
- Priority Area 2: Education and Economic Opportunities
- Priority Area 3: Empowering youth through community, cultural, spiritual and personal development
- Priority Area 4: Youth Health
- Priority Area 5: Wellbeing and Welfare
- Priority Area 6: Youth Risk and Resilience

Priority Area 1 - Family Relationships

Strengthening family foundations, values, and support systems

The definition of 'family' is broad and diverse, as its meaning varies for different individuals. In the Cook Islands, family can include biological parents and siblings or extend to those who have simply provided care, through physical, financial and emotional support. Family, therefore, can include a group or community of people that have responsibility and influence in raising a child.

This policy recognises the importance and vital role of the 'family' in developing and shaping a young person's values, behaviour, belief system and identity. The family has the primary role in developing positive and resilient youth and needs to understand and respond to the development needs of young people.

Parents, caregivers and guardians have a vital role in raising our future generations. While there is no 'manual' for raising children and youth, help should be made available for families through guidance information and counselling support to assist in the challenging task of parenting.

Improved access and awareness of these services, as well strengthening them with better resources in the future, will be important.

To support young people through strengthened family foundations, values and supports systems, we will:

1.1: Promote programmes that strengthen families, empower parents and young people through community education and awareness campaigns.

1.2: Promote and strengthen existing support services to young mothers and fathers to ensure parents are well equipped to build strong family foundations.

Priority Area 2 - Education and Economic Opportunities

Providing economic, education and lifelong learning opportunities for young people

Education is central to both the development and improvement of lifetime opportunities for young people.

Commitment to quality education and the accreditation of non-formal education services that target the vocational and technical needs of the country is necessary. Acknowledging that education is not just the sole responsibility of one agency, but the shared responsibility of all agencies, will improve the quality of services provided.

Young people need access to quality education systems, appropriate curricula and courses that will provide them with the relevant skills, knowledge and qualifications to succeed in their future endeavours. In doing this, the education system must be forward-focused and place increasing emphasis on technology-based skills as well as ensuring youth have access modern facilities and resources.

Guidance counselling can be a powerful way of assisting young people to focus on their futures and identifying life goals, purpose and a meaning in their lives. This form of advice ranges from mentoring to tertiary educational opportunities. Strengthening of these services will improve the quality of advice and ensure youth across the country have greater access to these types of services, and beyond schools.

Nurturing business development and entrepreneurship are important life skills that can be cultivated through focused programmes and support for young Cook Islanders. Such activities can provide young people with opportunities to exploit their creativity and initiative.

Management of personal finances and money is a key life skill that will affect the lives of all Cook Islanders from their youth and for the rest of their lives. Having young Cook Islanders manage their money effectively not only provides personal short and long term benefits, but can also contribute to a more sustainable and vibrant Cook Islands economy in the future, with young Cook Islanders making smarter decisions about investment and finance. Developing 'financial literacy' in our youth can be achieved through the formal education system and programmes provided by the private sector and banks.

To provide economic, education and lifelong learning opportunities for young people, we will:

2.1: Ensure that young Cook Islanders gain the necessary knowledge and skills needed to equip them for the career and lifestyle of their choice.

2.2: Strengthen academic and career guidance counselling services to ensure young people are informed of educational and employment opportunities available.

2.3: Improve access to support, guidance, counselling services, and information to young people, especially those living in the Pa Enea.

2.4: Strengthen and promote programmes that will assist young people transitioning into employment opportunities after school.

2.5: Promote business development and entrepreneurship for young people.

2.6: Ensure young Cook Islanders develop financial skills to manage their personal finances and responsibilities.

Priority Area 3 – Empowering youth through community, cultural, spiritual and personal development

Empowering young people to live up to their highest potential, to participate in their community by developing strong value systems, and cultural identity

Research shows by the age of 12, young people become independent learners and are heavily influenced in their future behaviours, beliefs and values. There are many people who can significantly impact and influence young people, including teachers, coaches, counsellors, managers and of course, their peers.

The social environment of our youth is a key influencing factor in their development. Every effort should be made to ensure that this is an enabling environment that promotes wellbeing, builds resilience, nurtures and supports young people.

Efforts in developing Cook Islands culture and educational programmes that promote engagement of youth can be strengthened. These activities can engage our Cook Islands young people to learn, appreciate and understand their own culture. Having youth engage and understand their culture will help to engender a sense of self, place and identity that can improve self esteem.

Community activities can also provide important engagement opportunities for youth to develop, engage and socialise in as productive members of society.

A central component of having happy and engaged youth participating in our society is ensuring that they are spiritually and emotionally healthy. Development in this aspect of youth is crucial in building resilience as well as maximising their ability to participate constructively in society, making sound moral judgements, have self-respect and respect for other people.

‘Life skills’ are those skills that are not necessarily part of the formal school curriculum, from sex education through to applying for a student loan. It is evident that with the breakdown of traditional larger family support systems due to migration and modernity, more formal support is required to teach youth these skills and give them the support they need at this crucial juncture in their lives.

To empower young people to live up to their highest potential, participate positively in their community by developing strong value systems, and cultural identity, we will:

3.1: Strengthen the link between youth and their culture as part of their personal development.

3.2: Encourage young people to positively participate in society by engaging in community, island and national programmes.

3.3: Support the moral and spiritual development of young Cook Islanders through church, community, peer support groups and programmes.

3.4: Promote life skills programmes in schools and the wider community to ensure young people and their families are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be resilient and empowered members of society.

Priority Area 4 – Supporting young people to achieve optimal health

Improving youth access to health information, secure services and ongoing support

Good physical, social and mental health is key factor in our quality of life, with impacts on not only physical health but also self-esteem, mental health and the economy.

Cook Islands youth face serious health challenges, with non-communicable diseases and sexually transmitted infections all trending upwards. These illnesses, however, are behavioural or lifestyle-based and therefore present opportunities to change outcomes for youth and future generations with appropriate targeted efforts and support.

As young people reach an age when they are ready to make their own decisions, it is essential that they know how to care for their own physical health, by leading active lifestyles, participating in sport and community events, practicing proper hygiene and eating healthy, balanced diets. Efforts in this area range from physical education and sports programmes through to public awareness campaigns on youth health issues.

It is essential that young people take responsibility and ownership over their personal health. Armed with this knowledge, in catering to youth, we must ensure that not only are they aware of the existing health services available and how to access them, but they must feel secure and confident they are receiving quality health care. In consultations with young people, a major reason for youth not engaging with health services was due to concerns that their health issues would not be kept confidential. More can be done to improve confidence in the security of the health system to get more young people using the services they need.

Mental Health services are incredibly important in assisting many young people who suffer from various mental health ailments, particularly in the difficult transition from childhood to adulthood. There will be a need have trained and skilled professionals available to provide adequate quality and coverage of services for the young people of the Cook Islands.

In supporting young people to achieve optimal health, we will:

4.1 Ensure youth health programmes are appropriate and relevant so that young people are engaged and their needs are met.

4.2: Ensure Cook Islands youth make good health decisions through improved access to information and awareness raising of major health issues and risks relating to:

- Substance abuse
- Sexual Reproductive Health and sexually transmitted infections, and
- Non-communicable diseases

4.3: Encourage young people to use health services, ensuring that services are secure and appropriate to their needs.

4.4. Ensure that adequate mental health support systems are available to youth.

Priority Area 5: Improving Wellbeing and Welfare

Improving the wellbeing and welfare of youth so that they are happier and more resilient

We want to ensure that we have a happy and vibrant youth population. In doing so, efforts must be made to ensure youth are engaged in activities that bring meaning to their lives as well as ensuring there are services and support systems that will assist them and build their resilience in times of difficulty and stress.

Youth are also vulnerable to peer pressure, bullying, and other forms of physical and psychological abuse, which can have devastating effects on their emotional and mental wellbeing if they do not receive the support they need to address these issues. Moreover, we need to remove the stigma associated with abuse so that young people can report it, or find a way to remove them from that relationship.

This policy aims to improve the wellbeing of our young people by providing access to information and support services to assist them during these difficult periods. To achieve this requires a multi-stakeholder approach that engages families, caregivers, teachers, professionals, and communities to work together to provide a strong support network for youths.

The transition from childhood to adulthood can be an emotional and particularly difficult time for young people, with many youth suffering from anxiety, low self-esteem, and sometimes depression and in the worst case suicidal behaviour. It is important that we acknowledge the challenges of youth and adolescence and change the perception around talking about these challenges and feelings, putting in place programmes and systems to equip young people with the necessary information, knowledge and skills to effectively cope with these issues as they arise. Mainstreaming such practices may also be crucial in assisting to identify and proactively engage with those with more severe mental health disorders and reach out to those who are 'at risk' before it is too late.

Abuse and neglect can take place at home, at school, in the community and even at church. To effectively identify stop and address these cases of abuse, there must be strong coordination by all stakeholders to work together to stop abuse and protect youth. Efforts to improve outcomes in this area will also rely heavily on awareness and changing the perception of 'abuse' and encouraging a culture of "zero tolerance" for abuse.

As previously mentioned, mental health and specific policies and efforts to address mental health issues have only been introduced relatively recently. There has existed for a long time a stigma around mental health issues with misconceptions of mental health disorders meaning someone was "weird" or "crazy" and that acknowledging them and asking for help was a sign of weakness. These misconceptions are still pervasive across our society and a huge impediment in having youth engage with the counselling, support and mental health services that are available. Dedicated public awareness and education campaigns are required to change the societal perception regarding emotional and mental health to encourage those who are suffering to seek health and support.

To improve the wellbeing and welfare of youth so that they are happier and more resilient, we will:

5.1 Support the emotional development of young Cook Islanders through appropriate counselling and support programmes.

5.2 Ensure young people are engaged and lead balanced lifestyles by providing extracurricular activities through sports, arts and community programmes.

5.3 Protect young people from physical and psychological abuse, through strengthening support services and coordination between relevant government agencies, NGO's and community.

5.4 Encourage young people to seek help and advice and remove the stigma around emotional and mental health issues through better awareness of youth adolescent issues.

Priority Area 6: Youth Risk and Resilience

Safeguarding young people and our communities by positively engaging at-risk youths, and adopting a holistic approach to building resilience

In recent years, evidence shows that young people have been involved in criminal activities ranging from theft, burglaries and assault to drink driving. Reasons offered by these young people included boredom, peer pressure, or simply opportunity (for theft).

The provision of support networks and programmes to engage and positively influence youth should be encouraged to target those who are vulnerable and at risk of these behaviours.

This policy acknowledges the importance of having a ‘safety net’ for youth that ‘fall through the gaps’ and places an emphasis on encouraging efforts to provide opportunities for youth offenders to learn from mistakes and improve their lives in the future. The legislative framework dealing with youth in these situations needs to support restorative and rehabilitative options, and only resort to punitive approaches in serious cases. A community approach can assist with corrective measures that achieve better long term outcomes for these youth.

To achieve this, young people must be engaged in the problem solving process to reach a fair solution that benefits the offender, the family, and society as a whole.

We will:

6.1 Identify “at-risk youth” and engage them in targeted programmes (community, sport, church) to prevent their engagement in criminal activities.

6.2 Reduce reoffending by youth through targeted effective restorative and rehabilitation programmes.

6.3: Ensure the legal framework allows for fair and appropriate treatment of youth promoting restorative and rehabilitation where possible.

6.4: Engage with traditional and community leaders, and government entities involved in addressing youth justice issues to ensure a collective effort is made to adopt a ‘problem solving approach’ that actively engages youth offenders.

6.5: Ensure young offenders have access to legal and other support services, information and ongoing assistance.

Appendix

Situational Analysis- Youth

Youth Definition

The age range for Cook Islands Youth has been redefined in this policy to 15-24 years of age. Previously the youth age range was 15-34 years of age.

Consultations were conducted between 2008 and 2014 with youth, youth groups and agencies that work with youth and the feedback received indicated that a narrowing of the age range was necessary so that there can be better targeting of issues and responsive measures for the specific transition young people face from childhood to young adults. It is in this age range that young people are transitioning to independent members of society with legal responsibilities and obligations including the ability to vote in general elections, learn to drive, gain employment or undertake further studies, form relationships, marry and start a family. It is therefore critical that this policy targets that critical period of transition.

Youth Profile

A Youth Profile Report was commissioned by the Youth & Sports Division in 2011 based on the 2006 Census Report. It included data from 1991 through to 2006.

The main objective of the Youth Profile Report was to establish baseline data for youth in the Cook Islands using the Census Report to provide a comprehensive range of data for analysis and enable comparisons over time on trends affecting young people in the Cook Islands. It is hoped that the Youth Profile Reports (or reports of a similar nature) will provide the ability to calculate forward projections on the youth population in the Cook Islands as a way of designing appropriate and relevant interventions and strategies for positive development of the youth population.

Based on the 2011 Census Report, the youth population⁵ (15-24yrs) represented 15.35% of the total Cook Islands population.

⁵ Youth age definition 2014: 15-24yrs

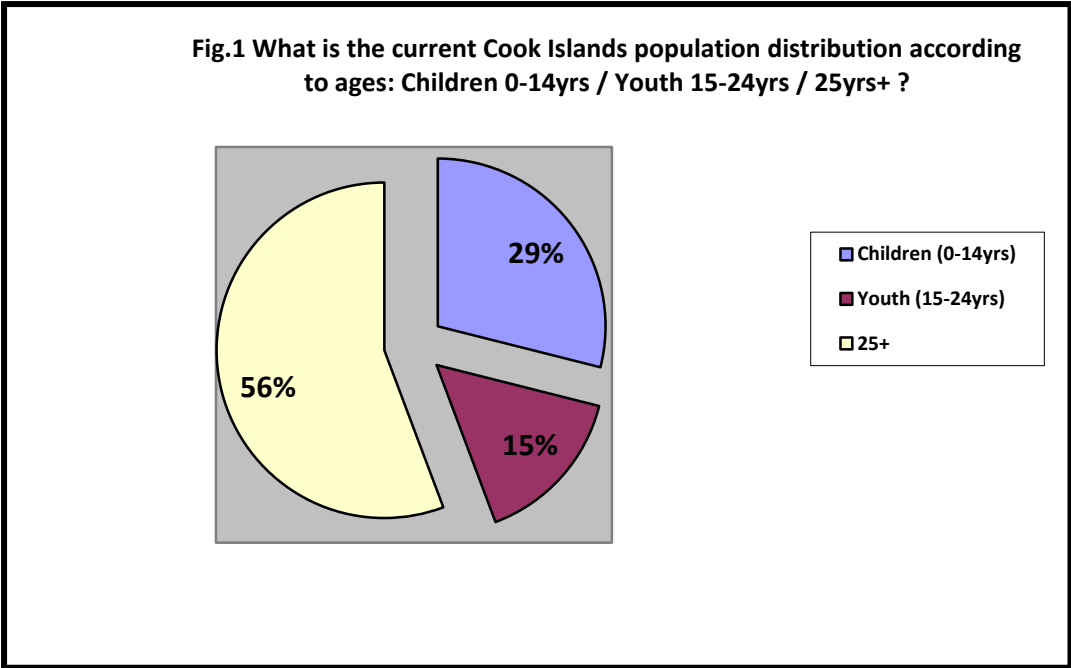


Fig 1. (above) Illustrates the make-up of the Resident Cook Islands Population as per the various age groups at 2011 Census.

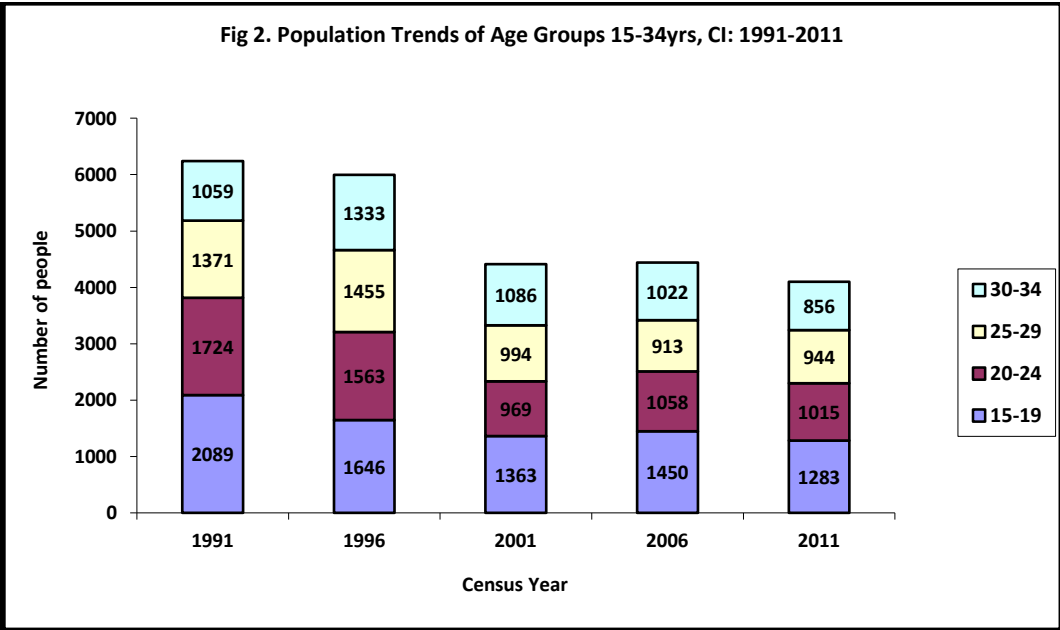
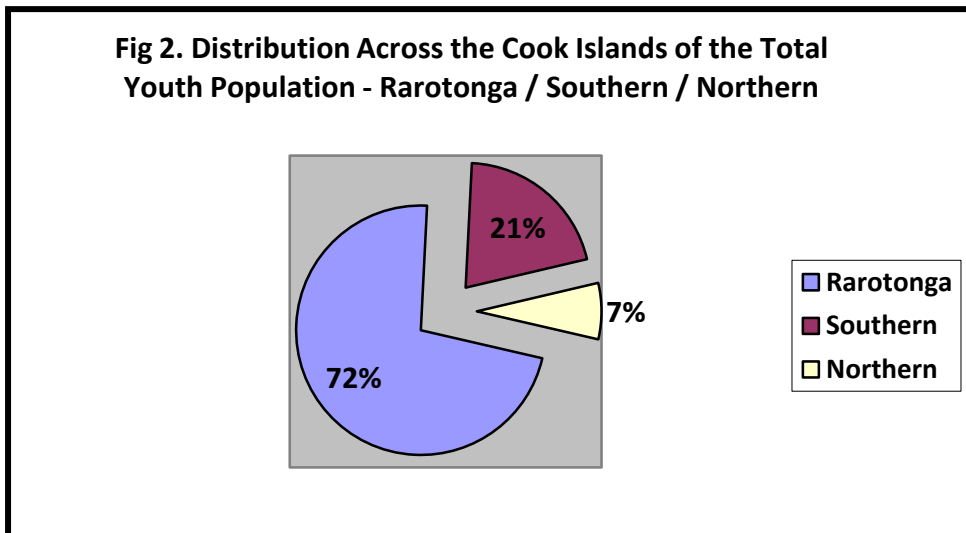


Fig 2. This graph illustrates the Population Trends of Age Groups 15-34yrs within the Cook Islands over the years 1991-2011, using data from each Census Year. Please note that up until 2011 Census, the youth population is defined in the CI National Youth Policy as 15-34yrs, this will change for future National Youth Policies, with the youth population being redefined as 15-24yrs.

Despite the overall trend of a declining Cook Islands population, Rarotonga’s total population has steadily grown within the last decade. The opposite is true for the Outer Islands where there has been a substantial population decline during the last three Census periods (1996-2001, 2001-2006, 2006-2011), pointing to possible dissatisfaction with living conditions in these islands. Reasons may include lack of post-secondary education opportunities (for tertiary or vocational/technical qualifications), limited employment opportunities, and high cost of living in general.

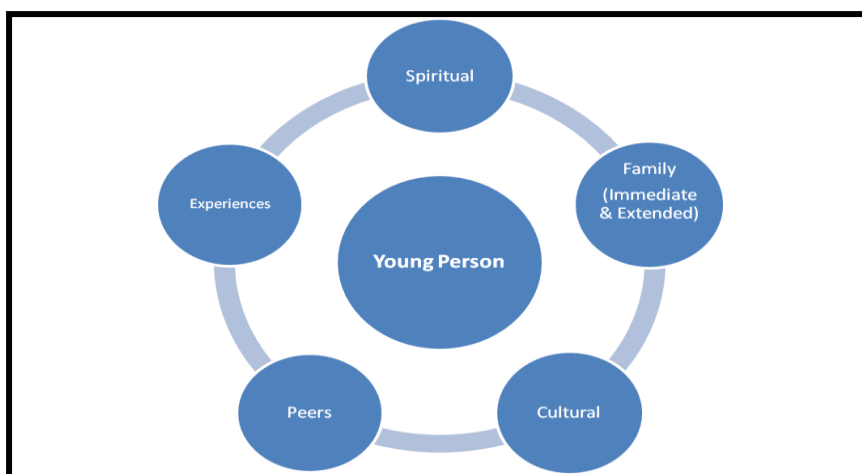
The proportion of youth throughout the Cook Islands was relatively consistent across Rarotonga (15.71%), the Southern Group (14.19%) and Northern Group (15.29%) at the time of the 2011 Census.

A large proportion (72%) of the Cook Islands youth population is residing on the Capital island of Rarotonga. This is expected, with more facilities being available for education, employment, health and lifestyle. The Pa Enua of the Cook Islands has considerably lower proportions of the Cook Islands' youth population residing, with 21% of the Cook Islands Youth population living in the Southern⁶ group and 7% living in the Northern⁷ group (which equates to 45% of the total CI resident youth population living on Rarotonga vs 27% of the total CI youth population living on the Pa Enua).



Influencing Factors

There are many influences in a young person's life that ultimately contribute to who they become - the values they learn throughout life that guide their decision-making; their ability to cope with major events in their life (positive and negative) and take responsibility for their actions; their ability to overcome obstacles and challenges, whilst celebrating the positives in life.



⁶ South is defined as Southern Group Islands in the Cook Islands

⁷ North is defined as Northern Group islands in the Cook Islands

Supporting Documents:

Behavioural Surveillance Survey among youth in the Cook Islands 2012; Ministry of Health

Budget Estimates 2014/2015: Book 1 Appropriation Bill – Appropriations and Commentary. Ministry of Finance and Economic Management;

Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2007—2010; Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Cook Islands National Census 2011; Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

Cook Islands Youth Profile 2012; Ministry of Internal Affairs

Learning for life – Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2014 – 2023; Ministry of Education;

Cook Islands Population and Housing Census 2011; Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

Te Kaveinga Nui - National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2011-2015

Youth Suicide Prevention Steering Committee, 2012 - Youth and Parent/Caregiver Suicide Evaluation: Based on the Suicide Prevention Surveys, Cook Islands, 2012

Young people of the Cook Islands; *analysis of the 2011 population and housing census, Feb 2015*

Youth Justice Policy 2013; Ministry of Justice

Key Stakeholders consulted

- The young people of the Cook Islands

Cook Islands Government agencies:

- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Marine Resources
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Business Trade and Investment Corporation
- Police
- Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute
- Cook Islands Tourism

Non-Government Organisations, Community Service Organisations:

- Cook Islands Family Welfare Association
- Cook Islands National Council of Women
- Cook Islands National Youth Council
- Punanga Tauturu Incorporated
- CI Red Cross Society
- Rotai'anga

A special word of thanks to the following:

- Mrs Vaine Wichman for your support and guidance in the initial phases of development of this policy;
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- Sandra Taringa for your support during the review process of the policy;
- Charlene Hoff for your immense contribution and assistance towards the development of this policy.
- Youth Advisory Committee: Rebecca Hosking-Ellis (Cook Islands Police), Siniva Marsters (CISNOC), Teresa Tararo (Ministry of Education), Fr Fred Kaina (RAC) and Valentino Wichman (Ministry of Health). Your passion to help pave a better path for our youth through your experiences and your areas of work, we say a huge Meitaki Maata.

Na Te Atua e akamanuia mai ia kotou katoatoa.