



TE MANA O TE MAPU THE POWER OF OUR YOUTH AS NATION BUILDERS

COOK ISLANDS NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2021-2026











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The development of the Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2021-2026 Te Mana o te Mapu, was the collaborative effort of representatives from the Cook Islands Government, Civil Society and the Pacific Community through its Human Rights and Social Development Programme.

To the members of the working group who have contributed and worked on this National Youth Policy, Meitaki Ma'ata.

To all past and present youth workers in the churches, government, schools, community youth groups, cultural groups and non-government organisations, your commitment is greatly appreciated and acknowledged. The support and care provided to our young people in the Cook Islands has significantly contributed to their development and growth.

Thank you for the tireless work done for our youth.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs also acknowledges the input of all youth who were consulted, responded to the survey and rendered their services in the development and the launch of this Policy. May you all be encouraged to pursue the pathway of your choice with confidence.

TE MANA O TE MAPU MOTIFS

Original Art Designs - Tuaine "Katu" Teiti Art Concepts - Poko Rongo, Tuaine "Katu" Teiti



TE MANA O TE MAPU

The letter "M" shows a silhouette of a person holding a spear. This spear signifies the power of the youth as nation builders. While the "M" represents the beginning of the letter of Mapu. The word 'Mapu' means 'Youth' in the Cook Islands language The symbols around the outer circle represents all the key symbols of the priority areas.

TE MANA O TE MAPU

WRITTEN FOR YOUTH LIVING IN THE COOK ISLANDS BY ORA MUSIC/EMILE RIMA

l mua mai te tuatau Makokore Te kite atu nei Te kakave nei E oraanga matutu e te meitaki Kua reka kua tano ete mataora Noku e arikiia akangateitei E kia atui ia mai te au mapu Kia tiratiratu te au mapu Note au tauianga o te Aorangi Mapu e, Te mana o te mapu e, Kia rangatira, Te mana ote mapu e, lora mai Te mana o te mapu e, Kia rangatira Te mana ote mapu e, Kia orana Te mana o te mapu e, lora mai lora mai kotou katoa E oraanga matutu e te meitaki Kia ruperupe kia prepere kavana Te au mapu e

In the beginning Filled with so much We see our youth healthy and resilient For we are happy Bright and Vibrant We see that our youth is accepted and respected we are connected and our youth are Ready for change The spirit of our youth will prevail The strength of our youth will prevail The strength of our youth will live on May you live on For you are strong and wonderful For you are kind and resilient The Power of our Youth as Nation builders



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YOUTH ARE PROUD OF THEIR CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND IDENTITY

The "atamira/atarangi" and "maire" represents the rich history and culture of our land which promotes the youth to acknowledge and preserve their language, customs and way of life. The "pate/tokere" denotes the uniqueness of our youth, however, when united they all become harmonised. The fish represents swiftness, movement, agility and grace, and also represents our local "raui" which empowers youth to preserve our culture.

YOUTH ARE LEARNING AND DEVELOPING

The vaka represents the journey of our youth in navigating their individual paths through the unknown, equipping themselves to be steadfast. The "toki" is a tool used by our ancestors for carving and it symbolizes the youth carving their journey through life. The conch shell signifies the youths' voice to emphasize their confidence and making their voice heard.

YOUTH ARE HEALTHY AND RESILIENT

The "kumete" and "pao/reru" is a utensil used to produce local medicine thus encouraging the youth to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The arrowhead signifies strength and direction in finding your way to achieve optimal health and resilience. The "taro" plants which is one of the most sustainable vegetable symbolizes might and durability amongst the youth.

Youth Are Accepted, Respected And Connected

The fish hook is a sign of prosperity, endurance, and connection. The "tikitiki tangata" of Rarotonga and Mangaia represents unity and support through life

YOUTH ARE ENVIRONMENT ACTION READY!

The "tavake" bird is significant to the Cook Islands and represents our environment and the uniqueness of our ecosystem. The shark tooth and flora represent the many abundance of the sea and the land that sustains our people.

MAT DESIGN ON EVERY LOGO

The mat design symbolizes the unity, connectivity and the correlation of our youth. We stand as one, and we grow as one.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

CAFs	Child and Family Services – Internal Affairs				
CEIT	Centre for Excellence in Information Technology				
CI	Cook Islands				
CIFWA	Cook Islands Family and Welfare Association				
CINYC	Cook Islands National Youth Policy				
CITTI	Cook Islands Tertiary and Training Institute				
CSO	Civil Society Organisation				
INTAFF	Ministry of Internal Affairs – Te Tango Akarangatira Ora'anga				
MFEM	Ministry of Fnance and Economic Managment				
МоА	Ministry of Agriculture				
MoCD	Ministry of Cultural Development				
MoCS	Ministry of Corrective Services				
MoE	Ministry of Education				
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation				
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases				
NES	National Environment Services				
NGO	Non-Government Organisation				
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan				
NSO	National Statistic Office				
NYP	National Youth Policy				
PE	Physical Education				
RAC	Religious Advisory Council				
SPS	Social Policy and Service Business Unit				
ТММ	Te Mana o te Mapu				
ТМО	Te Marae Ora – Ministry of Health				
USP	University of the South Pacific				
YD	Youth Division				

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Foreword



Kia Orana to all young people in the Cook Islands,

It is with honor and excitement that I present the Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2021-2026:

TE MANA O TE MAPU THE POWER OF THE YOUTH AS NATION BUILDERS

Government has long understood the importance of supporting and developing our youth to secure our future as a nation. Hence, this is the fourth iteration of this Policy.

I personally advocate for the development of youth in all areas including sports, the church, education, business, environment, culture and even politics. It is only through such exposure that they will be able to gain the confidence to move from observers to participants and onward to future leaders.

TE MANA O TE MAPU recognizes that the well-being of young people is dependent on both internal and external forces, that is, it is a combination of their personal power and resilience and the support that we as leaders, parents and teachers provide. This policy commits to improving and providing better systems and support for our young people not only on Rarotonga but those that choose to continue to make our Pa Enua their home.

TE MANA O TE MAPU was informed by over 250 youth survey respondents and the input of the working committee representing government and civil society. It is underpinned by new set of **YOUTH VALUES** relevant to our young people today.

HONESTY, RESPECT & CUSTODIANSHIP, FAMILY OF LOVE, AND GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

The launch of *Te Mana o te Mapu* also marks the opening of the **'YOUTH HUB'.** The sealing of an important partnership between the newly formed Empower Me Inc Group, a youth NGO that will assist to implement the Policy through the provision of important support services to our youth. Government has and will continue to support this initiative.

I would like to thank all those individuals, Government Ministries, Agencies, our donor partner Pacific Community, Civil Society Organisation's (CSO's) and the communities at large who have contributed to the development of the 2021-2026 National Youth Policy. May we now focus our efforts collectively to support the Policy we created!

Last but not least, to our young people, we hope this Policy resonates with you and empowers you to do the best you can in all that you do and I will leave you with this bible verse, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." – 1 Timothy 4.12.

Kia Manuia,

Howerable Vaine Mac Mokoroa Minister for Ministry of Internal Affairs, Cook Islands



TE MANA O TE MAPU THE POWER OF THE YOUTH AS NATION BUILDERS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Cook Islands Government have long committed to developing its young people as a vital part of its society, workforce and community, when its first National Youth Policy was launched in 2003. Today, the Cook Islands Government maintains this commitment through its fourth iteration of the Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2021-2026:

TE MANA O TE MAPU - THE POWER OF OUR YOUTH AS NATION BUILDERS.

The Cook Islands National Youth Policy 2021-2026 has been named **'TE MANA O TE MAPU' - THE POWER OF OUR YOUTH AS NATION BUILDERS** as it strives to build the confidence and competence in our young people and develop a positive and creative attitude capable of serving and building our nation into prosperity. It will also assist youth to recognise the power and potential they have within them to build the necessary resilience required to face local and global challenges and to be meaningfully involved with educational and entrepreneurial activities in line with the demands of nation building. Furthermore, it aims to engage youth in societal, cultural and voluntary activities that lead to healthy, dynamic, conscious lifestyles that would nurture youth into good citizens and leaders, able to help others and help themselves to be the best version of themselves.

Through this Policy, Government acknowledges their responsibility to empower the young people through the provision of relevant support, resources and systems and the upskilling of the right people equipped with the knowledge, skills, training, passion and understanding required to effectively work with our youth.

1.1. VISION

"YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ACTIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY ENGAGED IN OUR SOCIETY ENABLING THEM TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL"

"Ko te au mapu kia maroiroi e kia atui ki roto i to tatou iti tangata No te akatukatau'anga ia ratou kia taeria te ope o to ratou karape"

1.2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance to the various stakeholder's groups including Government agencies, CSO and all implementing agencies that engage with young people on issues concerning or relating to the youth.

1.3. SCOPE

The Policy focuses on men and women between the ages of 15 - 24years, living in the Cook Islands. It is a living document that attempts to address challenges around Youth in the Cook Islands in the short term and in an effort to alleviate potential long-term challenges.

1.4. VALUES

"IT IS WIDELY ACCEPTED THAT CORE VALUE SYSTEMS ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE WITH GOOD DECISION MAKING."

In applying this Policy, the following values aligned to our Cook Islands culture and the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020 have been adapted to guide us in delivering the progammes within this policy.

HONESTY - Honesty leads to a free and fulfilling life for our youth. A life where youth can be accepted for being their authentic self, free from judgement and isolation.

Honesty allows young people to observe their surroundings with clarity. To be honest is to be accountable and behave with honour.

RESPECT & CUSTODIANSHIP - Respect is one of the most important values as it teaches boundaries and expectations. Treating others how you would expect to be treated.

As Cook Islanders it is particularly important to preserve respect for;

- the land, sea and all living things
- the people living in our homes and our community
- our ancestry, heritage, culture and identity
- our traditional knowledge and practices.

FAMILY OF LOVE - Family values help to shape our lives and teaches our young people the value of love, affection, care and accountability. It can be a group of people related or unrelated that value, care and support one another in times of joy and achievement; and also, times of disappointment and difficulty.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP - To be a good citizen is for young people to be willing to work with others for a greater common good of the community and the nation through the spirit of participation, patriotism, to be law abiding, participate in governance processes and be aware of issues that shape decision making.

The intention of these values is to instil a sense of pride and unity for young people in our nation.

1.5. YOUTH PRIORITY AREA

Youth Priority Areas form the basis of Te Mana o te Mapu. These priorities were informed by young people through a survey and working group sector consultations. These are as follows:

YOUTH ARE... PROUD OF THEIR CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND IDENTITY

YOUTH ARE... LEARNING AND DEVELOPING

YOUTH ARE... HEALTHY AND RESILIENT

YOUTH ARE... ACCEPTED, RESPECTED AND CONNECTED

YOUTH ARE... ENVIRONMENT ACTION READY!

The National Youth Priorities 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. Section three will provide further detail on these priority areas.

2. BACKGROUND

YOUTH IN THE COOK ISLANDS

The **Te Mana o te Mapu - National Youth Policy 2021-2026** defines youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years old. However, it also recognizes that those between 25 and 34 years old are also members and considered youth within respective youth groups throughout Rarotonga and the Pa Enua.

According to Cook Islands Census 2016, there has been a decrease in the youth population from 2011 of approximately 200 youth, leaving just over 2087 youth. This decline has been attributed to young Cook Islands relocating overseas for educational opportunities.

According to the 2019 Labour Force Survey, Youth unemployment is at 3% - the highest across all age groups with the majority being male.

COVID-19 has severely impacted the Cook Islands largest industry and employer, the Tourism Industry. With very little work experience, youth workers were the first staff to be released from employment. The Ministry have close-ly monitored young workers over the past nine months to ensure the available social protection assistance was received. It was evident that some workers did not qualify, namely the 16-18-year olds.

Survey data collected reflects the church, sports and school as the greatest support networks for our young people through the Cook Islands. Many young people shared that they often turned to church youth groups and church leaders for help and support to overcome their challenges.

Being judged, having low self-confidence, self-esteem issues, stress, smoking, drinking, anxiety, violence, cyber bullying, obesity, poverty and suicidal thoughts are issues young people are being constantly faced with. They expect these behaviours and issues they are being challenged in will continue for another 5 years.

2.1 POLICY ENVIRONMENT

In today's context of multiple and competing development issues, it is important that any national action plan be strongly 'embedded' in the relevant policy instruments. This is done to maximise support for the plan at various levels of governance – national, regional, international, and also to facilitate effective coordination. Such alignment is also essential to facilitate financial support (government and donor support) for the implementation of the identified priority areas.

REGIONAL

The Cook Islands is aligned to The Pacific Youth Development Framework (PYDF) 2014-2023: A coordinated approach to youth-centred development in the Pacific. Like other Pacific countries, the Cook Islands attended the Third Meeting of Pacific Ministers of Youth and Sport held in New Caledonia in December 2013, supporting the need for a regional framework as a priority in the regional development agenda, specifically youth and sports. The PYDF, was a result of this meeting.

Already preparation for the next strategic framework is underway with SPC engaging with the Pacific Youth to inform the development of SPC's strategic plan 2021+ to discuss, "Sharing Pacific Youth 2030 Visions to help inform the Pacific Community's Strategic Plan". This will in turn help SPC address youth development, innovation, challenges, care, resilience and empowerment.

As a result of these consultations five emerging themes have surfaced.



NATIONAL

Within the National Sustainable Plan 2016-2020 (NSDP), Goal 9, explicitly highlights the youth to, "Accelerate gender equality empower all women and girls and advance the rights of youth, the elderly and disabled." The indicator further specified to, promote youth wellbeing through providing a Youth Wellbeing Index as the indicator to measure. Despite the NSDP coming to an end the Youth Well-being Index can now be found in *Te Mana o te Mapu* under the Priority Area 3: Youth are Healthy and Resilient.

The Cook Islands is currently developing the national 100-year blueprint, National Strategic Development Agenda (NSDA) 2020+ to be endorsed next year. This will extend on from the current Cook Islands National Development Plan 2016 – 2020 and will span four generations with 25-year frameworks that are monitored against 5-year implementation plans.

Te Pito Manava o te Anau - the Cook Islands National Policy Framework for Children 2017-2021 is another document that the NYP aligns to. There is an overlap between the two policies due to the scope of ages where Te Pito Manava o te Anau covers children up to 18 years while the NYP youth age is 15-24 years.

The NYP 2021-2026 is also aligned to other key strategic documentation such as the Education Master Plan and the National Health Strategy.

It also reflects key legislation like the Prevention of Juvenile Crime Act and its Amendments, Crimes Act and its Amendments and the Family Protection and Support Act 2017. The Family Protection and Support Act 2017, has consolidated many old legislations into one law encompassing child support, parenting arrangements when families separate and care and protection of children and family violence. The Harassment Act 2017 was also passed, aimed at closing the gaps identified in the Family Protection and Support Act 2017.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

Te Mana o te Mapu – the Power of the Youth as Nation Builders was developed based on the lessons learned in the previous iterations. A review of the NYP 2015-2020 assessing the priority areas and the implementation successes and challenges over the policy period by government and CSO's.

A working committee was also formed with 11 Agencies/ NGOs (see appendix for list), to assess the youth issues and define the policy objectives, policies and indicators. The working committee was allocated into the 5 sectors of Learning/ Developing; Culture, Traditions and Identity; Health & Resilience; Acceptance, Respect & Connection; and Environment. This enabled the groups to discuss their identified key priorities, what this meant and identified the key issues; develop Policy Objectives and Indicators; and identify who will be the lead and support agencies.

Finally a survey was conducted (both on social media and face to face) with 316 respondents from Rarotonga, the Southern Group and the Northern Group. 251 of these respondents were from within the defined youth age group of 15-24 years. The survey collected both qualitative and quantitative information with an option for young people to make recommendations.

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY (NYP) 2015-2020 REVIEW

The previous NYP 2015-2020 had 6 key priority areas.

YOUTH PRIORITIES			
2015-2020	2021-2026		
1. Family Relationship 2. Youth Risk & Resilience	1. Youth are Accepted, Respected and Connected		
3. Empowering youth through community, cultural, spiritual and personal	2. Youth are proud of their Culture, Traditions and Identity		
4. Supporting young people to achieve optimal health 5. Improving Wellbeing and Welfare	3. Youth are Healthy and Resiliant		
6. Education and Economic Opportunitues	4. Youth are Learning and Developing		
	5. Youth are Environment Action Ready!		

General stakeholder feedback suggests little awareness of the NYP 2015-2020. As a result, the Policy was not mainstreamed into annual work plans as intended. In 2017, the Ministry also experienced staff turnover, with the position of Youth Policy Officer vacant until early 2018. It was then, the team assessed the status of the implementation of the NYP 2015-2020 and identified the need was to promote the policy and rebuild stakeholder relation-ships rather than conducting a mid-term review.

The review process revealed challenges in collecting data/information from stakeholders. Stakeholders were unable to share detailed information on the activities conducted and the impact on youth. The previous policy also omitted indicators or measures for success and responsible agents. This omission of a monitoring and evaluation framework made it very difficult to review. As a result, Te Mana o te Mapu includes clear indicators for each Priority Area and identifies lead agencies for each to ensure ownership and the ability to measure progress and success.

Furthermore, a new priority area for the youth was created to address the increasing importance of our environment and our vulnerability to climate change. This highlights the need for young people to champion and protect, preserve and conserve our environment at a local and global level.

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YOUTH PRIORITY AREAS & POLICY OBJECTIVES

E NGAKAUPARAU'ANGA NO TE AU MAPU TA RATOU PEU MAORI, AKONOANGA MAORI E TO RATOU TURANGA MAORI

AKAO'ANGA I TETAI TU NGAKAUPARAU E TE TURANGA MAORI, NO TA TATOU AU PEU MAORI, KIA RIRO TE REIRA EI AKAMATUTU I TE AU TAKAIANGA KIA TOMO TE AU MAPU NA ROTO I TE PAE O TE AU ANGAANGA O TE NGU-TUARE E TO TE OIRE.



PRIORITY AREA 1: Youth are proud of their culture, traditions and identity

Policy Objective: To instill a sense of pride and identity, of our Cook Islands culture to develop strong value systems and enable full participation in family and community life.

This means:

Issues:

- Youth have access to learn about and partici
 pate in cultural events and programs.
- Youth have knowledge of Cook Islands culture, traditions, language and history.
- Youth are connected to their culture, traditions, and identity.
- Youth are able to communicate in Cook Islands Maori, both oral and written.
- Limited programs to teach our young people about Cook Islands culture, traditions, language and history.
- A delayed appreciation of the value of the Cook Islands language, traditions, history until later in life.
- Returning Cook Islanders and non-fluent Cook Islands Maori speaking youth feel excluded.

Policies

To address the issues and objective stated, the Policy will:

- 1. Promote and support the inclusion of traditional knowledge, skills and practices in schools and the wider community to ensure young people and their families are equipped with traditional knowledge and skills to be resilient and empowered members of society.
- 2. Encourage relevant stakeholders to work collaboratively to promote and support young people to explore their cultural identity and values, respecting tradition while encouraging creativity and innovation.
- 3. Develop a strategy for Cook Islands Maori at all levels of education as an academic qualification.

Indicators	Lead
1.1 Stakeholders meeting every quarter to share information, provide advice and discuss future plans in regards to the National Youth Policy.	INTAFF
1.2 Number of young people actively engaged in Cultural activities in the community, island and national programs.	MoCD
2.1 Number of Cook Islands Maori programs across the education sector.	MoE
2.2 Number of graduates with a Cook Islands Maori qualification at secondary level (NCEA) and tertiary (CITTI or USP).	MoE
3.1 Number of traditional knowledge and skills programs delivered annually in:	MoCD
schoolswider community	MoE
3.2 Number of young people participating in the traditional knowledge and skills pro-	MoCD
grams annually delivered in:	MoE
• schools	
wider community	

TE APTI E TE ARANGATU NEI TE AU MAPU

ORONGA'ANGA KI TE AU MAPU I TE TAI AU TIKA'ANGA TAMOU APII NO TE TAI TUATAU ROA I ROTO I TE TUANGA O TE KIMI PUAPINGA E TE APII.



PRIORITY AREA 2: Youth are learning and Developing

Policy Objective: To provide multiple education, economic and lifelong learning and development pathways for young people.

This means:

- Youth have the knowledge and skills to achieve their full potential as they progress through life.
- Youth have access to resources, mentors and support services relevant to their needs.
- Youth are positively engaged with what they choose to pursue in educational, career and community activities.
- Youth are recognised as valued contributing members of society.

Issues:

- Lack of resources or not being able to redirect available resources.
- Lack of support, assistance, direction with our youth transitioning from the education system into society – work or tertiary qualifications.
- Teaching Cook Islands history, life skills, health and well-being is optional.
- Youth development is not seen as a high priority for government.

Policy

To address the issues and objective stated, the Policy will:

- 1. Strengthen and promote educational pathways and programs that will assist young people.
- 2. Promote business development and entrepreneurship for young people in various industries including Creative Industries, Green Economy, Digital Business, Agriculture and Engineering.
- 3. Develop programs to support health and wellbeing, Cook Islands history and life skills.
- 4. Recognise youth achievements and leadership in the community.

Indi	cators	Lead
1.1	The number of programs youth have access within the schools for:	MoE
i.	Health and Wellbeing	
ii.	Cook Islands History	
iii.	Life Skills	
2.1	Number of programs that help transition young people:	MoE
i.	Youth gain relevant qualifications	CITTI
ii.	Academic pathways	CIET
iii.	Vocational pathways	
iv.	Post-secondary transitions	USP
V.	Enrolment and Completion rates, NCEA, CITTI, CIET and USP (inclusive of other training pro- grams)	
2.2	Establish a mentoring and/or internship program/ database for businesses and students	Youth
to h	ave access.	Hub
3.1	Number of youths that are engaged with:	MoE
i.	Business mentor programs	Cham-
ii.	Dragon's Den	ber
iii.	Year 10 Business Challenge	
4.1	Recognise youth achievements and leadership in the community through:	INTAFF
i.	Annual Youth Awards Program	MoCD
ii.	Youth Ambassador Programs across sectors	

E ORA'ANGA MATUTU E TE MEITAKI TO TE MAPU

AKAMEITAKI I TE AU TUANGA NO TE ORA'ANGA TIRATIRATU E PERA KIA RAUKA TETAI AU NGAI TAUTURU NO TE ORA'ANGA MEITAKI E TE MANAKO MEITAKI EI TAUTURU I TE ORA'ANGA O TE MAPU.



PRIORITY AREA 3: Youth are Healthy and Resilient

Policy Objective: To improve the provision of quality health information as well as secure health and mental wellbeing services to support young people.

This means:

- Youth are surrounded in an environment that encourages healthy choices.
- Youth develop good communication, social and emotional skills.
- Youth are spiritually and emotionally healthy.
- Youth are knowledgeable, active and resilient.
- Youth have access to secure services for health and mental wellbeing following their needs and evolving platforms.

Issues:

- Limited access to confidential health services and support.
- Public stigma for utilising mental health services
- Misleading and invalidated health information rumours and misinformation.
- Limited access to specialised health professionals
- Delayed health seeking behaviour.
- Living in an obesogenic environment i.e. promotes weight gain and not conducive to weight loss.

Policy

To address the issue and objective stated, this Policy will:

- 1. Strengthen an environment that encourages healthy choices.
- 2. Increase utilisation and support for mental wellbeing.
- 3. Support and ensure young people are well informed, healthy and resilient.
- 4. Develop a survey to capture youth welfare and wellbeing.

ndica	ators	Lead
1.1 E	xercise tax on sugar, alcohol and tobacco products	ТМО
1.2 To	obacco products control	MFEM
i. 	Restrictions on advertising	
ii.	Prohibitions of smoking in public places	
	on communicable diseases	
i.	Policies to reduce the impact on children of marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages high in saturated fats, trans fatty acids, free sugars, or salt	
ii. 	Insufficient physical activity in adolescents	
iii.	Children under 5 years who are overweight	
iv.	Age-standardised prevalence of persons consuming less than 5 total servings (400grams) of fruits and vegetables per day	
V.	Improve targeted awareness and screening programmes	
2.1 N	umber and proportion of mental health disorders	ТМО
i.	Service coverage for severe mental illness	CIFWA
2.2 N	lental health service coverage	
i.	Prevalence of youth with autism spectrum disorder	
ii.	Prevalence of youth with behavioural issues	
iii.	Prevalence of students with a learning disability	1
iv.	Proportion of youth using mental health services	
2.3 N	lortality cause	
i.	Suicide rates	
2.4 N	lorbidity cause	
i.	Rate of deliberate self-harm	
ii.	Rate of admissions related to mental health and addictions	
2.5 S	ubstance abuse	
i.	Treatment coverage for alcohol and drug dependence	
ii.	Prevalence of self-reported mental illness and substance use	
3.1 R	eproductive health	ТМО
i. 	Demand for family planning satisfied with modern methods	
ii. iii.	Contraceptive prevalence rate	
	Antenatal and postnatal care coverage nmunisation	, V
3.2 ir i.	Coverage rate by vaccine for each vaccine in the National Immunisation Schedule	
ii.	Availability of vaccines against human papillomavirus, according to national programmes and policies	
3.3 H	ealth Specialist Visits	
i.	• Number and proportion of population accessing health services by area of speciality	
3.4 C	areer pathways	
i.	Proportion of youth aspiring for a career in health	
ii.	Number of youths accessing health internship programmes	
3.5 S	chools	
i.	Compulsory physical education	
ii.	Healthy school lunches policy implemented	
4. De i.	velop surveys to capture youth welfare and wellbeing: Youth Wellbeing Index	INTAFF
ii.	National Youth Survey	MFEM -
11.	National Touth Sulvey	NSO

KIA ARIKI'IA, AKANGATEITEI'IA, E KIA ATUI'IA MAI TE AU MAPU

PARURU'ANGA I TE AU MAPU NA ROTO I TE AKAMATUTU'ANGA I TE AU TANGO KOPU TANGATA, AKANOONOOANGA NA TE AU MAPU, E TETAI UATU TUANGA TAUTURU.



PRIORITY AREA 4: Youth are Accepted, Respected and Connected

Policy Objective: To safeguarding young people by strengthening family foundations, youth programs and support systems.

This means:

- Youth have access to all support services.
- Youth feel accepted, respected and connected at home, school, in the community and online.
- Youth feel supported and included.
- Youth have support from parents, families, church and the community.
- Youth understand the importance of accepting, respecting and connecting with others.

Issues:

- Youth voices are not being heard.
- Unsuitable home environment eg. poverty, alcohol/ drug abuse, absent parents, sexual abuse, family violence.
- Young people are forced to mature quickly to care for the household or supplement the family income.
- Lack of rehabilitation programs and restorative approaches for youth offenders.
- Stigmatised in the community if you have been convicted.
- Youth have access to more worldly information without supervision.
- Youth feel disconnected from their families and the community.
- Lack of coordination within the Church Youth Groups and CSO's.

Policy

To address the issue and objective stated, the Policy will:

- 1. Design and implement programs that strengthen families, empower parents and young people.
- 2. Positively reintegrate young people into our society.
- 3. Developing youth programs and alternative education pathway.
- 4. Building our social service capacity.

Indicators	Lead	
1.1 Number of community education and awareness campaigns.	MoE	
1.2 Support the moral, values and spiritual development of young Cook Islanders through church, community, peer support groups and programs.	RAC Youth	
1.3 Kakaia Programme: i.Number of delivered programsii.Build the number of facilitators.	MoE	
1.4 Number of targeted youth parenting courses.	MoE	
2.1 Corrective Services to design a rehabilitation and restorative justice programs.	MoCS	
	Second Chance	
3.1 Provide a range of relevant youth alternative education programs.	MoE	
4.1 Number of families accessing support services for families experiencing violence,	MoE	
neglect and abuse.	CAFs	
4.2 Number of qualified or trained social and community workers.	INTAFF	
4.3 Establish a National Youth RAC by 2021.	RAC	
4.4 Establish a Youth HUB to be fully operational to support our young people through any journey of their lives.	INTAFF	

KIA TIRATIRATU TE MAPU No te au taui'anga o te aorangi.

KIA AKAMANA'IA TE AU MAPU KIA RIRO MAI E AU TUMUTOA E TE AITO NO TE AORANGI.



PRIORITY AREA 5: Youth are Environment Action Ready!

Policy Objective: To empower youth to be resilient champions of our environment.

This means:

- Issues:
- Youth are resilient environmental champions who protect, preserve and conserve our environment.
- Youth are involved and are aware of environmental issues and actions at a local and global level.
- No baseline data or measurable indicators of Youth and their involvement/concern for the Environment or monitoring and evaluation.
- No data on the Pa Enua Youth involvement in environmental activities.
- Lack of education and awareness regarding environment related activities.
- Cook Islands lacks inclusiveness of youth bodies or councils in decision making in relation to environmental protection decisions.
- Existing Environment legislation contain no Youth considerations.

Policy

To address the issues and objective stated, this Policy will:

- 1. Develop a database to collect data on youth interest in environmental related activities.
- 2. Educate our youth and raise awareness on local and global environmental issues.
- 3. Strengthen participation of youth in environmental protection.

Indicators	Lead
1.1 Establish a risk assessment framework	NES
1.2 Conduct survey regularly with youth	NES
1.3 Interviews, workshops, consultation with youth	NES
2.1 Number of integrated schedules of environmental related activities in the Cook Islands	NES
2.2 Engaging the youth to lead research within the Cook Islands	NES
2.3 To educate and train Pa Enua staff to be educators in environmental issues	NES
2.4 Establish and form a coordinated approach by stakeholders.	NES
3.1 Consult the Cook Islands National Youth Council (CINYC) or body as a main stakehold- er during consultation of standard policy government processes and law-making process- es	NES

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INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Non-Government Agencies are encouraged to turn to this policy to provide backing for funding towards supporting the National Youth Policy Objectives and their youth programs.

Empower Me Inc – the Youth Hub, will be the office where our young people can turn to find support or a safe place to congregate. It is also a hub where Agencies can provide information on any events or opportunities specifically targeted to our young people.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Social Policy and Service Division, Youth Officer will have the primary responsibility to facilitate a Steering Committee to meet on a quarterly basis (March, June, September, December) to report back on developments and challenges.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Social Policy and Service Division, Youth Officer will be responsible for establishing and maintaining an appropriate monitoring system to keep track of all relevant data, indicators and activities carried out during the next five years.

As a living document this policy needs to be reviewed regularly with this policy expected to be reviewed in 2024.

The implementation of the National Youth Policy 2021-2026 and the achievements of all 5 Youth Priority Areas requires the contribution and buy in of all levels of Government, Non-Government Organisations, Private Sector and Individuals.

The Cook Islands Government Agency Business Planning, Performance and Budget process is a key component in the implementation, monitoring and reporting on key work program deliverables. Budget allocations are captured in the Agency Business Plans, whether they be agency appropriations or development partner funding.

The specific monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements for each of the various organisations are outlined below:

Ministry of Internal Affairs, Social Policy and Service Division

- a) Shall be the lead in all National Youth Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
- b) Shall establish a *Te Mana o te Mapu* Steering Committee to oversee the implementation and monitoring of this Policy
- c) Shall be the Secretariat (SPS Divisional personnel) of the Te Mana o te Mapu Steering Committee
- d) Shall be the lead to call the Quarterly meetings for the *Te Mana o te Mapu* Steering Committee
- e) Shall be responsible to report back quarterly to the Secretary of INTAFF with their findings
- f) To support, cooperate with all key stakeholders working with young people.

TMM Secretariat

- a) Monitor and evaluate the activities within the *Te Mana o te Mapu*.
- b) Advise and support *Te Mana o te Mapu* steering committee.
- c) Advise and support the lead agencies.

TMM Steering Committee

- d) Develop a Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee to adopt at inaugural meeting.
- e) Meet quarterly to discuss and report progress. An annual report shall be furnished to the Secretary 30 September.
- f) Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to support *Te Mana o te Mapu*.

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VISION

"YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ACTIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY ENGAGED IN OUR COMMUNITY ENABLING THEM TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL"

ANA O TE MA

MAPL

ORAMA

"KO TE AU MAPU KIA MAROIROI E KIA ATUI KI ROTO I TO TATOU ITI TANGATA NO TE AKATUKATAU'ANGA IA RATOU KIA TAERIA TE OPE O TO RATOU KARAPE"

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Government Agencies

- g) Use the policies and indicators to inform their annual business plan and budget submission for the activities to achieve the NYP Policy Objectives
- h) To conduct an internal agency monitoring and management report, to be provided back quarterly or when the meetings are called, to the National Youth Steering Committee
- i) To communicate and collaborate with other key stakeholders working with young people.

Civil Society Organisations

- a) From time to time CSO and community groups will be invited to provide input for consolidation into *Te Mana o te Mapu* National Youth Policy 2021-2026 Annual Report back to the Secretary of INTAFF
- b) To conduct an internal Organisation monitoring and management to report back to the Steering Committee quarterly or when the meetings are called
- c) To communicate and collaborate with other key stakeholders working with young people.

MONITORING	FRAMEWORK
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	AGENCY	REPORT	REPORT TO	TIMING
	TMM Steering Committee	Annual Report	Head of Ministry to Internal Affairs	annually
	Social Policy and Services Division (SPS)	Divisional Progress Report	INTAFF HOM	6-monthly, annually
MONITORING DURING THE	SPS	Pa Enua Progress Report	INTAFF HOM	6-monthly, annually
	INTAFF	Agency Business Plan (KPI, Work Program)	OPSC	annually
MIDTERM REVIEW	SPS	Mid-year Review of the TMM 2021- 2026	Head of Ministry to Internal Affairs, All stakeholders	Mid-year progress update 2024
EVALUATION	SPS	Full Review of the TMM 2021-2026	Head of Ministry to Internal Affairs, All stakeholders	End of policy term 2026

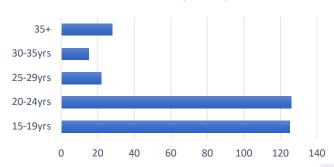


APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

In June 2020, work began on developing the new 2021-26 National Youth Policy – Te Mana o te Mapu. It was imperative that the views of the youth were captured through survey to inform the priority areas of the Policy. A survey was conducted in Rarotonga and the Pa Enua (Aitutaki, Mangaia, Atiu, Pukapuka, Manihiki) through Survey Monkey via Facebook, as well as face to face interviews.

The Cook Islands 2016 Census Report noted that young people from the ages of 15-24 represent 6.7% (2,600) of the Cook Islands total population (CKS, 2016). It was decided only youth within the Cook Islands should participate in the survey.

There were 316 eligible respondents to the survey from August up until early December 2020; with 259 people from Rarotonga and 57 people from the Pa Enua, of those respondents , 251 participants were from the ages 15-24years, 65 respondents being from over the age of 25.



Number of Survey Respondents

The survey provides an overview on the levels of various support being provided to current youth programmes and services . Respondent answered either strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagree or disagree on the areas of:

- political support
- policy & regulatory framework
- organisational/ administrative support
- resource allocation
- implementation
- sustainability

The survey also gave an opportunity for respondents to provide their own opinions on:

- issues faced in the previous 5 years
- perceived youth issues in the next 5 years
- priority areas for youth development in the Cook Islands
- disadvantaged young people
- agencies most effective in youth development
- most successful/impactful youth programmes to date

The survey results show that youth programs, services and development efforts are being recognised by the youth and community.

Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) are seen as being more effective and successful with youth programmes and services. Results show they also source out the opinions of the young people before making decisions.

While Government is seen as doing well in the implementation and organisation/administration support of youth programmes and services, however, respondents feel that Government is not doing well in seeking the opinions of youth before making decisions and providing more resource allocation to youth development.

Respondents identified family, sports, technology, agriculture, culture and health as priority areas for youth development.

POLITICAL/ COMMUNITY SUPPORT

A positive response from those surveyed agreed Government supported youth initiatives (61%) and showed youth are aware of youth issues (64%). However, just over 50% did not agree that youth development was high priority for government (52%), nor has the media placed a positive spotlight on youth issues (52%).

In contrast, a high positive response from those surveyed of 88%, agree religious organisations and NGO's provide good support to youth.

Findings also showed church youth groups were identified as being the most effective and successful youth programs being conducted through the Cook Islands. Many expressed in the survey the effectiveness of church youth groups and church leaders in providing assistance and support. While school, sports, INTAFF and Cook Islands Police were also acknowledged as having effective youth development programs too.

POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

There is positive feedback about the Policy and Regulatory Framework in the Community.70% of respondents agreed CSO's sought the opinions of youth views in decision making. Almost 70% of respondents expressed that Government do sufficiently not seeking youth views in decision making.

In general, respondents agreed there is an effective national plan for youth (57%); sufficient laws and regulations in place to support and protect youth (60%); national youth organizations have an influence to national plans (64%).

ORGANISATIONAL/ ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Over 50% of respondents expressed that there is good organisational and administrative support for youth.

Results show youth development work is well coordinated (52%), youth have good access to information about services and programs (52%), youth can access support and information at local centers (55%).

70% of respondents agreed youth/community workers who focus on youth issues in community.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

In the view of those surveyed, just over 50% of respondents did not agree that government is providing sufficient resources for youth development (55%) and disagreed that resources are being put into important areas of youth development (56%)

IMPLEMENTATION

Over 50% of respondents expressed the implementation of youth programmes and services is delivered well and sufficiently addresses the needs of youth (54%), youth are involved in projects and programs that are making a difference in their lives (64%), youth have access to appropriate information and services e.g. on career, personal development and health. (60%).

Positive responses in this area indicate actual youth programmes and services being provided do cater to the different needs of males and females (gender sensitive) (58%), are easy for youth to understand and be a part of (youth friendly) (61%), are linked to the local language and culture of youth (culturally Sensitive) (66%).

Respondents expressed in the next 5 years that youth will face self-esteem issues, stress, smoking, drinking, anxiety, violence, cyber bullying, obesity, poverty, low self-confidence and suicidal thoughts. These issues have also been highlighted as challenges young people have faced in the past 5 years in this survey too.

When asked to identify youth groups that were most disadvantaged, responses did not classify a specific group but described the types of activities harmful to youth and likely to disadvantage our youth such as alcohol, drinking, depression, smoking and peer pressure.

SUSTAINABILITY

Over 50% of respondents agreed that the relevant areas of government have committed to the national plan for youth (53%).

APPENDIX 2: INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

Working Group:

- 1. Ministry of Education
- 2. Ministry of Education
- 3. Te Marae Ora Ministry of Health
- 4. Ministry of Culture
- 5. Ministry of Correctional Services
- 6. Office of the Prime Minister, CCCI
- 7. National Environment Service
- 8. National Environment Service
- 9. Ministry of Internal Affairs
- 10. Te Ipukarea Society
- 11. Chamber of Commerce
- 12. Cook Islands Family & Welfare
- 13. Cook Islands Family & Welfare
- 14. University of the South Pacific
- 15. Religious Advisory Council
- 16. Consultant/ Facilitator

Others that have been consulted:

- 17. Te Marae Ora Ministry of Health
- 18. Te Marae Ora Ministry of Health
- 19. Police
- 20. Ministry of Education
- 21. Ministry of Education
- 22. Ministry of Finance & Economic Management, National Statistics Office
- 23. Ministry of Internal Affairs
- 24. Ministry of Internal Affairs
- 25. Religious Advisory Council

Mrs Anna Roumanu Mrs Sharlene Atai Mr Ellis Solomona Mrs Ngarangi Tangaroa-Teio Ms Lisiane Messine Miss Rima Moeka'a Mr Muraai Herman Miss Tekura Moeka'a Mr Tuaine Manavaroa Miss Alanna Smith Mrs Ana File-Heather Miss Hereiti File Miss Leilani Vano Dr Debi Futter-Puati Pastor Eric Toleafoa Ms Poko Heather-Rongo

Ms Mirella Mairii Miss Teinatangi Ringi Mr Maeva Kirikava Kairangi Thomson Cindy Milanovic Mr Jim Nimerota

Miss Moana Manuela Ms Rebecca Eliis Ms Tereapii Inukihaangana





AGE: Melina Tuiravakai







