

**Tonga Strategy for the
Development of Statistics
(TSDS)
2019 – 2023**



**Tonga Statistics
Department**

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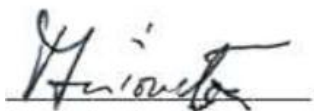
Message from the Minister for Statistics, the Hon. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa

The Tongan Government recognizes that the key to forming, refining and monitoring relevant policies, monitoring and responding to social, environment and economical situations are quality statistical data. Statistical data that in addition to the Government's needs is also in high demand from non-government organizations, academic institutions, the public and international entities as well. It is with this in mind that at the Government's request, work began towards developing the Tonga National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS) in April 2010.

This TSDS is aimed to make the production and management of accurate statistical information efficient and effective. It is linked with other existing national development policies and frameworks particularly the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF), regional SAMOA Pathway and others in-order to produce a cohesive strategy that will enable Tonga to achieve its national objectives. In effect, this strategy on a national level will:

- 1) Provide accessibility to user friendly quality statistics
- 2) Facilitate better and informative decision making
- 3) Encourage the development and practice of informative debate
- 4) Lead to informed policy planning and development

The work on developing the TSDS would not have gotten far without the necessary support of PARIS21, SPC, local and international consultants as well as the Tonga Statistics Department/Tonga Government. Their contributions are acknowledged and sincerely appreciated.



Hon. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa

Minister of Finance and National Planning and
Minister responsible for the Tonga Statistics Department

Acknowledgement

The Tonga Statistics Department (TSD) would like to acknowledge the contribution and support of the following institutions and individuals who made it possible to produce this Tonga National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS) for Tonga.

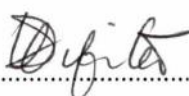
Our sincere gratitude is to the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), in particular to Ms Millicent Tejada and Mr Tomas Africa, and to the Pacific Community (SPC) and its former Director of its Statistics for Development, Dr. Gerald Haberkorn, for their advocacy of the TSDS from 2010 onwards, and for their technical and financial support.

TSD would also like to acknowledge with thanks the national sectoral consultants Dr. Seula Johannson Fua, Dr. Vailala Matoto and Ms. Meleseini Lomu for their initial consultative work with stakeholders on the social, environment and economic sectors in 2014.

Much appreciation goes to Dr. Gerald Haberkorn for picking up the work done by the national sectoral consultants in March 2017, and assisting us finalizing this document in collaboration with the Tonga Statistics Department and colleagues from across the National Statistical System during a TSDS drafting workshop in July 2018. This would not have been possible without the financial support from the Pacific Community, and I like to extend our gratitude to the Director of the Statistics for Development Division, Dr. 'Ofa Ketu'u and Mr. David Abbott.

Finalizing this document also benefitted from the work done by the Institute of Education research team of the USP Tonga Campus, pulling together sectorial assessment recommendations and contributing to the final design of this strategy.

Furthermore, this process would not have been possible without the contributions of all senior government officials and in particular the Minister responsible for Statistics and previous Government Statistician Mr. 'Ata'ata M. Finau. Their support was critical towards the formulation of the TSDS and the development of statistics in Tonga.



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Dr. Viliami K. Fifita
Government Statistician

Introduction

The Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS) has been developed to enable the production, management and use of statistical information that is needed to inform the development and implementation of policies and the monitoring of progress towards achieving the Kingdom's development goals. The TSDS will be aligned with the *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025* and Tonga's Sustainable Development Goals, covering the period 2018 – 2023.

The TSDS places Tonga's production, collection and use of statistics in line with international best practice principles and will involve a range of organizations and agencies that will contribute to the implementation of the TSDS and Tonga's statistical system with the Tonga Statistics Department and its Government Statistician playing a substantive coordinating role¹.

The Strategy for the Development of Statistics presents the Vision, Mission, Core Values and Objectives that are supported by Statements of Quality which are founded on principles of independence, relevance, credibility and coordination. All of these will work together to guide the National Statistical System for at least the next five years.

The TSDS sits within the framework established by the Statistics Act (2015) and will be overseen by a governance structure, comprising of a TSDS Steering Committee which is supported by three Technical Working Groups. The Strategy presents five Strategic Objectives that cut across and unify the statistical needs of Tonga's Economic, Social, and Natural Resources sectors; they are:

- Statistical Legislation and Policy
- Communication, Access and Use
- Data and Information Management
- Coordination of the Tonga National Statistics System
- Resource Development

The TSDS strategic framework outlines different strategic outputs associated with each of the five strategic objectives, illustrating what the TSDS aims to achieve (*where we want to go*), and matches these strategic outputs with operational outputs, or statistical action plans, highlighting *what needs to be done* to in order to get there. These will be fine-tuned and prioritized by the three sector technical working groups, following endorsement of the TSDS by the Tongan Government.

¹ See Section 3.2 outlining the TSDS Governance structure.

1. Overview of the Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS)

The Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS) will enable the efficient and effective production and management of accurate statistical information needed for evidence-based policy formulation, planning, monitoring of policy performance and progress, and ultimately accounting for results. The TSDS has been anchored to existing national development policies, in particular the *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025*², in order to address the statistical requirements implicit in its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; it also needs to address Tonga’s commitment to regional and international policy frameworks, such as the *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development* which was endorsed by Pacific Leaders in Apia, Samoa in September 2017, to guide regional responses for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of national plans and priorities, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

Initially the TSDS will serve to help:

- address national information and policy demands such as those involved in national budget planning;
- address regional and international policy commitments such as outlined in the *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development*
- Improve the value and use of statistics for evidence-based decision making
- In the establishment of protocols for collection, classification, quality assurance, sharing and dissemination of statistics
- provide an effective platform for collaboration, coordination, and consultation across between different stakeholders across the National Statistical System;
- ensure adequate and sustainable resources are in place, to deliver quality statistical products and services.

The TSDS places Tonga’s production, collection and use of statistics in line with international best practice principles in that it requires statistical data production, collection and storage, methods and procedures to be grounded in scientific principles and professional ethics. This will enable Tongans to be assured that the presentation and interpretation of statistical data has been done in a transparent and accountable manner. The Strategy ensures that collected personal data remain strictly confidential and is used for statistical purposes only. The TSDS situates Tonga statistics within an international context that utilizes cooperation and the application of international standards to lead to system improvements.

A range of organizations and agencies will contribute to the implementation of the TSDS and Tonga’s statistical system. Chief among these is the Tonga Statistics Department with the Government Statistician playing a major coordinating role in collaboration with the Head of Planning, to ensure a close link between this TSDS and Tonga’s *Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025* and the Government’s commitment to regional and international policy frameworks, as referred to earlier. The TSDS categorizes the other contributors to the system as being producers (such as government departments and statutory bodies, like Education and Health, and the Reserve Bank who have dedicated statistical/research units), a user (for instance senior policy-makers, policy analysts, planners, researchers, development partners) or a provider (e.g. households, business) of statistical data and information. The cross-cutting nature of official statistics is likely to see contributors to the system move across these categories and this will be dependent on what role(s) they have in the processes of informing key decision making activities, especially those regarding the TSDS’s five Strategic Objectives and any related development programs or projects.

² For details see: http://www.finance.gov.to/sites/default/files/TSDF%20II_English_printed%20to%20LA%20on%2019May2015_0.pdf

1.1 Background

The National Statistics Development Strategy (NSDS) concept, as articulated by PARIS21³, supports the development of national statistical development strategies that are linked to and integrated with national development policies, including sectoral policies. The process for developing an NSDS includes broad consultations with decision makers and data users across government departments and statutory bodies. The initial planning and work leading to the development of the TSDS began in April 2010 when, at the request of the Tongan Government, and support from the then Government Statistician, PARIS21 and The Pacific Community (SPC)⁴ conducted a joint mission to Kingdom of Tonga to advocate the importance of designing and implementing a NSDS.

A key recommendation from this initial planning mission was for the design a NSDS for a period of ten years. It was recommended that this be anchored to existing national development policies, which at the present time refers to the *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025*, and addressing statistical requirements implicit in its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. A second recommendation called for a review the statistical legislative framework, including revisiting Tonga's Statistics Act and the status of the Tonga Statistics Department. The planning mission also called for the formation of an NSDS Steering Committee to guide the NSDS planning process and its eventual implementation, with consideration also being given to establishing three sectoral technical working groups/ committees, to guide and support TSDS activities in their respective areas.

In the first half of 2013 a 'roadmap' to develop the TSDS was endorsed by the Tongan Government. This enabled the appointment of a national NSDS-consultant to manage the overall TSDS development process. In collaboration with the Tonga Statistics Department and three national sectoral consultants, the consultant was tasked with undertaking a statistical assessment of the economic, social, natural resources sectors. In the second half of 2013 detailed summary matrices addressing Government agencies' data needs, access and availability and their capacity to collect, analyze and disseminate data were prepared. These provided the baseline information for the two TSDS strategic planning and design workshops, and to inform the subsequent formulation of sector-specific statistical action plans.

Based upon this work, between January and June 2014 the following TSDS components were developed and endorsed:

- Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Objectives
- Strategic objectives, associated outputs and risks
- A TSDS Governance structure

The sectoral assessments and subsequent planning workshops also supported the establishment of a TSDS governance structure comprising of the TSDS Steering Committee and three sectoral technical working groups, to facilitate coordination and ensure quality and timeliness of data and to focus ministries and agencies to produce useful statistical reports. From a systems perspective, the assessment prioritised the development of a common ICT infrastructure supporting data collection, analysis, and dissemination, and to ensure that systems and programs used across Government are compatible to facilitate data access and sharing. The assessments also identified the need for the development of human resources skills and knowledge to bring these in line with international standards and methods and to improve the capacity of the Statistics Department and ministries and agencies to be able to effectively and efficiently develop and share data. Similarly, the assessments identified the need to strengthen and improve the role and capacity of the Statistics Department to provide necessary assistance to government agencies.

³ United Nations Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21). For details see: <http://www.paris21.org/>

⁴ For details see: <http://www.spc.int/>

In March 2017 a Tonga Statistics Development Workshop validated the sectoral assessments undertaken in the second half of 2013. The sectoral assessments identified the need for a review of legislation to ensure that ministries and government agencies had the authority to collect and access required data and that this enable the development of a National Statistics Development policies that address data access/sharing, data dissemination, coordination and collaboration on statistical matters between ministries and with nongovernment agencies. The assessments prioritized the need for government agencies to have appropriate budgets and resource allocations to effectively support the development of statistics at a national level.

1.2 TSDS Design Principles

The TSDS is based upon the United Nation's *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*⁵ and PARIS 21's 2004 document, *A Guide to Designing a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)*⁶.

A NSDS should be:

- Integrated into national development policy processes and context, taking account of regional and international commitments. This will help improve the flow of information among users and producers of statistics and develop and strengthen legal and policy responsibility for the TSDS.
- Developed in an inclusive way, incorporating results-based management principles and meet quality standards. This will result in strengthened and sustainable statistical capacity.
- Comprehensive and coherent and provide the basis for the sustainable development of statistics with quality. This principle paves the way for the development of a framework for monitoring and evaluation for national planning processes.
- Able to show where the statistical system is now, how it needs to be developed and how to accomplish this. This principle encourages the development of appropriate mechanisms for guiding and accelerating the development of sustainable statistical capacity.

An example of the first principle can be found in the necessity that there be an alignment between the TSDS and existing national development policies, such as those present in the *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025*, addressing statistical requirements implicit in its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. An example of the first and second principles being applied simultaneously can be found in the sectoral consultation approach that enabled the formulation of sector-specific statistical action plans, the identification of Government agencies' statistical capabilities and needs, and the identification of specific sector/community based statistical needs or priorities (see Appendix A). Evidence of the third and fourth principles can be found in the TSDS's requirement that:

- The assessments upon which the TSDS is based are regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain aligned to the TSDS Key Performance Indicators and against its 7 TSDS Outcomes, and the 132 Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators pertaining to *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development* referred to earlier, to guide regional responses for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of national plans and priorities, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.
- Data sources for these indicators are reviewed to confirm their suitability and that this occurs in a timely manner
- The frequency of statistical updating is appropriate and timely

⁵ For details see: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/gp/FP-Rev2013-E.pdf>

⁶ For details see: https://www.paris21.org/sites/default/files/1401_0.pdf

The TSDS requires high level policy makers to support the TSDS's Vision, Strategic Objectives and Action Plans through the provision of appropriate funding and the deliberate alignment of the TSDS with the Tonga Government's development objectives, while at the same time creating the environment in which government agencies provide data for a results-based management approach to development and decision making.

1.3 Legislative and Policy Framework

The TSDS sits within the framework established by the Statistics Act (2015)⁷. The Act identifies the Tonga Statistics Department as the principal authority for the official statistics of Tonga, and refers to the duties of the Government statistician as *"to co-ordinate the practices of departments in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information"* (Section 5.2). The Act also requires the formation of a National Statistics Advisory Council whose functions are to guide and provide oversight of statistical activities. These include the production and use of quality statistical information, to provide the foundation for evidence-based decision-making, policy development, planning, monitoring of, and accounting for development progress (Section 8.3). Looking ahead, users of, and functions carried out under the Statistics Act (2015) would benefit from further small legislative amendments to the Act that:

- Include within the roles of Tonga Statistics Department, to act as a *"statistical clearinghouse"* to ensure all statistical activities undertaken in the Kingdom adhere to international statistical standards, classification and recognized procedures to help ensure data quality, requiring government agencies' to seek advice and clearance from TSD prior to embarking on new statistical collections; and
- Provide a framework/process through which parties can resolve any issues relating to the ownership of statistical data.

⁷ For details see: https://crownlaw.gov.to/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2015/2015-0007/StatisticsACT2015_1.pdf

2. Tonga National Statistical System

2.1 Overview

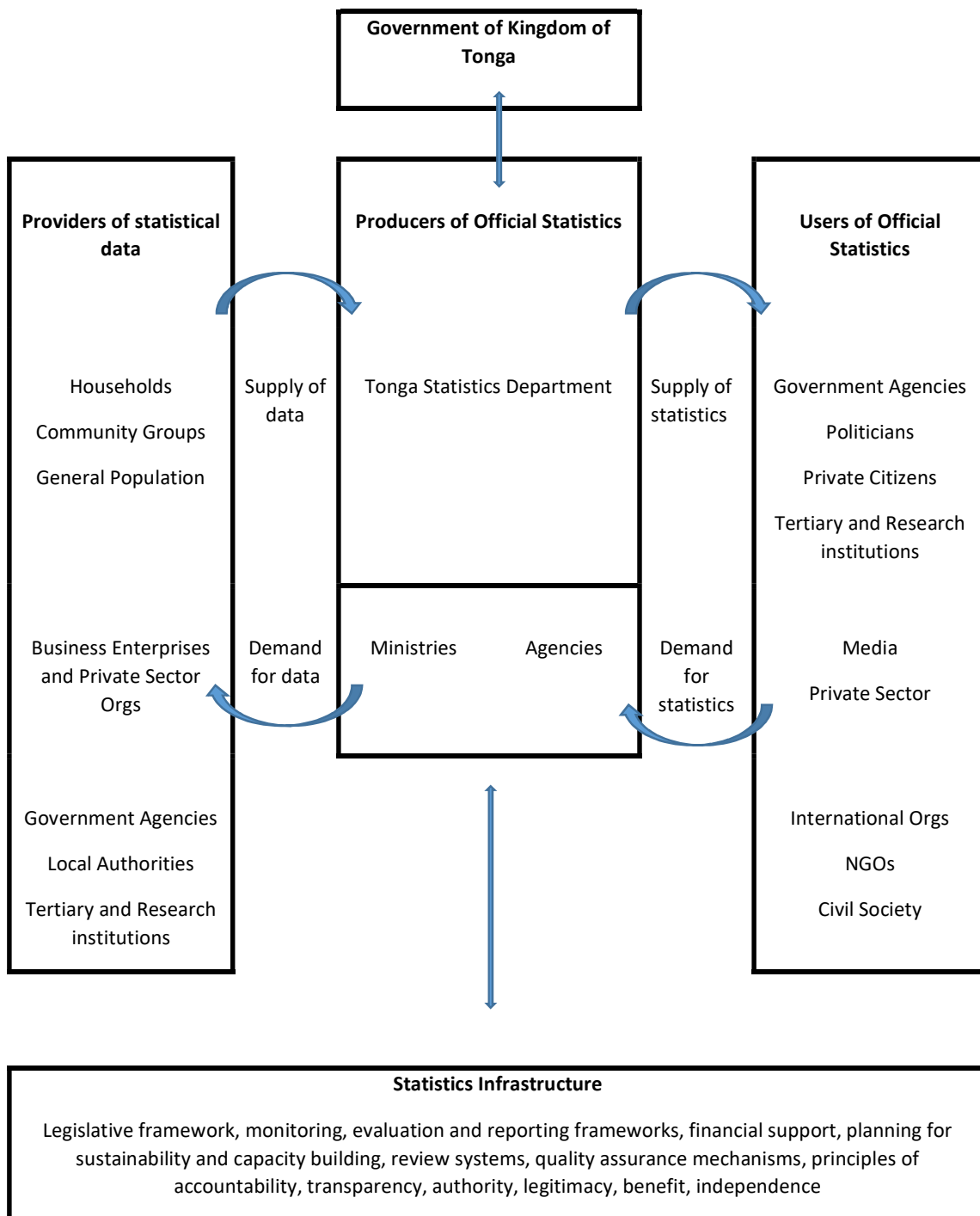
The principal aim of the TSDS is to strengthen and sustain the development of the Tonga National Statistical System. A National Statistical System (NSS) is the term used to describe the interrelationships and workings of the public, government, and some private organizations that produce, provide and use statistics and statistical information. An NSS also includes tertiary and research institutions given their involvement in both the collection and analysis of statistics, as well as contributing to the skills development of future producers and users of statistical data.

The Tonga NSS is a collaborative system that requires statistical producers, users and providers to work together in order to produce statistical information that can be effectively used in decision making. The TSDS will enable the Tonga NSS to work towards supporting the Kingdom's strategic direction in a manner that encourages coordination and collaboration while at the same time recognizing and supporting the Tonga Statistics Department as the principal authority for the official statistics of Tonga. This provides the Tonga NSS with a form of quality assurance that provides transparency relating to methodological and strategic decisions, and clear lines of reporting and accountability.

The Tonga NSS shares the following characteristics with most other countries statistical systems:

- *Providers* are those that provide data that are used to generate official statistics and can include private individuals and groups within the general population, government agencies, businesses and enterprises.
- *Producers* are those that process the data and information to generate official statistics and statistical information. Within the public sector these include ministries, regulatory authorities and statutory bodies. In the private sector these include business organizations, non-governmental organizations, and sometimes community, or civil society organizations. Producers are supported by and held accountable by a common statistical infrastructure and guiding principles.
- *Users* are those that use official statistics to fulfill a range of purposes. Within the public sector these include ministers, parliamentarians and senior government officials who require access to quality data and statistical information to enable sound policy formulation and planning, as well as the regular monitoring of policy performance and development progress. The private sector uses statistics in a similar manner.

Figure-1: Tonga National Statistics System



2.2 Tonga Statistics Department

The Tonga Statistics Department is part of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, with the Government statistician reporting directly to the Minister. Following a recent re-organization in June 2018, it comprises of three divisions: *Leadership and Policy Advice*, *Statistical Services*, and *Statistical Advice and Capacity Assistance*, and has an established staff list of 55 positions (Annex-1). This makes TSD the fourth largest national statistical agency in the Pacific after PNG, Fiji and Samoa.

- **Leadership and Policy Advice** comprises of 3 units: Corporate services, ICT and a small CEO office, which has 21 established positions.
- **Statistical Services** have responsibility for **economic statistics**, and comprises of two units, real sector, and external sector economic statistics, with 18 established positions.
- **Statistical Advice and Capacity Assistance** is responsible for **population and social statistics**, Population and Household censuses, Household Surveys and data processing, with 15 established positions.

TSD's core functions are outlined in section 3-2 of the 2015 Statistics act as follows:

- *The Statistics Department shall collect, from people, businesses and other organisations in the Kingdom, information relating to their activities and economic and social situation, in order to compile, analyse, abstract and publish official statistics relating to the condition of commerce, people, their communities and the environment, as well as the activities, performance and impact of the Government.*

TSD, like national statistical agencies elsewhere, undertakes a regular program of statistical collections, comprising of Population and Agricultural censuses, every five and ten years respectively; social and economic household surveys, ideally every 5 years; as well as establishment surveys and business register updates. TSD also undertakes more frequent or ongoing collections, such as quarterly price surveys, and compiles data captured by other agencies in order to produce annual population updates on births, deaths, and population movement (derived from immigration arrival and departure cards). These activities allow TSD to produce regular statistical outputs and information required by Government and private sector, and civil society at large, as illustrated in Annex-2, which covers all statistical outputs released on a regular basis as indicated in TSD calendar of statistical release. This, and other information can be accessed on a recently redesigned TSD website to be launched in early November 2018, and should users require access to statistics in other formats, including access to anonymized raw data sets (unit records), this could also be arranged through a formal MOU between the Director of TSD and his counterpart of the requesting government agency.

While TSD has been able to produce a large variety of quality statistical outputs over the years, thanks largely to an experienced and dedicated work-force and government support of its activities, a review of its functions as mandated by legislation, undertaken as part of the NSS assessment to guide the formulation of the *Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics (TSDS), 2019 – 2023*, identified several major constraints impacting on TSD capacity to deliver quality statistical products and services, which deserve priority attention in the TSDS.

- **Resource allocation**

The most pressing challenge faced by TSD, is its current staff vacancy rate of 40%⁸. With all three divisions and operational areas affected by this shortfall, TSD cannot be expected to operate efficiently and effectively in addressing current demands for economic and social-demographic

⁸ At the time of compiling this report (October 2018), some vacancies have been advertised, and some interviews been completed.

statistics, with both areas running at 56% and 60% staff capacity. And with a growing demand for natural resources / environmental statistics and many “*new domain*” statistics currently not met, this has severe implications for Tonga’s ability to monitor its own domestic and regional development policy performance, notwithstanding the excellent work undertaken by the Planning Office in its recent alignment of the TSDf and Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators in the “*tracker database*”.

- **Statistical coordination**

Notwithstanding a clear legal requirement to coordinate the statistical work of all national government departments (2015 Statistics Act, Section 5-2), there is no visible evidence of this taking place as yet. Such a process could be facilitated through regular National Statistical Advisory Council meetings suggested by the Act (Section 8-1), to “*meet the needs of the time for advice to the Minister on the range and scope of official statistics necessary for economic and social development planning and management in Tonga*”.

- **Datedness, irregularity of accessible data and statistical products**

With many socio-demographic and micro-economic data and indicators derived from population and housing censuses and household surveys, the lengthy time-lags between censuses (every ten years) and irregularity of household surveys, which more often than not are conducted when external funds are available rather than when required for policy development, do not lend themselves for regular monitoring of policy performance and development progress.

An added pressure to deliver quality statistical outputs in a timely manner and through a diverse range of products, is hampered by current staff constraints as referred to earlier.

2.3 Perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Tonga NSS⁹

An integral component of an NSS assessment is undertaking a SWOT analysis as part of a country’s NSDS strategic planning workshop. The benefit of such an exercise is twofold: it serves both as a cross-check/ validation of earlier sectoral assessments undertaken by the three national NSDS consultants, and provides a solid basis for the strategic planning process in helping to identify key strategic outputs associated with each strategic objective (“*what the TSDS wants to achieve*”), as well as associated operational outputs (“*what needs to be done to get there*”). The result of this process is summarized in the TSDS Strategic planning framework and risk analysis matrices discussed in chapters 4 and 6.

Strengths

One of the major strengths of the current statistical system is that it is supported by legislation that addresses the first of the five TSDS Strategic Objectives. The official status afforded to the position of Government Statistician is stated in the legislation too. Associated with this, the roles and purpose of statistics and that of the Statistics Department are more widely understood and accepted than they have been in the past. The proposed formation of a National Statistics Advisory Council (NSAC) ensures representative governance of the statistics system.

Stakeholder relationships are improving through on-going dialogue between statistics stakeholders and the re-formation of active sectoral technical working groups. These groups will provide information and advice to the Government Statistician. Their formation will lead to a growing awareness of statistics stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities, and enable the development of agreed protocols, procedures, and common standards for collection, classifications that help improve data production, sharing and dissemination.

A key development and a strategic strength of the current system is the recent alignment of the TSDf’s indicators and the Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators in the Planning Office’s “*tracker*

⁹ This is a condensed summary of the Tonga NSS Assessment report.

database". This development has provided the system with a framework for strategic decision making, a strong point of reference for the NSAC and TSDS Steering Committee, and a strategic roadmap for the coordinated planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the development of Tonga's statistics system.

Weaknesses

Despite its recent enactment, the Statistics Act (2015), there remain some inconsistencies and conflicts with other Acts over ownership, use and control of statistical data. Added to this, the term 'Official Statistics' needs to be clearly defined if the authority and legitimacy of the Government Statistician is to be fully understood and recognized by stakeholders. And at the governance level, the National Statistics Advisory Council and TSDS Steering Committee have yet to be established.

The 2015 Statistics Act also lacks a specific reference to a key TSD function to act as a "*statistical clearinghouse*" referred to earlier, and stronger reference to the importance of statistical coordination and collaboration between government agencies.

Technical weaknesses within the system include the range of different databases and data systems in use by statistics stakeholders. The range of types and frequency of statistical cycles does not make it easy for members of the public to have access to relevant data. Though coordination, cooperation and communication are improving between statistical users, providers and producers, the system, from time to time, is at risk of producing statistical information that is a duplication or contains discrepancies and/or gaps in information.

The system needs to develop a coordinated approach to the production and use of personal identifiers, in the form individual ID numbers. This would enable a system wide approach to the production, allocation, accessing and monitoring of statistical data for individuals, while guaranteeing individual privacy and data confidentiality. It would also reduce the risk of data duplication.

Resource constraints, both in terms of lacking (i) human resource capacity (number of staff and technical expertise) to collect, compile, process, analyze and disseminate statistics and statistical information, as well as (ii) realistic working budgets to do so, are a major weakness across the Tonga NSS. It is of particular concern regarding the production of natural resources/environmental and many "new domain" statistics associated largely with international development framework and treaty monitoring requirements. Having said this, even Tonga's pre-eminent Statistics Provider, TSD, is not immune to such challenges and constraints, as referred to earlier.

Opportunities

The ongoing development of strategic relationships, at organizational and individual levels, between the Statistics Department and statistics stakeholders is an opportunity to consolidate understanding of the roles, responsibilities, representation, and planned action as they relate to the strategic production and use of statistics. The fostering of strategic relationships within stakeholder organizations and sectoral groups could assist in enhancing statistical processes and procedures such as improving communication, the production and exchange of information, and the alignment of activities.

The alignment of the TSDF's indicators and the SDGs, as they relate to statistics, presents an opportunity for the strategic setting and acceptance of data priorities. The development of statistics planning, timelines, frequency of data collection and production, allocation of organizational and individual responsibilities, and indicators of outputs being completed and outcomes being realized can all stem from this strategic alignment exercise.

The alignment of the TSDF's indicators and the SDGs can inform the development and implementation of information technology and the statistical infrastructure. A flow on opportunity is the identification of training opportunities and capacity building initiatives to enable the delivery of statistics. In turn this could help facilitate the Statistics Department and statistics providers to

effectively and efficiently collaborate on producing and sharing statistics and provide professional and systems support to each other.

Threats

Active, considered and deliberate leadership within the Statistics Department and government ministries and agencies is a key assumption on which the TSDS is based. This assumption presents one of the risks to the successful implementation of the strategy in that leadership roles in the statistical system are not taken up by or accepted by other producers of statistics. An associated risk is that stakeholders are unwilling, or unable, to coordinate and co-operate in statistical activities or to recognize their responsibilities within the statistics system.

Another assumption that underpins the TSDS is that the participants in the statistics system will be involved in change that focuses on the improvement of the development and use of statistical information. The risk is that key participants are reluctant to support the change process and/or work actively to maintain the status quo. Maintaining organizational capability and professional memory is a challenge for the system and there is a risk of capable and competent staff moving out of the system therefore potentially weakening the system's leadership and change and improvement process.

It is likely that the development of information technology and systems infrastructure will be necessary to enable the delivery of the TSDS Strategic Objectives. There are a range of risks associated with this that include budgetary matters, the potential for changes in government priorities or demands from other projects, the ability of providers to deliver products and services, and the ability of the system's participants to become competent in meeting any new information technology or infrastructure demands. The development of information technology and systems infrastructure will require resourcing and there is a risk that the government, or support partners, are unwilling or unable to provide the necessary resources.

3. TSDS Strategic Framework

3.1 Vision, mission, professional values, strategic objectives, statements of quality

Vision:

To be recognised as the best statistical system to assist the development and management of the Kingdom of Tonga

Mission:

To provide user-friendly access to quality statistics, informing policy development and planning, mindful of Tonga's development aspirations, and acknowledging international best practices, local knowledge and culture

Values:

- *Professionalism*
- *Integrity*
- *User Focus*
- *Independence*

Strategic Objectives:

- *Statistical Legislation and policy*
- *Communication, Access and Use*
- *Data and Information Management*
- *Tonga NSS Coordination*
- *Resource development*

Statements of Quality:

- *Independence*
- *Relevance*
- *Credibility*
- *Coordination*

While drawing from information from the three sectoral assessments, the TSDS Strategic Framework's Vision, Mission, Values and the Strategic Objectives were developed and validated at the TSDS strategic planning workshops in January and June 2014. The Statements of Quality stem from acknowledged international best practice and have been linked to priorities identified by the sectoral assessments.

Vision

The Vision that the Tonga NSS aspires to achieve in the implementation of the TSDS is:

To be recognised as the best statistical system to assist the development and management of the Kingdom of Tonga

Mission

The Mission is at the heart of any national statistical system and it drives the pursuit of the production of high quality, reliable and timely data to assist the Tongan Government and stakeholders to make better informed decisions. The Mission Statement is demanding in that it requires the Tonga NSS to be constantly reviewing and developing itself in order to meet emerging needs of the social, economic and natural resources sectors. This will rely on building and maintaining relationships with key providers and users of statistics. The mission of the TSDS is:

To provide user-friendly access to quality statistics, informing policy development and planning, mindful of Tonga's development aspirations, and acknowledging international best practices, local knowledge and culture

Values

The TSDS Values reflect the guiding principles and behaviors that emerged from the consultation process that informed the sectoral assessments. The TSDS Values and their foci are:

- **Professionalism:** Focus on: *timeliness, relevance, legally compliant, efficient, accountable, innovative, transparency, independence*
- **Integrity:** Focus on: *reliability, accuracy, confidentiality, unbiased, compliance with standards*
- **User Focus:** Focus on: *improved data availability/accessibility; data sharing/dissemination.*
- **Independence:** Focus on: *institutional/professional attributes*

Strategic Objectives

The following five strategic objectives were initially identified and developed during the January 2014 Strategic Planning Workshop and were validated at the June 2014 and March 2017 Workshops.

- **Statistical Legislation and Policy:** Rationale: ensure TSDS addresses national information and policy demands (link to national plan/budget process)
- **Communication, Access and Use:** Rationale: improve general/public awareness of the value and use of statistics for evidence-based decision making
- **Data and Information Management:** Rationale: review/update or establish protocols for collection, classification, quality assurance, sharing and dissemination of statistics.
- **Tonga NSS Coordination:** Rationale: establish partnerships, improve collaboration, coordination, consultation between internal and with external stakeholders.
- **Resource development:** Rationale: ensure adequate and sustainable human, financial and institutional (budget, IT, physical environment) resources are in place, to deliver quality statistical products and services.

Statements of Quality

The following Statements of Quality are universally seen as being elemental to the establishment of an effective National Statistical System:

- **Independence:** the system must have a widely acknowledged position of *professional independence*
- **Relevance:** the system must produce the statistics the users need
- **Credibility:** the system must produce statistics that are generally perceived to be reliable
- **Coordination:** the system produces statistics that are comparable across domains and over time

A synthesis of the sectoral assessments presents the following priorities that need to be undertaken to meet the elemental components of the Statements of Quality:

- Use international and national standards to base and set objectives, outcomes, policies and structures and that these contribute to monitoring the progress towards achieving (TSDF) outcomes.
- Define, develop, consult on, and confirm Quality Standards and develop a Quality Assurance System that includes effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
- Government ministries and agencies allocate and mobilize budgetary resources to future statistical development based on identified statistical needs and priorities, as well as report on current expenditure of 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 that provides a full range of essential quality statistical information management services, and a platform for monitoring and reporting development results.
- Long term efforts are made to build and retain a core contingent of statistical analysts in government and that this involves a training needs analysis across all departments and ministries in the national statistical system. In turn this should include identification of priority statistical training needs and training opportunities matched to key job descriptions and incumbents.

Planning has to be undertaken to ensure that participants in the national statistical system conduct regular user surveys to ensure that available statistics meet users' needs, assess gaps and evolving data needs. Ministries and agencies in the national statistical system need to plan to meet regularly, through organized committees for economic, social and natural resources statistics, to ensure core national datasets are made available and frequently reported – with the proposed TSDS Sectoral working groups providing a means to make this work. 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, should be developed. Planning should also cover the need for data producing agencies to conduct timely reviews of data quality and put in place validation procedures and include information about these in statistical releases.

3.2 Governance

The final of the three NSDS workshops recommended a three-tier TSDS governance structure, comprising of a TSDS Oversight Committee providing broad strategic guidance, with the actual TSDS implementation and monitoring responsibility entrusted to a TSDS Steering Committee and three sectoral Technical working groups (Figure-2). With section 8 of Tonga's 2015 Statistics Act providing for the formation of a *National Statistics Advisory Council* to ensure Government, private sector and civil society's interests in, and access to information pertaining to economic, social and natural resources development are met, it is imperative for these three bodies to be convened as soon as practical, to ensure TSDS implementation gets off to a successful start.

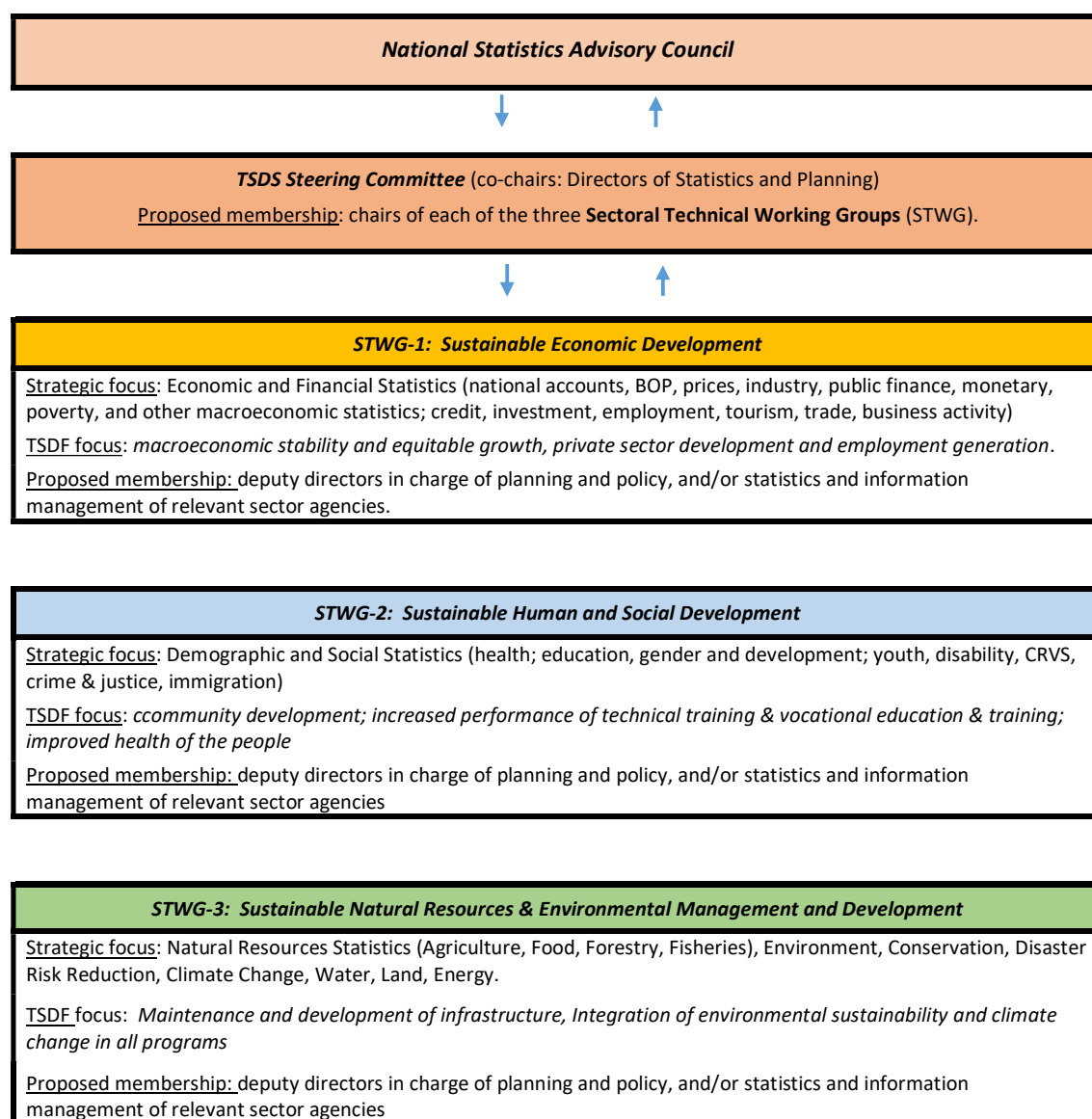
This is of particular importance for the establishment and composition of both the TSDS steering committee and the three Sector Technical Working Groups (STWG), to make an early start with developing and implementing:

- core statistical action plans across sectors to address national and regional/ international policy commitments, and
- agreement on processes and mechanisms to facilitate statistical coordination and collaboration, including data sharing;

are two major strategic and operational outputs to be pursued right from the start of TSDS implementation.

It is envisioned that the work of this National Statistics Advisory Council will be supported by the *TSDS Steering committee*, which is tasked with providing overall guidance to, and monitoring of the TSDS implementation, comprising of two co-chairs, the Directors of Statistics and Planning, and the chairs of the three TSDS sectoral technical working groups, representing the three pillars of sustainable development. The sectoral technical working groups' main role is to ensure implementation of the sector-specific statistical action plans as outlined Chapter 4.

Figure-2: TSDS Governance Structure



4. TSDS Operational Framework – matching strategic and operational outputs, including responsibilities for implementation, to strategic objectives

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outputs	Responsibility	Operational outputs/TSDS action plan
<p>1. Institutional Environment: Statistical Legislation and policy</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> ensure TSDS addresses national information and policy demands (with a link to national Plan/ budget process)</p>	<p>1.1 The Tonga <i>National Strategy for the Development of Statistics</i> (TSDS) is completed, and following political endorsement, is ready for implementation.</p>	<p>TSD</p>	<p>1.1 The TSDS is in place following endorsement by TSDS Steering committee prior to final submission to Minister responsible for Statistics for endorsement, and ultimately Cabinet, to guide statistical developments in Tonga to enable evidence-based policy development and planning, policy and activity monitoring, and accounting for development results.</p>
	<p>1.2 Following the passing of a new Statistics Act in 2015 replacing the 1978 Statistics act, two proposed amendments to the 2015 Act are endorsed by the Attorney-General.</p>	<p>Solicitor-General's office</p>	<p>1.2 Progress 2018 review by TSD, and submit two proposed amendments to the 2015 Statistics Act to the Attorney-General's Office for consideration.</p>
	<p>1.3 TSDS Steering Committee and National Statistical Advisory Council are established and meet on an agreed-upon regular basis.</p>	<p>TSD, with support from Minister</p>	<p>1.3 TSD Director to submit TORs for the TSDS Steering Committee and the <i>National Statistical Advisory Council</i> to Minister responsible for Statistics to enable establishment and regular convening of these bodies</p>
	<p>1.4 Provide statistics to address national information and policy demands, as well as regional and international policy monitoring and reporting commitments, as outlined in the Tonga <i>tracker database</i>.</p>	<p>All government agencies (including TSD)</p>	<p>1.4 National Planning Office finalize its <i>tracker database</i> in close collaboration with TSD, which addresses both TSDF KPIs and <i>Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators</i> (PSDI and includes allocation of collection responsibilities and the production of sector statistical outputs by different government agencies.</p> <p>1.4.1 Each Government agency commits to (i) review availability of up-to-date statistics to be able to monitor and report against their respective TSDF and PSDI KPI, and to (ii) provide this information to their respective TSDS sector working groups in second half of 2018, to have this information available in time for their respective budget submissions for FY2019-20 (<u>Note:</u> also required to implement 2.1 and 2.2)</p> <p>1.4.2 If this information is not available, agencies commit to develop a plan to compile this information, and present to their respective sectoral working group (<u>Note:</u> also required to implement 2.1 and 2.2)</p>

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outputs	Responsibility	Operational outputs/TSDS action plan
2. Communication, Access and Use <u>Rationale:</u> improve general/public awareness of the value and use of statistics for evidence-based decision making	2.1 List of TSD and sector agency statistical publications, including calendar of release, is publicly available and updated on a regular basis.	All government agencies	2.1.1 TSD to publish an annual calendar of release of statistics and statistical publications , including an annual Statistical Digest. 2.1.2 All government agencies commit to produce an annual statistical digest in line with the <i>tracker database</i> , as part of their annual management plan and reporting requirements, and share this information with TSD to allow production of a consolidated Annual Statistical Yearbook.
	2.2 Statistics and statistical information are provided in user-friendly formats	All government agencies	2.2 Government agencies commit to ongoing communication between data users and producers, to ensure data and statistics are made available in formats that addresses specific user requirements (with specific reference to, but no restricted to various forms of disaggregation). TSD to provide technical guidance.
	2.3 Protocols for sharing administrative data between government agencies are established, including provision of metadata.	TSD	2.3 TSD to develop such data sharing protocols to facilitate NSS-wide collaboration and communication and assist administrative data providers with adding statistical value to their data collections.
	2.4 Databases/systems' architecture (IT platforms) progressively harmonized to facilitate data sharing	TSD, ICT section (MEIDECC)	2.4 National Planning Office to progress consultation between TSD and ICT section of MEIDECC to initiate an action plan to progressively harmonize database/systems architecture (IT platforms) to facilitate data sharing.
	2.5 Statistical advocacy/awareness programs and associated activities are developed	All government agencies, with TSD support	2.5 Produce and implement an annual advocacy programs comprising of diverse activities and statistical outputs and communication to the public and users ¹⁰ .

¹⁰ TSD convene Annual Tonga Statistics Day; TSD to regularly debrief the public following each major survey – to share results and thank the public for their willingness to participate; other agencies to include/feature statistical information regarding their sectors in their respective annual public events (e.g. Annual environment week, Annual climate change week); regular public seminars and TV talkback; regular statistical debriefs for parliamentarians and journalists.

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outputs	Responsibility	Operational outputs/TSDS action plan
3. Data and Information Management <u>Rationale:</u> review/update or establish protocols for collection, classification, quality assurance, sharing and dissemination of statistics.	3.1 IT infrastructure improved across Government agencies to facilitate move-away from manual data compilation and recording.	TSD, ICT section (MEIDECC)	3.1 TSD to undertake a review of current statistical compilation and recording practices across agencies , before deciding on next steps to progress from manual to electronic data compilation.
	3.2 Establishment of thematic/sectoral statistical working groups to agree and implement on common standards for collection, classifications that help improve data sharing and dissemination.	TSD, TSDS Steering Committee	3.2.1 In line with TSD <i>statistical clearing house</i> functions, assess agency compliance with statistical standards. 3.2.2 In line with Tonga’s statistics legislation, all household surveys and community consultations with a statistical focus will undergo prior review and endorsement by TSD to (i) ensure compliance with statistical standards (ii) and the published annual calendar of statistical surveys, to avoid both duplication and respondent fatigue. 3.2.3 This also applies to collections undertaken/initiated by CSOs and NGOs.
	3.3 Protocols are in place for data dissemination.	TSD, with support by ICT section (MEIDECC)	3.3 TSD to develop a draft protocol for data dissemination in close consultation with SPC, for review and endorsement by NSDS Steering committee. 3.3.1 Following steering committee endorsement, agencies commit to implementing dissemination protocol.
	3.4 All Government agencies have database security/back-up protocols in place to avoid data loss or data being compromised.	All government agencies	3.4.1 ICT of MEIDDEC to advise on data security protocols, that protect databases against hacking and theft, virus and malicious software attacks, fire and natural disasters (e.g cyclones, tsunamis, flooding) 3.4.2 Implementation of these protocols rest with all government agencies.
	3.5 Best practice statistical procedures (adherence to international classifications, standards, definitions) are adhered to by all providers of statistical data	All government agencies, with TSD support	3.5 In line with its <i>statistical clearing house</i> functions, TSD to assess and ensure agency compliance with statistical standards , with technical support, where required, from specialist external technical assistance providers.
	3.6 Ongoing training provided for data collection/ information management procedures and standards for all agencies producing national statistics.	TSD, supported by specialized technical agencies	3.6 Develop and implement an annual statistical training program for TSD and other agencies’ staff involved in data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outputs	Responsibility	Operational outputs/TSDS action plan
<p>4. NSS Coordination</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> establish partnerships, improve collaboration, coordination, consultation between internal and with external stakeholders.</p>	<p>4.1 Improved capacity of TSD and statistics providers in other agencies to effectively and efficiently collaborate on producing and sharing statistics.</p>	<p>TSDS Steering committee</p>	<p>4.1.1 The TSDS Steering committee to convene regularly to ensure the three sectoral working groups pursue a more effective and efficient coordination and collaboration in the collection/ compilation of statistics and sharing of statistical information by individual sector agencies.</p> <p>4.1.2 This includes sharing and coordinating their annual plans for statistical activities amongst agencies of each sectoral working group, before submitting these to TSD for (i) technical advice and guidance, and (ii) clearance to proceed.</p>
	<p>4.2 Strengthened TSD capacity and role to provide statistical support to other agencies, <i>including assuming role of “Statistical Clearinghouse”</i>.</p>	<p>TSD (supported by amended legislation)</p>	<p>4.2 In line with its <i>statistical clearing house</i> functions, TSD to assess agency compliance with statistical standards, with technical support, where required, from specialist external technical assistance providers (see Action Point 3-5).</p>
	<p>4.3 National Statistical Advisory Council and TSDS Steering committee (strategic output 1.3) to guide implementation of strategic outputs 4.1 and 4.2.</p>	<p>National Statistical Advisory Council, TSDS Steering committee</p>	<p>4.3 Following sectoral working group submissions to TSD of agencies’ annual plans for statistical activities (4.1.1), TSD to compile and publish an annual calendar of statistical activities across the Tonga National statistical system, to facilitate better NSS-wide statistical coordination, and keep SPC and the development partner coordination group informed of these activities.</p>
	<p>4.4 Regular data producer-data user forums are convened</p>	<p>All government agencies, with TSD support</p>	<p>4.4.1 To provide an avenue to ensure data and statistics are made available in formats that addresses specific user requirements (with reference to, but no restricted to various forms of disaggregation, and display of information, such as topical briefs, charts, tables, infographics, geo-spatial).</p> <p>4.4.2 Each sectoral working group to compile an inventory of NGOs and CSOs to ensure inclusiveness when organizing such regular dialogues.</p> <p>4.4.3 Each working group to decide if they wish to invite relevant NGOs and CSOs to its meetings, on an <i>as-needs</i> basis.</p>

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outputs	Responsibility	Operational outputs/TSDS action plan
<p>5. Resources development: human, financial, institutional</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> ensure adequate and sustainable human, financial and institutional (budget, IT, physical environment) resources are in place, to deliver quality statistical products and services.</p>	<p>5.1 Provision of sustained training opportunities and capacity building initiatives are in place to enable the delivery of quality official statistics by the Tonga Statistics Department and other sectoral statistical providers.</p>	<p>Public Service Commission/ TSD, in collaboration with specialized technical agencies</p>	<p>5.1.1 TSD and PSC collaborate in a regular statistical capacity/needs assessment of all statistical providers in the Tonga public sector (human, budgetary, IT-systems), to address current training and capacity building demands.</p> <p>5.1.2 Such assessments, or their updates, to become an essential part of Annual Department Budget preparations.</p>
	<p>5.2 Appropriate and sustainable budgetary support is in place to assist improvement of statistics across sectors.</p>	<p>Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>5.2.1 see Action Point: 5.1.2</p> <p>5.2.2 As this is of particular relevance to agencies across the Natural Resources/ Environment sector which currently lacks departmental statistical capacity and expertise (Agriculture, Environment, CC, & Energy), a business case can be made to strengthen the statistical capacity across this sector.</p>
	<p>5.3 Government agencies’ strategic plans/business plans include provisions for data and information management.</p>	<p>All government agencies</p>	<p>5.3 TSD to undertake a stock-take of line ministries’ current statistical data and information management capacity and statistical needs, to advise the first meeting of the TSDS steering committee to develop appropriate action plans to address current data and statistical capacity gaps (e.g. dedicated budgetary/staff resources to allow for regular data collections and information management).</p>
	<p>5.4 Government agencies involved in the collection of statistics and management of information will have these functions reflected in job descriptions of staff recruited to undertake such tasks.</p>	<p>All government agencies</p>	<p>5.4 Ensure statistical capacity assessment of line ministries is endorsed by PSC.</p>
	<p>5.5 Government agencies involved in the collection of statistics and management of information will have succession and key personnel contingency plans in place, to mitigate “key person risk”.</p>	<p>All government agencies</p>	<p>5.5 Make use of the <i>one-Process</i> Tool which entails provision for risk assessment.</p>

Footnote to Action Point 5.2.2: This can take the form of establishing small statistical units in each of the relevant Ministries; an alternative scenario would be for TSD to expand its statistical capacity and focus beyond economic and demographic/social statistics, and set up a dedicated unit/operational group dealing with Natural Resources/Environmental statistics.

5. TSDS Resources requirements

Major activities to be undertaken as part of implementing the Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics over the coming five years, will address both strategic and operational outputs outlined in the previous section, targeting proposed institutional development and strategic data and information management initiatives.

Institutional development initiatives, include strengthening statistical governance mechanisms, improve NSS-wide coordination, and address financial and human resources requirements, including ongoing statistical capacity building, of government departments with dedicated data and information management responsibilities, including TSD.

Strategic data and information management priorities need to ensure

- a regular (and appropriately resourced) program of core national statistical collection is in place;
- all major national statistical collections address first and foremost national (TSDF) and regional/ international policy development, planning and associated monitoring requirements;
- a regular dialogue between data users and producers, including inter-agency statistical collaboration and data sharing; and
- the timely dissemination of, and access to statistical information and products, which is supported by a strong NSS-wide IT infrastructure.

While a detailed costing of TSDS implementation is not possible at this stage without information on departmental and sector-specific TSDS priority activities and associated human and financial resources requirements, Table-2 outlines an indicative TSDS budget based on known costs and estimated costs by the Statistics Department.

Table-2: TSDS indicative budget, 2019 – 2023

Year	Insttitutional Development				Data and Information Management	
	TSDS	Statistical	Additional	NSS-wide	Core National Statistical Collections	
	Governance	Capacity	TSD staff	Staff/IT		
		Building	requirements	requirements	Collections	Costs
2019	35,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	1. Multi-Cluster Indicator	
					Survey (MICS)	850,000
					2. Energy Survey	650,000
2020	35,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	1. Household Income and	
					Expenditure Survey (HIES)	850,000
					2. Tourism Expenditure	650,000
					Survey	
2021	35,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	1. Population and Housing	
					Census	1,700,000
					2. Business Activity Survey	250,000
2022	40,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	1. Demographic and Health	
					Survey (DHS)	900,000
					2. Agricultural Census	650,000
2023	40,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	1. STEP Survey	700,000
					2. Labour Force Survey	700,000
					3. Disability Survey	700,000
Total Cost	185,000	750,000	750,000	1,000,000		8,600,000
GRAND						
TOTAL						11,285,000

6. Risk analysis regarding TSDS implementation

An important component of any plan, be it a long-term national development policy, or a medium-term strategic action plan such as the 2019-2023 TSDS is a **risk assessment** that identifies both known risks that are clearly visible, as well as possible risks and challenges that, if left unattended to, might turn into real risks and derail all good intentions and planned endeavors.

Some of the major risks have already been identified in the Tonga NSS assessment, with most subsequently validated in the SWOT analysis undertaken during the TSDS Strategic Planning training as ‘weaknesses’ and ‘threats’, and also reflected in the TSDS Roadmap. The analysis presented below is further complemented by observations emerging from the TSDS drafting workshop convened recently in Nuku’alofa, 23 – 27 July 2018, establishing a link to each of the five TSDS strategic objectives and their associated strategic and operational outputs, and thus provides a more comprehensive picture of what the TSDS could achieve if proposed strategic and specific operational outputs and associated actions are considered, and what strategic opportunities to improve data and information management in Tonga would be missed if proposed risk mitigation strategies are taken lightly or are ignored.

Drawing from these assessments and also illustrated in NSDS developments in other Pacific Small Island Developing States since 2010 and reported by other National Statistical systems particularly across Africa and Asia beginning as early as 2004, major risks to the successful implementation of the TSDS can be grouped into two broad categories, relating to (i) institutional, and (ii) data and information management challenges, as reflected in the TSDS five strategic objectives, and which require different types of intervention and support.

- The first concerns the current **legislative and policy environment**, as well as prevailing **resource allocations** addressing demands for statistical information and services, which requires **political and policy attention and support**;
- The second challenge deals specifically with **data and information management practices and constraints**, including data security, requiring active **participation and commitment of both operational staff and senior management** across the Tonga National Statistical System.

Challenges to both are inter-linked, and careful attention to this intersect is indispensable for a successful implementation of the TSDS and the achievement of its desired strategic outcomes.

With specific risk-mitigation strategies and associate activities already identified in Section-4 as recommended TSDS **operational outputs**, the following tables provide a summary of **major risks** to a successful implementation of the TSDS and the achievement of desired strategic and operational outcomes.

Risk-1: Lack of institutional support to statistics (NSDS strategic Objectives 1 and 5)

Lack of **visible** institutional recognition of importance attributed to statistics and data and information management as critical to evidence-based decision-making and overall good governance.

Risk 1.1: Statistical legislation, and link between data and information management and policy	Risk Mitigation Strategies
<p>1.1.1 Current statistical practice and governance is constrained by statistical legislation, that requires two short amendments to help improve data and information management requirements.</p> <p>1.1.2 Prevailing weak link between data and information management and policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement by Attorney-General’s office of two proposed amendments to the 2015 Tonga Statistics Act, that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ recognizes the emergence of a growing National Statistical System (NSS) with data collected and produced by various Government departments and statutory bodies in addition to TSD, and which requires greater statistical coordination and more effective collaboration than is currently the case; and • vests greater statistical authority in the TSD and the Government statistician to fulfil the role of a statistical clearing-house, to ensure compliance with statistical standards, classifications and processes, to ensure statistical data quality and integrity. • Government’s strong and ongoing political support to statistics, and data and information management is illustrated in its <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ endorsement of the TSDS as providing a coherent framework for a successful integration with both national and regional/international development policy frameworks already endorsed by Government; and ○ ensuring government departments’ use of the <i>tracker database</i> which addresses both TSDF KPIs and the Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators, in compiling and budgeting annual departmental work plans, and to monitor progress and account for results.
Risk 1.2: Statistical Resources Constraints	Risk Mitigation Strategies
<p>1.2.1 Prevailing staff shortages and lack of statistical subject matter expertise in many government departments limit their capacity to adequately respond to known data needs reflected in both national and regional/ international development policy commitments by Government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representing a strong risk to a successful implementation of the TSDS, Government may wish to address this challenge as a matter of urgency, as if left unattended, this will have serious impacts on achieving most strategic and operational/ statistical outcomes envisaged in this strategy.
<p>1.2.2 Such statistical HR constraints are of particular relevance across the Natural Resources/Environment sectors which currently lack departmental statistical capacity and expertise (e.g. Agriculture, Environment, Climate Change, Energy), and where a business case can be made to strengthen the statistical capacity across the sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDS Government departments with sector-specific data and information management responsibilities, to outline current HR shortages, develop staff profiles for required positions and make a business case in their annual workplan and budget submissions, while highlighting opportunity costs incurred if these capacity constraints are not addressed.

Risk 1.2: Statistical Resources Constraints <i>(continued)</i>	Risk Mitigation Strategies
1.2.3 Budgetary resources constraints limiting an effective and efficient delivery of quality statistical products and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While addressing this risk is of strategic importance across the Tonga National statistical system, early attention ought to be given to data and information management across most of the Natural Resources/Environment sector, with many agencies lacking baseline data for planning, and to be able to regularly monitor and report on their sectors’ performance regarding national and regional/international policy priorities.
Risk 1.3: Lack of buy-in by Government officials to TSDS implementation	Risk Mitigation Strategies
1.3.1 Notwithstanding strong political support to the development and implementation of the TSDS by successive Governments, Ministers and Secretaries responsible for Statistics, on-going commitment by senior Government officials is critical for the TSDS implementation to succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretaries of Government departments and heads of national agencies should ensure key senior staff responsible for their department and agency’ policy development, planning and data/information management are available and commit to attend bi-annual NSDS Sector Technical working groups meetings, to monitor TSDS implementation 2019 – 2023, at sectoral level. • Overall TSDS implementation oversight should be provided by the TSDS Steering Committee, to be co-chaired by the Government Statistician and Director of Planning, and also comprising of the chairs of each of the three Sector Technical Working Groups, with final confirmation about the proposed TSDS governance structure resting with the Minister, or Secretary responsible for TSD.

Risk-2: Lack of active participation and commitment of operational staff and senior management across the Tongan NSS to improve current data and information management practices (TSDS strategic Objectives 2 to 4)

Risk 2.1 Failure to attend to key current data and information management challenges	Risk Mitigation Strategies
<p>2.1.1 Non-collection of statistics required by Government departments to regular monitor and report on national and regional/international policy outcomes relevant to their work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of particular relevance to much of the Natural Resources/ Environment sector, this requires early attention and commitment by senior management of affected government departments, to facilitate a sustainable process of ongoing data and information management. • Two possible solutions to address this challenge are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ establishing a small but dedicated statistical/data and information management capacity in these agencies; or ○ allocating this responsibility to TSD in the form of building in-house statistical capacity in this area, which it currently lacks.
<p>2.1.2 Non-adherence to statistical standards and classifications jeopardizing data quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize proposed amendments to the 2015 Statistics Act to empower TSD and its Government Statistician to vet and sign-off on all statistical activities undertaken by other national and state government departments and Civil society organizations, to ensure agency compliance with international statistical standards and classifications, including statistical collection modalities.
<p>2.1.3 Lack of balance in time and efforts allocated to statistical collections and compilations, and the production of statistical information and different outputs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure no new statistical collections or compilations are started, before previous activities are completed, in the form of completed data analysis, and the production and dissemination of statistical information ranging from basic tables, graphs, infographics to preparation of statistical and analytical reports, and with this information posted on departmental websites to facilitate easy access and data dissemination.
Risk 2.2 <i>Not knowing your customers:</i> lack of regular user-producer communication and consultation	Risk Mitigation Strategies
<p>2.2.1 Data and statistical information are not readily available or accessible to allow data users undertake their professional duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSD, and other providers of data and statistical information agree on modalities, such as MoUs, outlining type of information required by different users, and agree on timelines and means to make this information available. • Convene regular data producer-user forums to monitor process and progress.
<p>2.2.2 <i>Not knowing your customers,</i> lack of awareness of user needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSD and other agencies with statistical and data and information management functions to engage in regular communication with their key data users, to ensure statistics collected address user needs and demands, and are made available in formats addressing specific user requirements. • Failing to make such regular communication an integral part of data and information management runs the risk of not meeting user demands and an under-utilization of data, which compromises evidence-based policy development, activity planning and regular monitoring and reporting of progress.

Risk 2.2 Not knowing your customers: <i>.... Continued</i>	Risk Mitigation Strategies
2.2.3 Not keeping data users up-dated on statistical activities, developments and products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular statistical advocacy and communication is essential to (i) keep senior government officials, the private sector and public informed about ongoing social and economic developments and the (ii) the availability of new statistical information and products, and this way (iii) maintain their interest in, and support to statistics.
Risk 2.3 Failure to address institutional constraints on current data and information management challenges	Risk Mitigation Strategies
2.3.1 Lack of institutional arrangements, including legal provisions, to facilitate statistical collaboration, consultation and coordination across the Tonga NSS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize proposed amendments to the 2015 Statistics Act to empower TSD and its Government proactively coordinate the statistical work of all Government departments and facilitate ongoing inter-departmental statistical collaboration and consultation. • Establish and support TSDS steering committee and Sectoral Technical Working Groups to provide oversight and monitoring of TSDS implementation, and also represent an avenue for ongoing inter-departmental communication and statistical collaboration.

7. Monitoring TSDS implementation, and indicators of success

Pursuing an alignment of TSDS strategic and operational outputs (statistical action plans, and associated statistical activities) with national and regional development policy commitments and plans, provides a clear focus on strategic directions and operational decision-making, to ensure all current *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025* and the *Pacific Sustainable Development Framework* associated performance indicators (KPIs) can be monitored and reported on a regular basis, **illustrating immediate TSDS priority concerns and activities**, with every government agency committing to

- undertake a stock take/inventory of **currently available base-line indicators to measure and report on its performance** against the targets for their TSDS Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against its strategic plan outcomes, as well as the 132 Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators Government committed to monitor and report on a regular basis;
- identify the **data source** for these indicators (who collects the required statistics and how) and the frequency of these statistics being updated (how often); and
- outlining any **difficulty experienced in accessing these statistics**, and **plans** to address/improve this situation.

An immediate benefit of this work, and an *early-win* for the TSDS implementation is the potential to commit to a regular **Tonga NSS-wide program of core data collection and compilation**, which include

- monthly, quarterly and annual data collections and a cycle of household and business surveys, population and agricultural censuses, as well as
- ongoing updates to departmental and statutory agencies' Management Information Systems including the publication of annual statistical reports.

Aligning such a core program of data collection with the TSDS's broader strategic and operational outputs and objectives will help ensure it is integrated with administrative data, cross-Government statistical activities, and first and foremost address cross-policy data and information management requirements.

TSDS Implementation, coordination, and indicators of success

All Government departments and agencies within the statistical system will have a role to play in the implementation of the TSDS. Each sectoral technical working group has the responsibility to develop an annual implementation plan outlining core statistical and data and information management activities undertaken by relevant government departments and statutory bodies, providing ongoing clarity as to what is expected from each agency. A monitoring and evaluation framework, developed alongside the implementation plan, will enable progress to be measured and reported to the TSDS Steering Committee on a regular basis, given its responsibility for the overall coordination of the TSDS, and its three co-chairs will provide regular progress reports to the Secretary responsible for Statistics.

Indicators of Success

The following evaluative questions will assist in accounting for a successful TSDS implementation through regular monitoring and reporting by the TSDS Steering Committee:

- 1. Are required statistics and statistical information accessible and provided in a timely way?**
 - Statistical information is released within the timelines set down in policies and procedures
 - Reporting requirements are consistently met

2. Has there been an increase in user satisfaction?

- Increased levels of satisfaction reported by stakeholders/data users
- That statistics needed to develop policy and to report on their national, regional and international commitments are readily available
- They are finding statistics to be increasingly useful

3. Are there improvements in overall data quality, coverage, and transparency?

- Major users report that the statistics are more reliable and consistent with other data
- The range of available statistics has increased
- Accurate and up to date information relating to the collection, analysis and production of statistical data/information is readily available and accessible
- Quality Assurance policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed

4. Are there visible improvements in statistical skills and efficiency shown by staff across agencies engaged in data and information management activities (data collection, processing, analysis, dissemination)?

- Improvements in organizational performance measures for TDS staff, and staff in other agencies
- Increase in skill and knowledge levels reflected in regular staff performance reports
- Positive feedback from stakeholders

5. Do agencies with dedicated data and information management functions and responsibilities have adequate budgets and human resources to undertake these tasks?

- Agencies charged with undertaking such activities have adequate financial and human resources, as reflected in annual budget allocations.

While this information is essential for ongoing monitoring of TSDS implementation, the actual success of the TSDS, in having achieved its strategic objectives via the strategic and operational outputs outlined in Section-4 and Section-6, will only be reflected in discrete and tangible/visible higher order outcomes or results, as illustrated in the TSDS Outcomes/Results Framework overleaf.

Immediate Next Steps

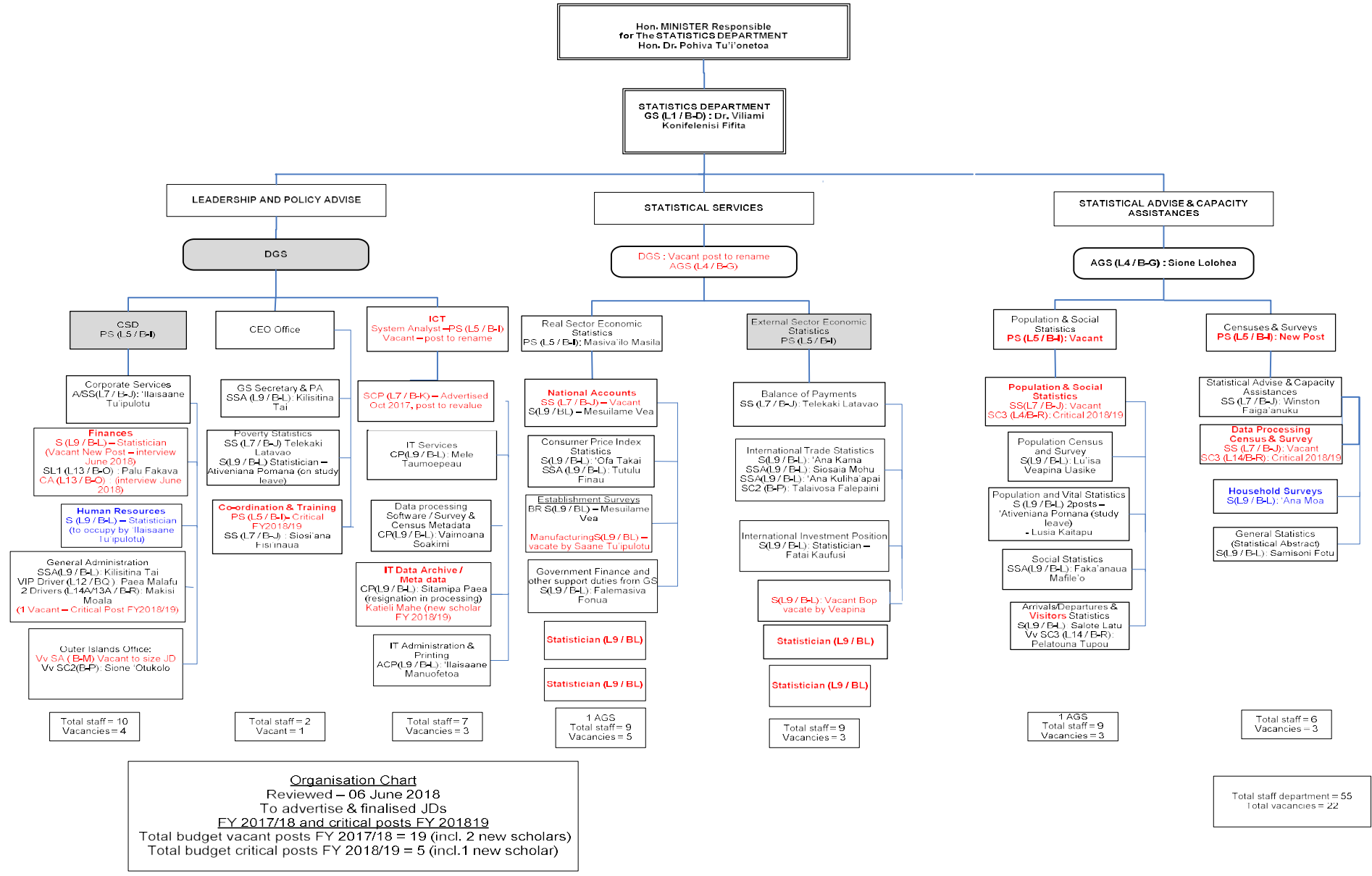
Tonga's Government Statistician should confirm with the Minister and Secretary responsible for Statistics the acceptability of the recommended TSDS governance structure, and discuss ways of convening the TSDS Steering committee and the three TSDS Sectoral technical working groups, including the consideration to establish an Advisory council for statistics, to guide and provide oversight to national statistical activities.

TSDS Outcomes/Results Framework

Early outcomes (2019)	Short-to medium term outcomes (2020 – 2021)	Medium-to longer-term outcomes (2022 – 2023)
TSDS Governance and management structures in place to enable successful TSDS implementation	Growing political support for TSDS implementation contributes to more adequate and sustainable resourcing of data and information management across the Tonga NSS.	Data and information management gradually becoming seen as a necessary process to guide evidence-based decision-making and good overall governance.
TSDS addresses national and regional/international policy demands, with agencies committed to develop data and information management plan, to allow regular monitoring and reporting against their respective national and regional policy indicators.	Gradual improvements in timely dissemination of, and access to statistics and statistical information.	Improved data availability and accessibility increases general awareness and growing political buy-in of both value and the use of statistical information for evidence-based decision making
		Available and accessible data and statistical information on time, and in user-friendly and relevant formats becomes a standard, rather than remains an optional outcome of good statistical practice.
		Evidence-free policy, project and annual budget proposals without statistical baselines, benchmarks, targets and indicators gradually disappear as acceptable/tolerated operating procedure.
TSDS Steering committee develop protocols facilitating inter-agency data-sharing, statistical collaboration and coordination.	Inter-agency data sharing and statistical collaboration and coordination, particularly within sectors, is becoming a more accepted statistical operating practice.	Inter-agency statistical collaboration and pooling of resources, particularly regards large and costly collections, is becoming a standard practice rather than remain an exception.
	Closer and more frequent collaboration contributes to establishing strong statistical/professional partnerships.	
	Protocols regarding statistical collections improve greater NSS-wide acceptance of statistical standards and classifications, thus improving overall data quality.	

Annexes

Annex-1: Tonga Statistics Department Organization Chart, June 2018



Annex-2: Major statistical services and products provided by Tonga Statistics Department

Type	Service/Product	Frequency	Latest Publication
Economic	Real Sector Statistics		
	National Accounts (GDP)	Annually	Annual 2016/2017
	Consumer Price Index	Monthly	September 2018
	Manufacturing	Annually	Annual 2015/2016
	Business Registry	Annually	Annual 2017
	External Sector Statistics		
	Balance of Payments	Bi-annually and Annually	Annual 2017
	Merchandise Trade	Quarterly & Annually	January Quarter 2018
Social	Migration Statistics	Monthly and Annually	January 2018
	Vital Statistics	Annually	2004
Census/Survey	Population Censuses	Every 5 years	Volume 1 2016
	Labour Force Survey	Every 5 years	2003
	Household Income and Expenditure Survey	5 years	2015/16
	Agricultural Census (conjointly with MAFF)	Follows the MAFF schedule	2015
Statistical Abstract	Summary of data collected	Annually	2014


Annex-3: TSDS Drafting workshop participants contributing to development of TSDS Operational Framework, Chapter-5

NAME		MDAs
Economic Sector		
1	Sione Faleafa	MOFNP-Policy and Planning Division
2	Ana Ika	MOFNP-Policy and Planning Division
4	Kilisitina Tuaimai'api	MOFNP-Budget Division
5	Dr. Kilisitina Puleiku	MOFNP-Aid and Project Division
4	Ana Soakai	NRBT - Manager Economics
5	Tevita Vaha'i	NRBT-Manager Financial Systems
6	Teniela Taumoepeau	NRBT-Manager Financial Markets
7	Pesi 'Ilangana	Tonga Chamber
8	Kaho 'Ofa	Retirement Fund
9	Sione Moala Mafi	Ministry of Tourism and Trade
10	Dr. 'Alisi Holani	MCCTIL
11	Ma'u Leha	National Plan PMO
12	Heiloni Latu	Ministry of Revenue and Customs
13	Kepueli Vea	Ministry of Revenue and Customs
14	Taniela Sila	Ministry of Revenue and Customs
15	Manuele Mo'ale	MAFFF - Agriculture
16	Futa Lolo	MAFFF - Agriculture
17	Mele 'Atuekaho	MAFFF - Fisheries
Environment Sector		
18	Eilini 'Ofanoa	MAFFF - Fisheries
19	Ma'ata Mafi	National Plan PMO
20	Fotu Veikune	MOI Building Division
21	Peni Lavakei'aho	MOI Building Division
22	Ailine Fine	MEIDDECC Climate Change
23	Akesiu Leva	MEIDDECC Climate Change
24	Aloisio Fifita	MEIDDECC Climate Change
25	Leveni 'Aho	MEIDDECC NIMO
26	Moana	MEIDDECC NIMO
27	Dr. Tevita Tukunga	MEIDDECC Energy
28	Feauini Laumanu	MEIDDECC Energy
29	Lupe Matoto	MEIDDECC Environment
30	Tahini Fifita	MEIDDECC Environment
31	Mafile'o Masi	MEIDDECC Environment
32	Ma'ana 'Akau'ola	Waste Management

-	NAME	MDAs
Social Sector		
33	Herbert Takeifanga	MET
34	Tavai Vikilani	MET
35	Sioape Kupu	MOH
36	Walter Hurrell	MOH
37	Samuela Pohiva	MIA Local Government
38	Temaleti Manakovi A. Pahulu	Ministry of Justice
40	Lavinia Palei	MIA - Women Division
41	Semisi Tongia	Culture (Ministry of Tourism)
42	Sinama Tupou Fuao	MIA - Youth
43	Lu'isa Manuofetoa	MIA - Disability Division
44	Kolotia Fotu	MCCTIL - Labour Division
45	Ashley Fua	Ministry of Police
46	Limoni Teisina	Prison Department
45	Mausa Halahala	Tonga National Youth Congress
46	Siale 'Ilolahia	NGO Focal Point
Tonga Department of Statistics		
47	Dr. Viliami K. Fifita	NBS - Poverty and Statistical Surveys
48	Sione Lolohea	Statistical Advise and Capacity Assistances, Population and Social Statistics
49	Masiva'ilo Masila	Statistical Services - Real Sector Economic Statistics
50	Telekaki Latavao	Statistical Services - External Sector Economic Statistics / Poverty
51	Vaimoana Soakimi	Leadership and Policy Advise - ICT / Censuses & Surveys Databases
52	Samisoni Fotu	Statistical Advise and Capacity Assistances, General Statistics
53	Siosi'ana Fisi'inaua	Leadership and Policy Advise - Co-ordination and Training / CSD
TSDS Sector Assessments		
54	Meleseini Lomu	Economics Sector
55	Dr. Seu'ula Fua Fonua	Social Sector
56	Dr. Vailala Matoto	Natural Resources Sector
57	Richard Robyns	Advisor
58	Dr. Mo'ale 'Otunuku	Advisor

Annex-4: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOP	Balance of Payments
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CC	Climate Change
CRVS	Civil registration and Vital statistics
CSD	Corporate Services Division
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DoS	Department of Statistics
FY	Financial year
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MAFFF	Ministry of Agriculture & Food, Forestry and Fisheries
MCCTIL	Ministry of Commerce, Consumer, Trade, Innovation and Labour
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEIDECC	Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications
MET	Ministry of Education and Training
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MICS	Multi-Cluster Indicator Survey
MOFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOI	Ministry of Infrastructure
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRBT	National Reserve Bank of Tonga
NSAC	National Statistics Advisory Council
NSDS	National Statistics Development Strategy
NSS	National Statistical System
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21 st Century
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSDI	Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators
SAMOA	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPC	The Pacific Community
STWG	Sectoral Technical Working Groups
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TOR	Terms of reference
TSD	Tonga Statistics Department
TSDF	Tonga Strategic Development Framework
TSDS	Tonga Strategy for the Development of Statistics



Tonga Statistics Department

2018