

Country statement from the Cook Islands Delegation

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. The Cook Islands are committed to the importance of CRVS for governance and planning. In recognising the multi-sectoral nature of the work, the Cook Islands have a national CRVS committee, have conducted a comprehensive assessment and have an informal national improvement plan. This plan is currently being reviewed and will be updated and formalised as part of the Cook Islands National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.
2. Importantly we are pleased that the RAF aligns closely with the work already underway in the Cook Islands and other Pacific countries through the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan, allowing the country to build on the work already done; The PVSAP sits under the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (2011-2020) and has been endorsed by all Pacific Countries.
3. It is important to ensure that the framework is as far as possible consistent with the existing work to avoid duplication or conflicting advice at country level, and to ensure the RAF adds value and builds on the existing momentum.
4. For this reason we are pleased to note that within the RAF there is scope to use existing recognised tools and approaches such as the WHO comprehensive assessment tool. We would also encourage partners to continue to provide and coordinate support through existing platforms that are working. In the Pacific islands this means working with national CRVS committees through the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan, supported by the Brisbane Accord Group of technical partners; (and we would like to recognise BAG for the support they have provided to date).
5. Countries will need to be both realistic and ambitious in setting targets and goals. Reaching these targets in the Pacific Islands will require significant investment both

at national level, and the continued support of partners such as the Brisbane Accord Group.

6. In the Cook Islands, where registration is essentially 100% complete, our focus in setting targets under the RAF will focus on improving the quality and availability of vital statistics and the sharing of data for off-island events. Some of this work will be shared with you in the side event on Friday.