

# Developing a Civil Registration System for Tokelau

## TOKELAU



- Tokelau is one of the most geographically isolated countries on earth. Despite the small population, it faces many challenges in resourcing and sustaining a CRVS system.
- An estimated 1/2 - 2/3 of births of children under age 5 were not registered in 2012, and death registration was likely to be even less complete.
- With strong Government support and inter-departmental collaboration, Tokelau is now building up its Civil Registration System to a point where reporting of births and deaths will be near complete.

### CRVS in Tokelau

- Tokelau is a remote island nation that can only be accessed by boat. Government is operated by the Tapulega (traditional council), with a further administrative centre in Apia, Samoa - the nearest major port. Many vital events for Tokelau residents occur overseas with only limited medical care available at the hospitals on the island.
- Until recently, although births and deaths were known to various departments or officials, there was no central collation of this data and subsequently no analysis or use of the data for planning purposes.

### What was done

In 2012, Tokelau started improving birth and death registration with support from BAG under the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan, and a National Statistics Advisor position seconded from Statistics New Zealand.

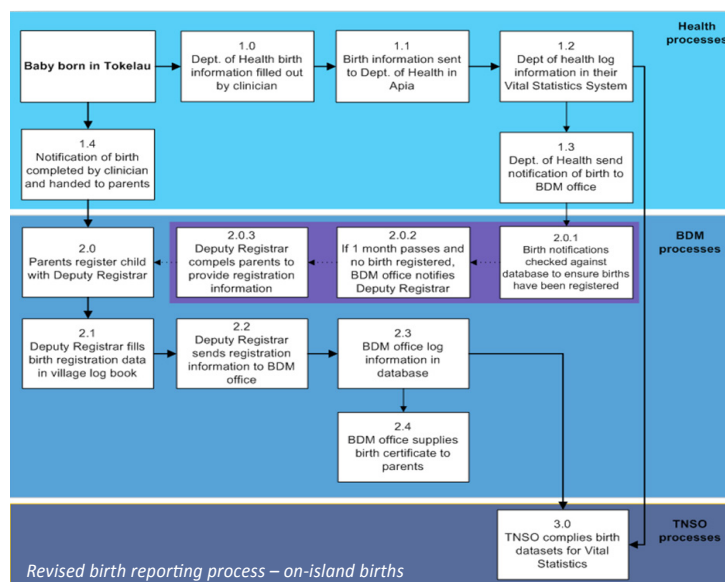
Members of health, statistics, and registry attended a sub-regional workshop to assess their system.

A national committee of senior Government officials was formed and formally endorsed.

System mapping and a national improvement plan developed; national registration day organised

The committee is undertaking a range of activities including:

- Revising processes for registration of births and deaths
- Developing a procedural manual for registration
- Certification for cause of death training for all doctors working in Tokelau
- Formal training for health staff on registration processes
- Organising a celebration day to catch up on registrations
- Upgrading paper-based records to a national CRVS database.



There are limited incentives for registration in Tokelau. To meet demand for vital statistics by health policy makers, Tokelau has developed a health-dominated system for vital statistics.

**Lessons learnt:**  
Engagement with traditional structures/chiefs has been essential for community participation.

**Next steps:**  
Data analysis and dissemination for policy use, and data sharing with neighbouring countries for off-island events.

SUPPORTED BY THE BRISBANE ACCORD GROUP (BAG)

