

# Our Development Cooperation with Cook Islands

New Zealand's development cooperation with Cook Islands focuses on supporting the Cook Islands Government to deliver strong public services (particularly in the health, education and tourism sectors) and quality infrastructure.

Our shared values and goals are set out [in the Joint Centenary Declaration signed in 2001](#).

On 1 January 2020 Cook Islands graduated from eligibility for Official Development Assistance. This decision was based on Cook Islands having exceeded the OECD's high income threshold for three consecutive years. Cook Islands is the first Pacific Island Country or Territory to graduate since 2000. Graduation is a testament to strong economic performance and management by Cook Islands.

In light of our strong commitment and Cook Islands' status as a member of the Realm of New Zealand, New Zealand will continue to provide reliable development assistance and support to Cook Islands.

## Recent achievements

- ✦ New Zealand has contributed NZD\$15 million in funding towards the Manatua Cable, which will bring reliable, high-speed internet to Cook Islands. The Manatua Cable connects Cook Islands to Samoa and French Polynesia via a submarine cable. The cable arrived onshore in Rarotonga in early January 2020 and is expected to be ready for service by May 2020.
- ✦ More than 3,000 Cook Islanders now access specialist health services each year as a result of New Zealand's funding to Cook Islands' health budget.
- ✦ New Zealand has contributed technical assistance to help support a well-managed tourism sector that is the driving force of the Cook Islands economy, with tourism yield continuing to grow year on year and annual visitor arrivals increasing from 125,130 in 2015 to 171,550 in 2019 (a 37 percent increase).

## Current development priorities

- ✦ Support Cook Islands to maintain effective self-governance for a sustainable economy and improved well-being, including for Pa Enua (outer islands).
- ✦ A climate resilient and environmentally sustainable Cook Islands.
- ✦ New Zealand and Cook Islands have a mutually beneficial and regional relationship.

## What we're working on now

- ✦ Te Mato Vai, a partnership between New Zealand, Cook Islands and China, will deliver safe drinking water to the people of Rarotonga.
- ✦ New Zealand continues to support Cook Islands' Government's budget for public services (health and education) and tourism.
- ✦ New Zealand has contributed an initial investment of \$12 million into the Cook Islands Infrastructure Fund in December 2019. The purpose of the Fund is to invest in infrastructure to deliver essential services to Cook Islands, to support the implementation of the Cook Islands' National Infrastructure Investment pipeline, and build the capability of Cook Islands' infrastructure sector.

## Evaluation Reports

[Evaluation of the New Zealand Medical Treatment Scheme](#) [PDF, 938 KB]

[Tourism Sector Evaluation Report](#) [PDF, 1.2 MB]

[Education Sector Evaluation Report](#) [PDF, 902 KB]

[Tereora College Evaluation](#) [PDF, 1.1 MB]

[Core Sector Support Evaluation](#) [PDF, 1.1 MB]



**2018-2021  
Development  
funding**

**(NZD)  
Where our  
funding goes**