

The Pacific

Cooperation Focused on Dealing with Small Size, Isolation and Remoteness Issues

The countries of the Pacific Region have a number of common characteristics. They have small-scale domestic markets due to limited land areas and populations (small size), are comprised of many islands separated by vast expanses of ocean (isolation) and have poor access to international markets (remoteness). In addition, this region is vulnerable to natural disasters and the effects of climate change as well as environmental issues associated with modernization. Furthermore, countries in the Pacific Region have very little resilience to economic crises such as sharp increases in the price of fuel or food.

Taking the situation of each country into consideration, JICA is providing a wide range of cooperation to overcome their priority issues. JICA is also extending region-wide cooperation to address common concerns throughout the region, such as disaster risk management and the environment.

Special Feature

Program Goals and Overview

Concrete Initiatives

Cooperation Modality

Operation, Management and Evaluation

Data and Information

Key Aid Strategies

Providing Cooperation Unique to Japan by Leveraging National Knowledge and Experience

JICA provides assistance to the following members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF): Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, the Cook Islands and Niue.

The island countries of the Pacific have become import-dependent economies under the influence of the influx of modern economic and cultural influences. This shift away from their traditional self-sufficient economies has resulted in large trade deficits in many countries. Countries must also deal with such environmental issues as environmental pollution and global warming posed by uncontrolled development.

Furthermore, their inadequate transportation infrastructure renders it impossible to deliver such social services as education and healthcare to the many scattered small islands of their countries. These problems have made it difficult to achieve social and economic development and become self-reliant.

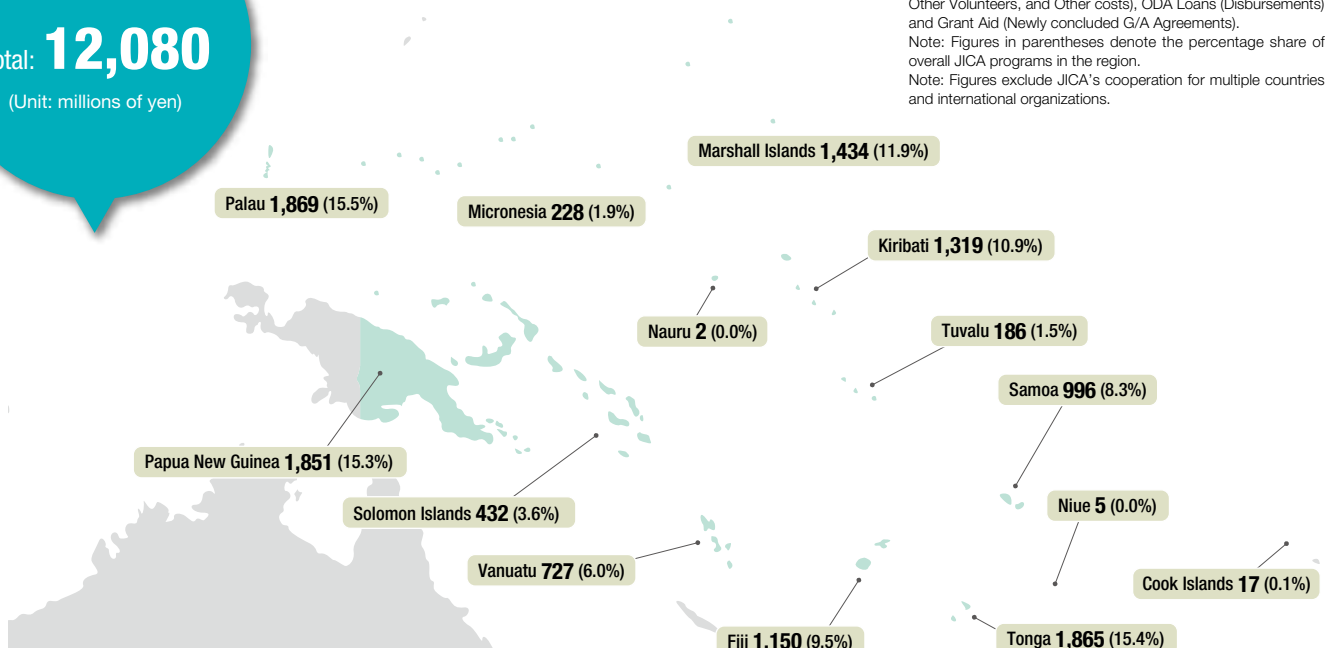
JICA is providing cooperation to these island states to address common issues while paying due regard to the uniqueness of each country. In this case, JICA's approach to cooperation involves dispatching experts to key countries to create development models that suit common regional needs. These models are then extended to neighboring countries

JICA Programs in the Pacific (Fiscal 2012)

The Pacific

Total: **12,080**

(Unit: millions of yen)



through such schemes as third-country training programs. As declared as important at the Sixth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM6) of May 2012, JICA is also providing cooperation that leverages national knowledge and experience, such as Okinawa's experience in overcoming issues unique to islands (See the Case Study).

Priority Issues and Activities

Protecting the Environment

Waste management is a problem common to the small islands of the Pacific Region. Since 2000, JICA has aided Samoa in its efforts to improve waste disposal sites and enhance management and operation capabilities. After that, JICA has also aided activities in neighboring countries for improving waste management practices. Since 2011, JICA has provided aid for developing sustainable waste management systems and human resources to 11 countries in the region in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).^{*} Cooperation is provided at the regional level and the individual country level toward the implementation of the Solid Waste Regional Strategy 2010-2015, a common regional goal. By conducting these activities, JICA is assisting in a reduction of the environmental impact of human activity and helping to establish a sound material-cycle

^{*}SPREP: An organization consisting of 21 Pacific island countries and Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States.

society on these islands.

Focusing on the oceans around the islands, the people of the Pacific can be said to depend heavily on coral reefs for a variety of things, such as marine and tourism resources and disaster protection. However, in recent years, their coastal ecosystems are being progressively damaged by multiple factors, including overfishing, environmental pollution from coastal area development and the impact of climate change. Through the dispatch of experts to the University of the South



Japanese expert and counterpart carry out a coral reef study in Palau.

Case Study Pacific Region Providing Aid through Cooperation with Local Governments

Cooperation Utilizing the Experience of Okinawa Prefecture

In May 2012, the Sixth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting was held in Nago City, Okinawa Prefecture. At this gathering, it was announced that because of Okinawa's similar geography and climate, its knowledge and experience would be utilized in the development of the Pacific island countries. Following up on this decision, in March 2013, Okinawa Prefecture and JICA signed a comprehensive collaboration agreement, agreeing to further strengthen their cooperation.

For people living on islands, obtaining a stable supply of safe drinking water is a matter of life or death. Based on its collaboration with Miyakojima City in Okinawa, JICA provided cooperation to Samoa regarding water system operations. Cooperation was supplied in the form of introducing a model filtering system based on a biological organism purification method. Miyakojima City actually uses the method itself and has a great deal of experience with this island-oriented solution. Samoa has given the method high marks for its ease of maintenance and management.

Recently, deciding how to overcome such problems as waste management in Pacific island nations that are emerging along with urbanization and changes in lifestyles has become an urgent issue because of their vulnerability to environmental problems. In Tonga, JICA is reducing the amount of waste through the What a Waste of Beautiful Vava'u Island Movement Project with the cooperation

of Naha City in Okinawa Prefecture and the Okinawa Citizens Recycling Movement. Toward solving the waste management problem of its island, Naha City has reduced the amount of waste it produces by about 30% with the cooperation of its residents. This know-how is being put to use in providing aid in establishing a recycling system on Tonga.

In recent years, the coastal ecosystems of coral reefs that surround each island nation have been experiencing deterioration from multiple factors, including overfishing, environmental pollution and the impact of climate change. In cooperation with the

University of the Ryukyus, JICA is supplying aid related to achieving proper preservation and management of coral reef ecosystems in Micronesia. Its base for this program is the Palau International Coral Reef Center.



Educating local residents about recycling

Pacific, JICA is cooperating with Fiji and such neighboring countries as Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga in achieving sustained preservation and management of their coastal resources. In Micronesia, JICA is using the Palau International Coral Reef Center as its base for an aid program aimed at improving coral reef ecosystem research capabilities and sustainable preservation management. The program is being carried out jointly with the University of the Ryukyus and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

Natural Disasters and Climate Change

Countries in the Pacific Region are highly vulnerable to damage from such natural disasters as cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, and floods. Communications and transportation are limited due to the large number of remote islands, which makes it difficult to provide residents with disaster warnings as well as to deliver emergency aid.

JICA is combining Technical Cooperation, Grant Aid and other cooperation to reinforce the disaster prevention measures of the entire region. One specific area of cooperation involves enhancing weather observation and forecast and warning capabilities. JICA is cooperating on a program that gathers experts from each of the regional countries to participate in training at Fiji's Meteorological Service. JICA is also providing cooperation for weather observation facilities in Samoa and for other activities. In Tuvalu and the Solomon Islands, JICA assists with setting up radio broadcast networks for disaster information to give residents quick access to the information. In Fiji and the Solomon Islands, cooperation takes the form of creating a system that enables residents to evacuate properly according to information received. Overall, JICA is supplying a broad range of cooperation for disaster prevention in the region.

Pacific island states also are vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In particular, Tuvalu and other low-lying coral reef countries are vulnerable to sea level rise and other events associated with climate change. With the cooperation of the University of Tokyo and JST, JICA is providing Science and Technology Cooperation for bioengineering research concerning the mechanism by which coral reefs, foraminifera and other organisms produce, transport and pile up sand.



A Solomon Islands community practices an evacuation exercise for disaster prevention.

Transportation Infrastructure

For Pacific Region countries with territories covering a vast area of ocean, transportation infrastructure to ferry people and cargo back and forth is essential. From the perspective of providing access to education and medical services, transportation infrastructure is truly a lifeline for these countries. Up to now, JICA has provided Grant Aid for rehabilitation of harbors and provision of passenger and cargo vessels in Micronesia, Marshal Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu, Tonga and other countries in this region. In June 2012, JICA signed a loan agreement with Vanuatu as its first ODA Loan, which is to be used for the construction of an international cargo wharf in Port Vila, its capital.



Ferryboat operating out of Tonga

Social Services

Because many countries in the Pacific Region lack the proper supply and storage systems to ensure safe immunization programs, they require the establishment of a "cold chain" to provide refrigerated supplies of vaccines. Toward that goal, in 2004, JICA committed itself jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO) to cooperation for the Project for Strengthening Expanded Programme on Immunization in Pacific Region. Since then, JICA has been aiding with the dissemination of technology and human resource development related to the management of immunization projects and vaccines in the Pacific Region.

Limited access to education is a serious issue for remote areas and islands. JICA is providing cooperation in the region to increase opportunities for and the quality of education through the use of television, radio and satellite communication networks, and other methods. Through Grant Loans and Technical Cooperation, JICA is assisting with the establishment of an information and communication technology (ICT) center and the nurturing of ICT staff at the University of the South Pacific, which was established by 12 Pacific Region countries. Among other examples, in Papua New Guinea, where the primary education enrollment rate is low, JICA has constructed a national education media center and provided aid for the production of educational programs. Aid has also been given for delivering model school classes via television to elementary and junior high schools in other areas of the country.