

# Dive into the Blue Pacific

JICA's Cooperation for the 14 Pacific Island Countries



Shaping a Sustainable Future of the Pacific Island Countries Together



# What is JICA?

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), an incorporated administrative agency in charge of administering Japan's ODA, is one of the world's largest bilateral aid agencies supporting socio-economic development in developing countries in different regions of the world.

Under its new vision set out in July 2017, JICA supports the resolution of issues in developing countries through a flexible combination of various types of assistance methods.

## Mission

JICA, in accordance with the Development Cooperation Charter, will work on *human security* and *quality growth*.

## Vision

### Leading the world with trust

JICA, with its partners, will take the lead in forging bonds of trust across the world, aspiring for a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can hope for a better future and explore their diverse potentials.

## Actions

### 1 Commitment

Commit ourselves with pride and passion to achieving our mission and vision.

### 2 Gemba

Dive into the field ("gemba") and work together with the people.

### 3 Strategy

Think and act strategically with broad and long-term perspectives.

### 4 Co-creation

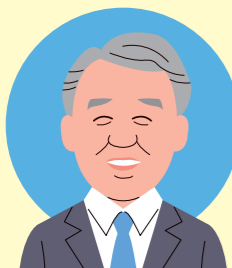
Bring together diverse wisdom and resources.

### 5 Innovation

Innovate to bring about unprecedented impacts.

#### Message

#### Japan and Pacific Island countries: Partners Sharing the "Blue Pacific Continent"



TANAKA Akihiko  
JICA President

Both Japan and the Pacific Island countries are island nations connected by the vast Pacific Ocean. Our relationship goes back many years—before World War II, many Japanese immigrants moved to Pacific islands, building deep cultural and historical ties that remain today. For example, in Palau, the word "daijoubu" (It's okay), and in the Marshall Islands, "amimono" (knitting), are Japanese words that have naturally blended into local conversations.

The people of the Pacific Islands call their beautiful and rich ocean the "Blue Pacific Continent." They take great care in conserving this precious nature. However, the region is highly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. Just like Japan, which faces more frequent typhoons and heavy rains, the Pacific also faces huge impacts from powerful tropical cyclones, rising sea temperatures, and sea level

rise—putting their homes and livelihoods at risk.

Additionally, the Pacific has limited industries, such as tourism, which means there are not enough job opportunities, leading to a substantial decline in population as people move abroad. Therefore, creating more opportunities for education and skill development for people, which is essential for various industries and the nation, and better infrastructure are key to sustainable growth.

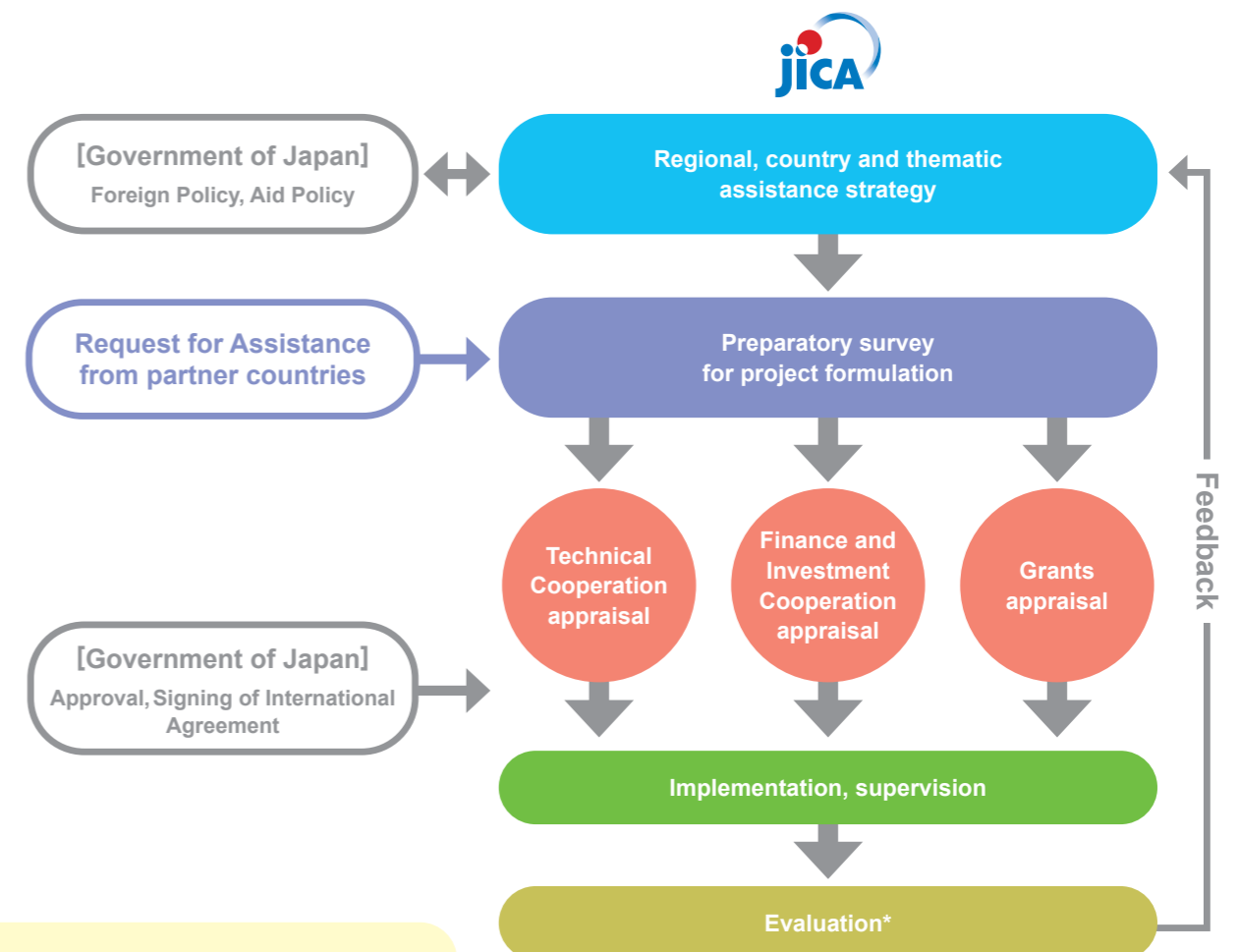
Japan, as a fellow island nation, shares many of these challenges. We have been working hand-in-hand with the Pacific countries—sharing experiences in areas such as stable energy supply, environmental conservation, and disaster risk reduction. Our goal is to support solutions tailored to each country's and community's unique needs.

# How does it work?

See the flow at a glance!

## JICA's Operational Flow for Cooperation

JICA implements effective and efficient cooperation under the Japanese government's aid policy based on an unbiased, broad perspective that extends beyond assistance schemes such as Technical Cooperation, Finance and Investment Cooperation, and Grants. In particular, JICA promptly conducts project formulation and implementation by undertaking preparatory surveys to investigate the content of cooperation at project sites before receiving aid requests from partner countries.



\* JICA conducts evaluations of projects using the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle for each scheme of Technical Cooperation, Finance and Investment Cooperation and Grants, and employs the system to further improve operations and sufficiently achieve public accountability.  
[https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our\\_work/evaluation/](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/evaluation/)

we conduct preparatory surveys for efficient project implementation.




Furthermore, the challenges of population outflow and decline are not unique to the Pacific—rural areas in Japan also currently face similar struggles. This makes us true partners in "co-creation", learning from and supporting each other as we walk the path together.


We have just celebrated the 70th anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) in 2024. This is a symbolic moment to look ahead and strengthen the special relationship between Japan and the Pacific.


As partners sharing the "Blue Pacific Continent," we hope to continue building on the bonds that many in the region warmly refer to as "Kizuna"—drawing on the deep ties of friendship and connection that unite us.

# Japan's neighbors sharing the Pacific Ocean: Let's look at the Pacific Island Countries

As a partner in the international community and neighbors in the Pacific Ocean, Japan has been engaged in various forms of cooperation and people-to-people exchanges with the Pacific Island Countries. Here, we will introduce the countries in the Pacific, which consists of three regions: Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.

**Japan**

**124.52 million people**

**39,350 US dollars**

Capital: Tokyo

Area: 378,000km<sup>2</sup>

Language: Japanese

Major industries: automobiles, electronic devices, machine tools, steel, non-ferrous metals, ships, chemicals, textile products

**Let's compare!**  
**Japan and 14 Pacific Island Countries**


	Japan	14 countries total
Population	124.52 million	Approx. 13.1 million
National land area	378,000km <sup>2</sup>	Approx. 530,000km <sup>2</sup>
EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone)	4,470,000km <sup>2</sup>	19,780,000km <sup>2</sup>


Approx. 1/10


Approx. 1.4 times

Approx. 4.4 times



**Republic of Palau**

**18,000 people**

**14,110 US dollars**


Capital: Melekeok


Land area: 488km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Palauan, English

Main industries: tourism

An island nation with an area roughly equivalent to Yakushima Island. It has abundant nature and tourism development is progressing. Many words derived from Japanese, such as "Tokubetsu", still in use from the Japanese colonial era.

**Federated States of Micronesia**

**113,000 people**

**4,250 US dollars**


Capital: Palikir


Land area: 700km<sup>2</sup>


Language: English, 8 local language

Main industries: fishery, tourism, agriculture (coconuts, taros, bananas)

It consists of 607 islands and atolls floating in a vast sea area of approximately 3 million km<sup>2</sup>, and is home to many rare species, including birds. It consists of four states with unique cultures.

**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

**39,000 people**

**7,860 US dollars**


Capital: Majuro


Land area: 180km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Marshallese, English

Main industries: agriculture (copra, coconut oil), fishery

The beautiful scenery of over 1,000 islands and atolls stretched out in a series like a ring, is called the "Pearl Necklace of the Pacific". Bikini Atoll has a history of being an American nuclear test site.

**Independent State of Papua New Guinea**

**10,390,000 people**

**2,820 US dollars**


Capital: Port Moresby


Land area: approx. 460,000km<sup>2</sup>


Language: English, Pidgin English, Motu language

Main industries: mining (liquefied natural gas, gold, crude oil, copper), agriculture (palm oil, coffee), forestry (timber)

The largest land area of the Pacific Islands and home to many ethnic minorities. In 2008, the world's oldest farming site, the 'Kuk Early Agricultural site', was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Solomon Islands**

**800,000 people**

**2,100 US dollars**

Capital: Honiara

Land area: 28,900km<sup>2</sup>

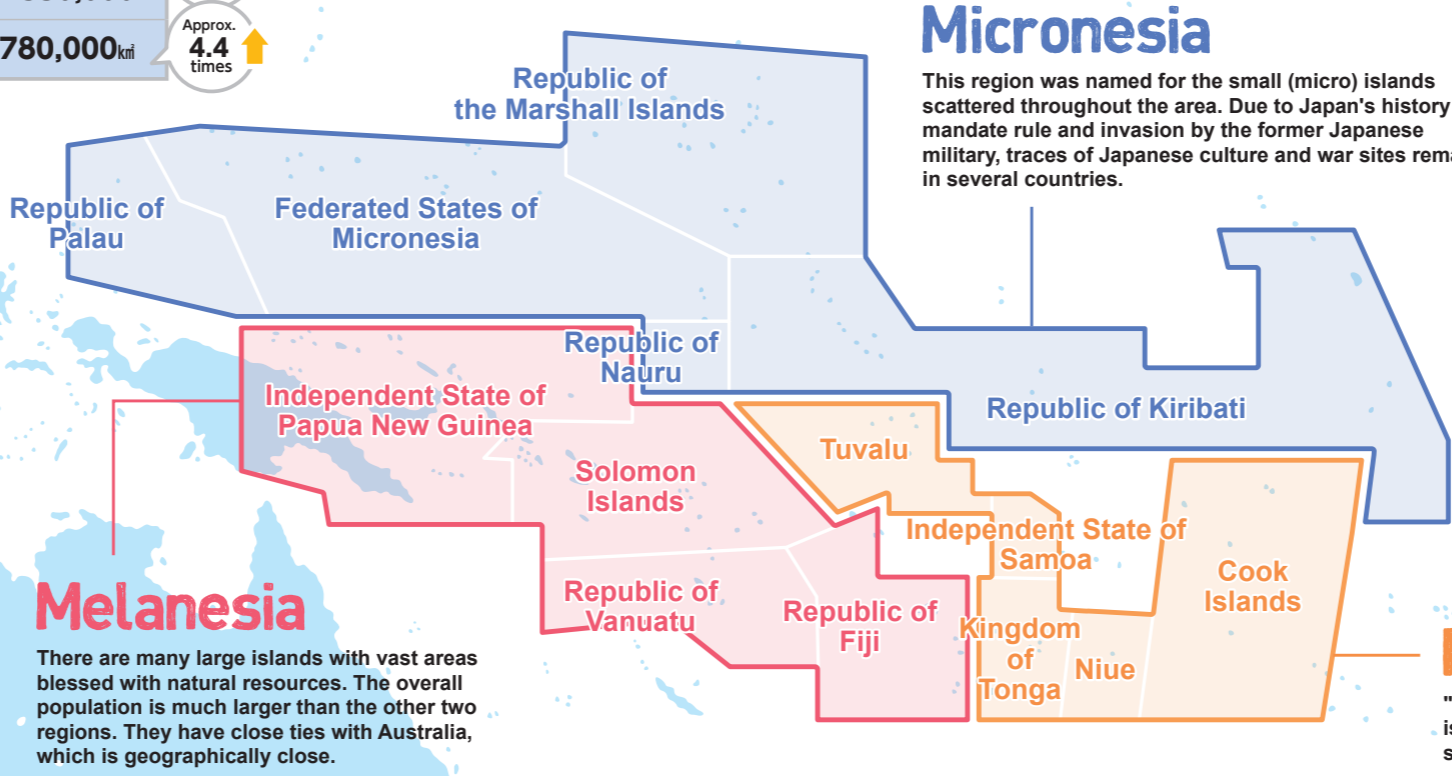
Language: English, Pidgin English

Main industries: agriculture (copra), fishing, forestry (timber)

A country consisting of approximately 1,000 islands in various sizes, covered with numerous volcanoes and rich tropical rainforests. Its capital is located on Guadalcanal Island, which was a fierce battlefield during the World War II.


**Micronesia**


This region was named for the small (micro) islands scattered throughout the area. Due to Japan's history of mandate rule and invasion by the former Japanese military, traces of Japanese culture and war sites remain in several countries.




**Melanesia**

There are many large islands with vast areas blessed with natural resources. The overall population is much larger than the other two regions. They have close ties with Australia, which is geographically close.

**Republic of Nauru**

**12,000 people**

**23,980 US dollars**


Capital: Yaren


Land area: 21.1km<sup>2</sup>


Language: English, Nauruan

Main industries: mining (phosphate)

The third smallest country in the world in terms of area. The entire island is made up of phosphate rock, and it once prospered from phosphate exports. Currently, it is focusing on tourism development.

**Republic of Kiribati**

**133,000 people**

**3,740 US dollars**


Capital: Tarawa


Land area: 810km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Kiribati, English

Main industries: fishery, agriculture (copra)

A country located directly on the equator, consisting of 33 atolls. The International Date Line runs along its border, and the easternmost island of Caroline Island (Millennium Island) is the first place in the world to start a new day.

**Republic of Vanuatu**

**320,000 people**

**3,820 US dollars**


Capital: Port Vila


Land area: 12,190km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Bislama (Pidgin English), English, French

Main industries: agriculture, tourism

The yellow Y on the flag represents approximately 80 islands and gospels that stretch 1,200 km from north to south. The tusk of a wild boar, which is considered a sacred creature, is also depicted.

**Republic of Fiji**

**924,000 people**

**5,680 US dollars**


Capital: Suva


Land area: 18,270km<sup>2</sup>


Language: English, Fijian, Hindi

Main industries: tourism, agriculture (sugar), manufacturing (clothing)

It functions as a hub connecting the Pacific Islands. In addition to traditional dances, the country is committed to preserving culture, such as "kava", a drink served during ceremonies and hospitality events.

**Tuvalu**

**10,000 people**

**8,770 US dollars**


Capital: Funafuti


Land area: 26km<sup>2</sup>


Language: English, Tuvaluan

Main industries: agriculture, fishery

It consists of nine atolls. The islands are low-lying, and there are concerns about sea level rise due to climate change. The country earns revenue by leasing the national domain ".tv" to an American company.

**Independent State of Samoa**

**217,000 people**

**4,200 US dollars**


Capital: Apia


Land area: 2,830km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Samoan, English

Main industries: agriculture, fishery

Comprising two volcanic islands with lush mountains, lakes, and rivers. The country cherishes and preserves its unique culture, including the chieftain system and traditional attire. In rural areas, a self-sufficient way of life remains deeply rooted.

**Kingdom of Tonga**

**105,000 people**

**5,260 US dollars**


Capital: Nuku'alofa


Land area: 720km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Tongan, English

Main industries: agriculture (taro, yams, kava, vanilla, pumpkins), fishery

The only constitutional monarchy in the Pacific Island Countries. It is notable for its diplomatic ties with the Japanese imperial family and the introduction of abacus-based mathematic education. Its attraction is also with friendly nation.

**Niue**

**1,673 people**

**Unknown**


Capital: Alofi


Land area: 259km<sup>2</sup>


Language: Niuean, English

Main industries: agriculture, fishery, tourism

A remote island formed by coral reefs. It is called the "Rock of Polynesia" because it stands alone in the sea. Its magnificent scenery, with limestone cliffs rising 60 meters high, is a major attraction.

**Cook Islands**

**20,000 people**

**Unknown**

Capital: Avarua

Land area: 237km<sup>2</sup>

Language: Cook Islands Māori, English

Main industries: tourism, agriculture, fishery (black pearls), finance

A country consisting of 15 islands named after Captain Cook, who discovered them. It is also known as the filming location for the movie "Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence" directed by Nagisa Oshima.

 = Population  
 = Gross National Income (GNI) per capita  
Source: World Bank and Asian Development Bank (2023)  
\*The "Pacific Island Countries" referred to in this booklet refer to the 14 countries with which JICA cooperates (data listed on pages 2-3).

# The reasons why Japan cooperate with the PICs

The PICs are facing problems unique to island nations that have a serious impact on the lives of their inhabitants. For many years, Japan has continued to offer wide-ranging cooperation in areas such as disaster prevention, industry, education and healthcare in response to their challenges.

**Q** What challenges do Pacific Island countries face?

**A** The PICs are **small-sized**, **isolated**, **remote**, and **maritime**, and they are faced with many issues related to these features.



## Land area is limited and populations are small Small-Sized Nations

In the PICs, population is concentrated in small urban areas, causing environmental problems and insufficient water supply. Retail prices tend to be expensive and this affects the livelihoods of the islanders.

Japan has been carrying technical cooperation to tackle these issues, such as applying a Japanese landfill method for proper waste disposal and supplying safe water appropriate for island settings. JICA has also cooperated in establishing a pharmaceutical services center that allows for reduction of purchasing costs and provision of adequate storage for medical supplies.



Island countries are scattered throughout a wide ocean

## Isolated

Where people live dispersed throughout multiple islands, the challenge lies in providing social services throughout every corner of the country, due to insufficient infrastructure and inadequate capacity building.

The PICs are making efforts to strengthen domestic links by developing necessary facilities, equipment, and personnel. For example, the donation of an inter-island ferry has facilitated economic activities. JICA also cooperates with disaster information transmission systems, including those for remote islands, and distance education. Healthcare initiatives include the development of hospitals and relevant equipment as well as the improvement of doctors' and nurses' skills.



## Distant from major international markets and bases Remote

Pacific Islands of Countries are far from international markets and bases, aircraft and ships are essential for imports, exports, and the movement of people. The aging airports and harbors with limited capacity are impeding various opportunities for logistics and people-to-people exchange. Restrictions on access to higher education, such as universities, are just one example. The region is also susceptible to fuel prices.

To strengthen ties with major markets and stimulate logistics, JICA is working to restore and enhance transportation functions through the repair and expansion of airports and ports. This cooperation is to meet the growing needs of logistics and tourism. We also cooperate in capacity development of customs officials for trade facilitation.

Surrounded by the sea and vulnerable to natural disasters

## Maritime

PICs are susceptible to natural disasters such as high tides and floods resulting from tsunamis, cyclones and rising sea levels. Climate change is exacerbating natural hazards and rapid action needs to be taken to prepare disaster-resilient infrastructure and reinforce responsiveness.

Japan is focusing on disaster risk reduction measures to keep the impact of natural hazards in the region to a minimum. At the Pacific Climate Change Centre in Samoa, climate change specialists are trained, and the Centre welcomes administrative officers from various countries to learn about the climate change risks and countermeasures. JICA also focuses on meteorological training to ensure that warnings are disseminated promptly in the event of disaster, constructing disaster-resilient infrastructure such as roads and bridges, and cooperating in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction based on the concept of "Build Back Better".



**Q** What are some of the challenges the PICs and Japan face?

**A** The PICs and Japan are isolated, remote, and maritime which are common to the island nations.

### Japan is carrying cooperation utilizing its knowledge and expertise

Like the PICs, Japan is an island country, and it shares many of the same features. Japan is isolated, with many people living in remote islands; it is remote, because aircraft and ships are essential for import, export, and tourism; and it is maritime, being vulnerable to typhoons and tsunamis. When cooperating in the PICs, there are many cases where Japan's knowledge is leveraged. For example, the initiative of introducing renewable energy to remote islands is expected to be beneficial for both the PICs and Japan.

**Q** What are JICA's views on future cooperation with the PICs?

**A** Creating new social values through cooperation unique to PICs will be encouraged for future cooperation.

### Tackling on international issues to share experiences and ideas each other

Since the late 19th century, the PICs and Japan have shared a history that spans over a century. By supporting the PICs in their challenges and nation-building efforts, we believe we can further strengthen our ties and build a relationship that enables us to work together on international issues and support each other in the future. Moreover, sharing social issues and experiences unique to island countries allows us to work together to create new ideas and values that will benefit society in the future. The PICs and Japan face common challenges such as climate change and natural disasters, making ongoing dialogue and collaboration essential for co-creating innovative solutions.



**Q** What is the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM)?

**A** It is a conference in which leaders of the PICs are invited to Japan to discuss and explore opportunities for future cooperation.



### PALM is a summit-level meeting held every three years since 1997 to foster partnerships between the PICs and Japan.

PALM is an international conference hosted in Japan, where leaders and representatives of 16 countries and two regions, including 14 PICs that have diplomatic relations with Japan, and Australia and New Zealand, are invited to attend.

At PALM, top-level discussions are conducted on what issues PICs face and how Japan can cooperate in addressing such issues. PALM has been held every three years since 1997, and 2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the event. Venues span from Miyazaki to Okinawa, Hokkaido, and Fukushima, providing a valuable opportunity for the participants to gain a better understanding of Japan.

Japan is the only country that has maintained such a framework with the 14 PICs for over 20 years. The triennial PALM has become a proud asset of Japanese diplomacy, as it builds close cooperative relationships and deepen ties between Japan and the PICs.



**Q** How are the cooperation areas decided?

**A** The decisions are made based on the challenges of the times and the specific needs of each country.

### Cooperation has expanded from focusing on healthcare and education to addressing environmental and climate change issues.

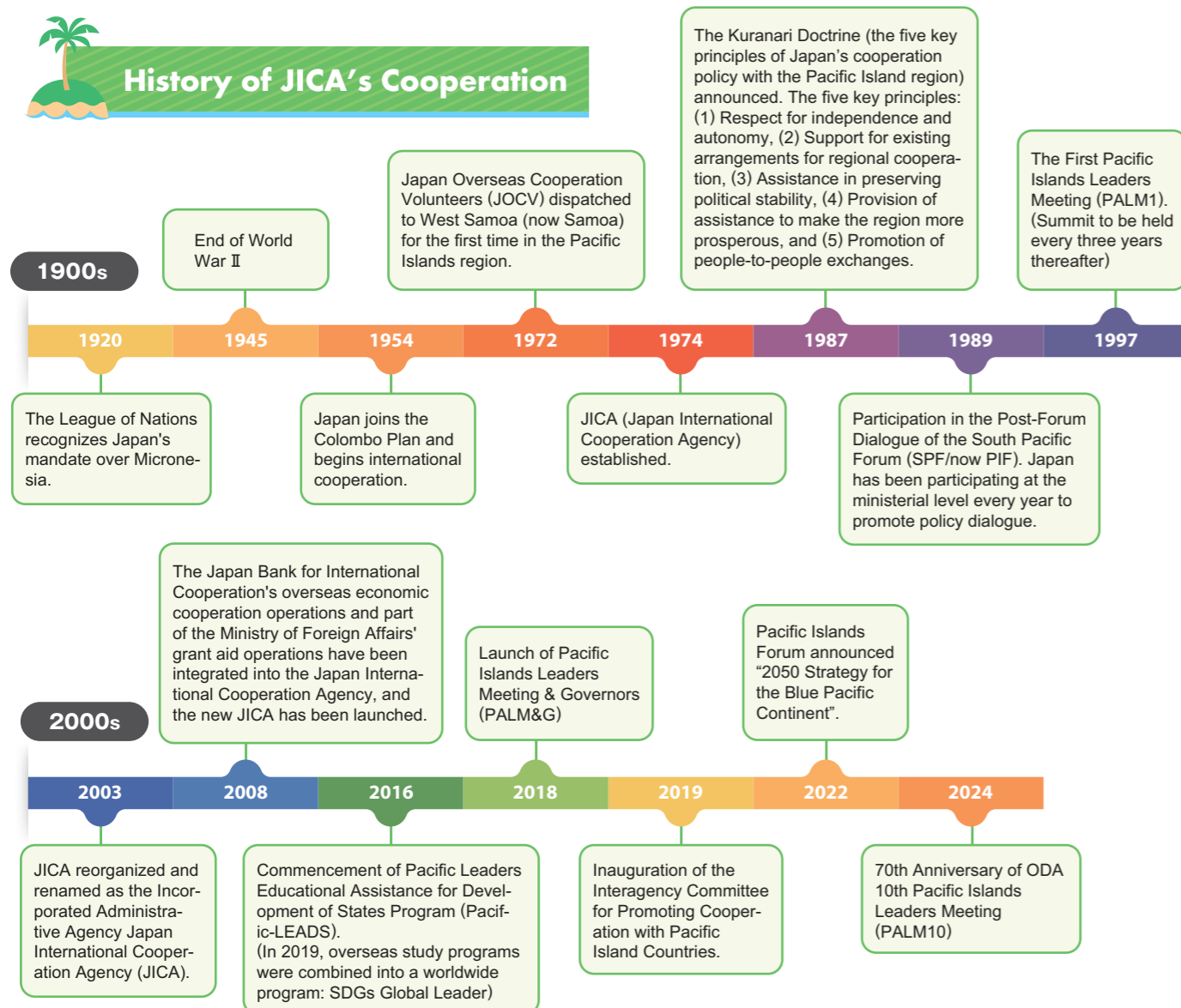
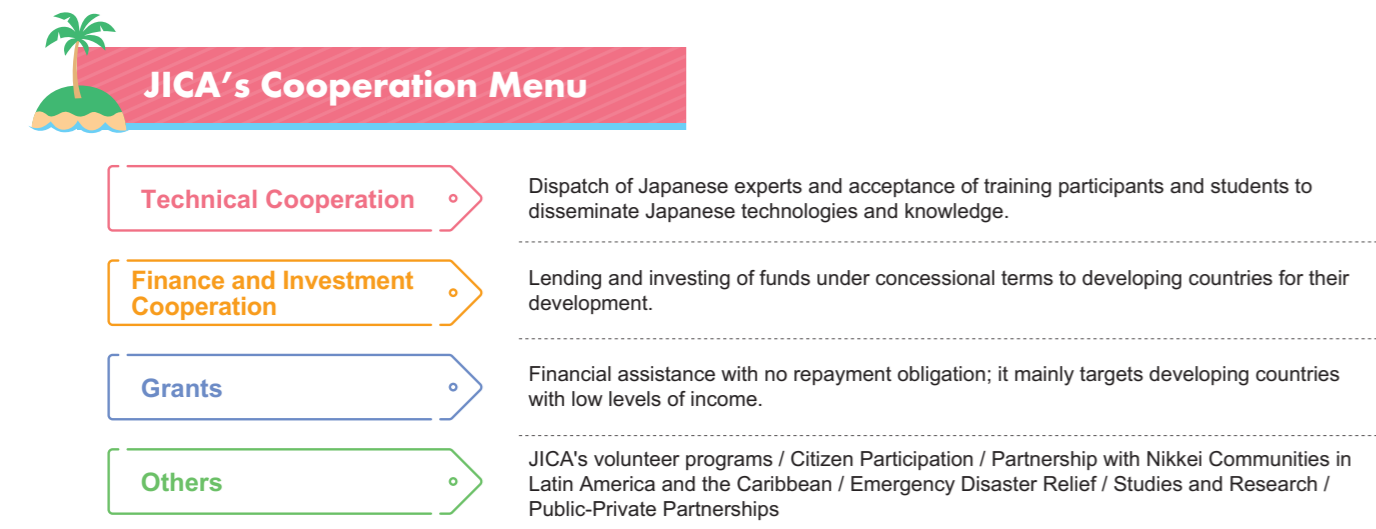
The focus areas of cooperation are determined by the challenges and concerns that change with the times. In the 1980s and 1990s, soon after JICA began its cooperation in the Pacific region, there was significant demand for support in basic social services such as healthcare and education, for instance a project to combat lymphatic filariasis in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO). In the 2000s, JICA expanded its cooperation to address environmental issues arising from waste disposal, a new challenge brought by lifestyle changes. As the PICs face similar challenges, the knowledge and expertise gained from these projects will be shared with one another. Our goal is to collaborate with the Pacific Islands region to make it a safe and pleasant place to live.

### Cooperation in alignment with the "2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent" formulated by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (The 2050 Strategy), the first long-term development vision for the Pacific region, was endorsed at the PIF Leaders Meeting held in Fiji in July 2022. The 2050 Strategy sets forth a vision to "ensure all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives" and focuses on the following seven priority areas: (1) Political Leadership and Regionalism (2) People-Centered Development (3) Peace and Security (4) Resources and Economic Development (5) Climate Change and Disasters (6) Ocean and Environment (7) Technology and Connectivity. Based on these seven priority areas, JICA is actively working toward the sustainable development of the "Blue Pacific Continent" see pages 10-15.

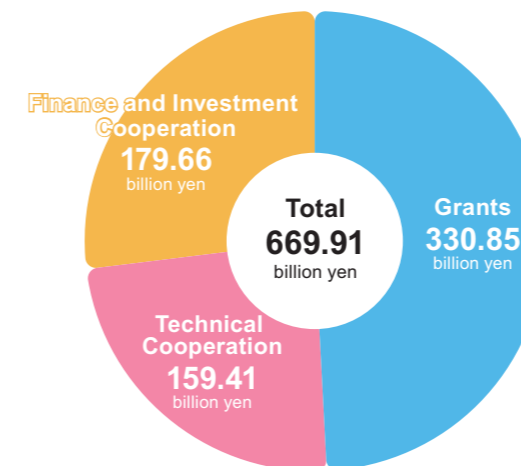
# Contents, history and achievements of cooperation with Pacific Island Countries

JICA's cooperation is implemented based on the dialogue between the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and Japan. We are working together to achieve peace and stability in the PICs, by carefully identifying the needs of different era.



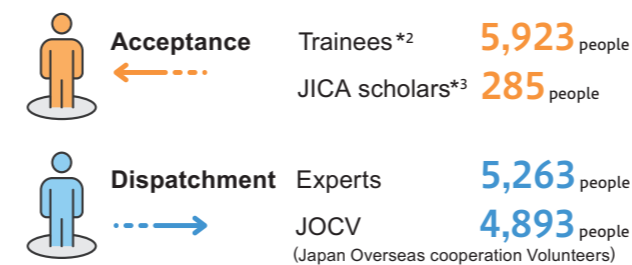
## Cooperation with the PICs

Scale of JICA's operations to the PICs (total) \*1



\*1 Data source: MOFA of Japan, "Japan's ODA Data by Country 2023"

The number of people taking part in People-to-People Exchange through JICA's schemes to date (total)



\*2 Including the number of trainees for Knowledge Co-Creation Program, Training Program for Young Leaders, and Country/Area-Focused Training Course

\*3 Long term trainees accepted for more than a year

Number of JOCVs dispatched per 100,000 people \*5

(Cumulative total until September 2024)



\*5 Population of each region is based on data from the World Bank (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>)

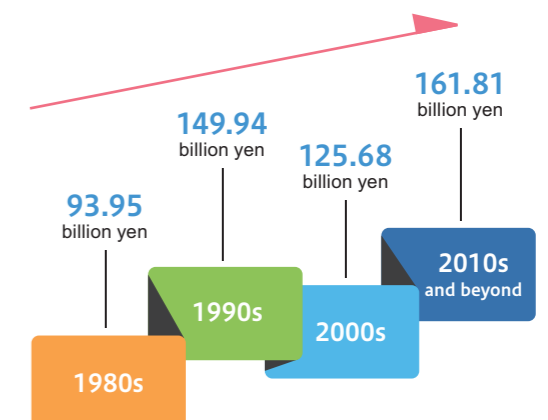
JICA Overseas Offices (As of June, 2025)



Japan's ODA scale per country (total) \*1

Papua New Guinea	226.18 billion yen
Fiji	83.80 billion yen
Samoa	59.64 billion yen
Solomon Islands	57.12 billion yen
Tonga	44.96 billion yen
Palau	40.29 billion yen
Vanuatu	38.76 billion yen
Federated State of Micronesia	37.04 billion yen
Kiribati	32.21 billion yen
Marshall Islands	29.26 billion yen
Tuvalu	14.49 billion yen
Nauru	3.73 billion yen
Cook Islands	1.82 billion yen
Niue	0.62 billion yen

Japan's ODA scale per era (total) \*4



\*4 Data source: JICA's website, "Operational Results"

It looks like JOCVs are making a big impact in the Pacific region!



# The 7 Promises Made by the PICs and Japan

## JICA is implementing its cooperation in alignment with the PALM 10 Joint Action Plan

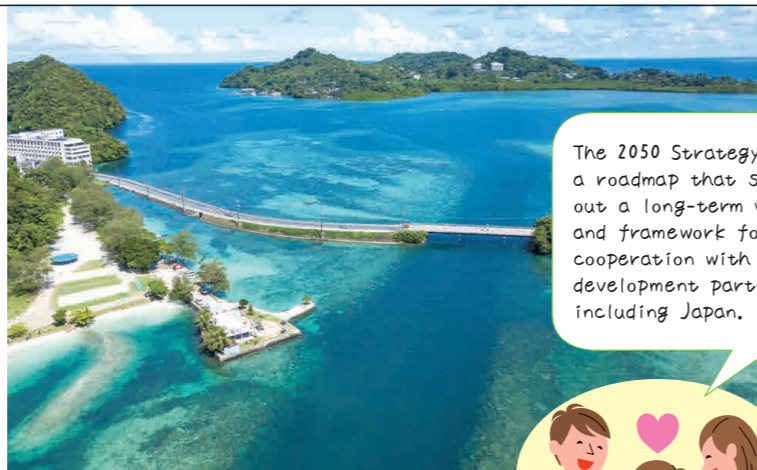
At the Tenth PALM (PALM10) in 2024, the joint action plan for Japan's cooperation to be implemented in the PICs was announced. JICA has already commenced activities aligned with this plan. What promises did Japan make to the people of the PICs? Let us take a look at some specific examples.



The cooperation is based on seven priority areas of cooperation = commitments that align with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

- Promise 1 Political Leadership and Regionalism**
- Promise 2 People-Centered Development**
- Promise 3 Peace and Security**
- Promise 4 Resources and Economic Development**
- Promise 5 Climate Change and Disasters**
- Promise 6 Ocean and Environment**
- Promise 7 Technology and Connectivity**

\* This is the long-term strategy developed by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in July 2022 (see p.7).



The 2050 Strategy is a roadmap that sets out a long-term vision and framework for cooperation with development partners, including Japan.



## 1 Political Leadership and Regionalism

### Key points of cooperation:

- Boosting policies and initiatives led by regional institutions in PICs

The PICs value unity and solidarity within the region due to their small size, and work together to address regional priorities. JICA respects and cooperates with the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific

(CROP), a specialized regional body, along with various initiatives. JICA also supports in the capacity development of future leaders (Case Study 1) to help achieve the goals set in the 2050 Strategy.

### Case Study 1

## Nurturing the Future Leader who will Lead the Region forward

This Program has been a Cornerstone of My Career as Chief of Staff



**Kalavatagaloa Tanita Aileen MORRISSEY**  
Chief of Staff, Office of the Prime Minister of Niue

"SDGs Global Leader"" is a program that provides undergraduate and postgraduate education, and also practical training opportunities in Japan with the aim of nurturing the next generation of leaders in PICs. I studied at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University for two years from 2017 and participated in internship program at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

The knowledge and skills I acquired in Japan are the foundation of my current career as Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister of Niue.

In addition, the network I built in Japan is indispensable in conveying Niue's voice to the international community.

I would like to apply these valuable assets gained from SDGs Global Leader to contribute to Niue's sustainable development, climate change measures, and strengthening regional cooperation. I would also like to keep sharing my experience with future participants in the program, in the hope that they too will make the most of this wonderful opportunity.

\*Pacific-LEADS (at the time)

SDGs Global Leader (Pacific)\* / FY 2019–  
\*From 2016 to 2018, the program was implemented as Pacific Leaders' Educational Assistance for Development of State (Pacific-LEADS).



## 2 People-Centered Development

### Promise 2

### Key points of cooperation:

- Improving healthcare services and addressing lifestyle-related diseases
- Improving education quality and fostering next generation leaders
- Strengthening "Kizuna (ties)" through people-to-people exchanges

Creating an environment where everyone has full access to social services is highly important. JICA develops educational materials for schools (Case Study 2) and enhances the quality of learning through JOCVs; imprisonment healthcare facilities and training healthcare pro-

fessionals; and implements strategies to combat lifestyle-related diseases. Furthermore, JICA is fostering the next generation of leaders by providing education opportunities in Japan and promoting grassroots level exchanges through domestic partners and JOCVs.

### Case Study 2

## Building a Foundation for Education in Mathematics and Science

### Developed Teaching Manuals and Strengthened Teachers' Capabilities



**ITO Akinori**  
JICA Expert / Chief Advisor



National textbooks and lecturers' manuals were delivered to local primary schools

Since 2016, I have been working with JICA to improve the quality of education in mathematics and science education in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

In the first four years, we created national textbooks and teaching manuals for grades 3-6 that aligned to the new curriculum together with the PNG National Department of Education (NDoE). Japanese textbook publishers also took part in the developing process. This textbook cultivates students' problem-solving skills and stimulating their interest with illustrations and photographs.

Until now, the 16 teacher training schools across the country used their own teaching manuals, which resulted in low quality of education and large disparities between schools. In response, teaching manuals development team, consisting of NDoE officials and instructors from teacher training schools in the capital, developed manuals for teachers and

teaching materials for students at teacher training schools. The new teaching materials are designed to provide students with practical knowledge of the subjects and teaching methods. We have had students try out the materials we have developed, and we conduct repeated verifications and improvements. We also organize online training for instructors at each teacher training school, where the materials development team takes the initiative in sharing teaching methods and other information to improve the instructors' capabilities.

We are conducting workshops with support from the international fund "Global Partnership for Education". Through mock lectures to instructors from teacher training schools, we were able to deepen their understanding of new textbooks and teaching materials. In addition, given that many female students find mathematics and science difficult, we are also committed to gender-responsive teaching.

Project for Strengthening Primary Teacher Pre-Service Education in Mathematics and Science (STEPMAS)  
Papua New Guinea  
Jan 2021 – Nov 2025



## 3 Peace and Security

### Promise 3

### Key points of cooperation:

- Strengthening governance functions to support regional and national peace and stability
- Reinforce capacity to ensure maritime safety

Ensuring safety and upholding the maritime law are crucial for the Pacific region, as they directly affect daily activities such as fishing and transportation. JICA cooperates by strengthening maritime safety measures, with a focus on improving the safety and efficiency of marine transportation.

This includes development support of navigational charts (Case Study 3) and maritime training school. JICA also provides training opportunities in Japan, in the development of legal systems and crime prevention, and other efforts to promote peace and stability in the Pacific region.

### Case Study 3

## Aiming to Improve the Safety and Efficiency of Maritime Transport

### Our First Electronic Navigational Chart



**Thierry Nervale**  
Director of Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA)

In the Solomon Islands, a country that consists of 1,000 islands, accurate charts that reflect the water's depth and sea obstacles are crucial for the safe navigation of vessels. At Solomon Islands Maritime Authority, in collaboration with JICA, we are developing the country's first internationally recognised electronic navigational charts. One of the two international ports has been completed, and the other is scheduled for completion in 2025. With these electronic navigational charts in place,

large vessels can navigate these ports with greater confidence. This project is our contribution to a safer ocean and growing economy in the Solomon Islands.

Completed hydrographic survey with a ship repaired with JICA assistance



The Project for Development Support of Electronic Navigational Charts for Honiara and Noro Ports in Solomon Islands  
Solomon Islands  
Mar 2022 – Dec 2025



# 4

## Promise 4 Resources and Economic Development

For the PICs to achieve stable economic growth, it is important to promote local industries such as tourism and fisheries, as well as trade and investment. JICA works to enhance customs operations by providing specialized training, which ensure sufficient customs revenue

### Key points of cooperation:

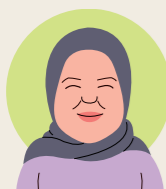
- Strengthening public financial management to ensure stable economic growth
- Promotion of blue economy in fishery sector along with tourism
- Development of quality infrastructure to enhance trade/investment/tourism

(Case Study 4) and by improving the trade environment. This effort helps to strengthen the economic foundation. Additionally, JICA collaborates with local communities to bolster sustainable coastal fisheries alongside tourism (Case Study 5), to support the growth of local industries.

### Case Study 4

## Developing Human Resources in the Field of Trade and Customs with the WCO

### Customs Operations are Improving in Many Countries



**Noha Shaltout**  
World Customs Organization (WCO) Expert



Port Vila, an international trade hub in Vanuatu, built in cooperation with JICA

The role of customs is to facilitate trade, collect customs duties, and control borders. However, many developing countries struggle with inefficient processes that hinder smooth procedures, and inability to properly perform "Harmonized System (HS) Classification" and "Customs Valuation". This often results in lost customs revenue. To solve such issues, WCO and JICA are collaborating to work on Customs modernization.

In a project started in July 2021 across six Pacific countries, we created training programs and educational materials to address each country's specific challenges. We have been also training master trainers to build a self-sustaining training system.

Participants, who are potential trainers, spend several years acquiring knowledge of customs, developing practical skills, and learning how to design and deliver training programs. Through the course of 3 years, 21 master trainers completed all the progressive activities. Building on these



Training to develop Master Trainers

successful results, a new program on risk management and post-clearance inspections started in July 2024 in eight countries, including Palau and the Solomon Islands. We aim to further improve trade by streamlining customs procedures.

JICA-WCO Collaboration Program for Pacific Island Countries:  
Master Trainer Program for Custom Administration Focused on  
Risk Management and Post Clearance Audit  
The Pacific Region and Timor-Leste  
Jul 2024 – Jun 2027

### Case Study 5

## The Richness of Ocean into a Sustainable Growth Industry

### Continue to Enrich the Grace of the Sea with a Strong Initiative in the Community



**Sompert Gereva**  
Acting Director, The Vanuatu Fisheries Department (VFD)



Shell crafts created with the cooperation of JICA volunteers assigned to VFD.  
Photo: JICA/SUZUKI Kaku

Our lives in the PICs are highly dependent on coastal marine resources such as shellfish and fish for food and income. However, coastal marine resources had been declining due to environmental destruction caused by land development and overfishing. In Vanuatu, community led by a chief owns and manages the sea that stretches out in front of the region, similar to the concept of "maehama" (foreshore) in Japan.

With JICA's support, the "Project for Promotion of Grace of the Sea in the Coastal Villages" was commenced with the aim of achieving sustainable use of coastal marine resources by combining traditional community-based resource management and modern methods such as data-based resource management and resource transplantation and aquaculture. Activities to increase income, such as shell craft making, and awareness-raising activities through sports events were also implemented. Local people reaffirmed the necessity of "the community-based coastal marine resource management" and the government officials

learned the importance of working together with communities while respecting their rules.

A new project will begin in JFY2026. Drawing on the efforts of the previous projects, we will continue to work on developing community-based management of coastal marine resources. We also have plans start sales of seafood to both tourists and restaurants.



Shellfish transplanted from Tonga to Vanuatu are growing and reproducing. Photo: JICA/SUZUKI Kaku

Project for Promotion of Grace of the Sea in the Coastal Villages (Phase III)  
Fiji / Vanuatu  
Feb 2017 – Feb 2024



# 5

## Promise 5 Climate Change and Disasters

PICs view climate change as "The Single Greatest Threat" to their security. Like Japan, the region is highly prone to disasters such as cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. To address these challenges, JICA has been working on strengthening DRR and

### Key points of cooperation:

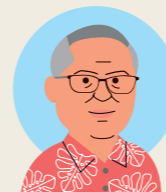
- Capacity building to minimize the impacts of climate change (adaptation)
- Clean energy transition to build a decarbonized society (mitigation)
- Capacity building in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) through promoting DRR investment and building skills in meteorological services

improving weather forecasting and warning systems (Case Study 6) drawing on Japan's experience. JICA is also working to build a decarbonized society, by introducing renewable energy sources (Case Study 7).

### Case Study 6

## Developing a Core Hub for Regional Disaster Prevention and Mitigation

### Cooperating within Region to Ensure Accurate Weather Observations and Forecasts



**Harish Pratap**  
FMS in-charge of the building project and RIC



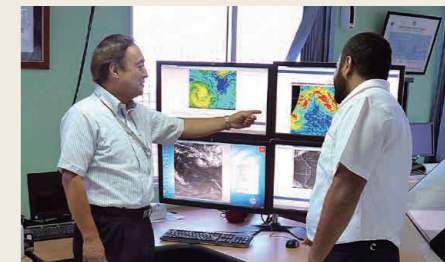
The FMS building constructed with the cooperation of Japan

We live in the Pacific Islands, vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change, where early warning mechanisms and accurate weather observation and forecasting are essential. In 1995, the Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS) was designated by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as a Regional Specialized Meteorological Center for Tropical Cyclone forecasting and warning in the Southwest Pacific region.

Based on the information from the FMS, the meteorological bureaus of each country undertake disaster prevention measures, such as issuing evacuation advisory. In addition to capacity development in the meteorological field, the FMS plays a central role in instrument calibration to ensure accurate measurements of observation equipment. Cooperation among countries has been enhanced by sharing observation data, and joint forecasting in the region, as well as standardization of tools and training.

JICA has been supporting FMS' development such as the maintenance of our office buildings and observation equipment, the provision of data

from the Himawari meteorological satellite through the technical cooperation. Additionally, with JICA's support, we are currently working on the development of buildings and equipment for regional training center and regional instrument center that meet WMO standards, as well as enhancing the capabilities of FMS staff. This project is crucial for the PICs to collaborate to mitigate the impact of disasters and build a community where people can live in a safe environment.



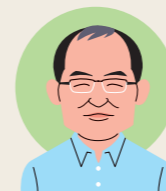
JICA expert (left) provides guidance on satellite data analysis and barometer calibration.

The Project for Capacity Development for Improvement of Meteorological Forecasting and Warning and for Establishment of Regional Centers for the Pacific  
Fiji  
Oct 2024 – Apr 2028

### Case Study 7

## Advancing Energy Transitions and Supporting Decarbonization

### Cooperation Designed to Meet Every Country's Needs



**Tadayuki Ogawa**  
JICA Senior Advisor



Project officials check the operational status of a hydropower plant in Samoa.

Energy security is a significant concern in the Pacific region due to the low energy self-sufficiency and heavy reliance on diesel power generation, which is both costly and subject to price volatility. In response, countries such as Palau and Samoa are actively and rapidly making energy transition from diesel power generation to renewable energy sources, such as solar power. However, this transition introduces new challenges, including a stable electricity supply and effectively responding to issues as they arise. To overcome these challenges, there is a need for the implementation of advanced technologies for managing supply-demand balance and optimizing power system operations.

This project closely monitors the situation in each country and assists in developing plans to promote large-scale renewable energy and energy transitions, and methods to stabilize power grids while also encouraging consumers to use

surplus solar power during the day. In Fiji, efforts include collaborating with companies from the Pacific to enhance energy security and decarbonize the energy sector by establishing training systems for electric power companies in the Pacific region. The project also seeks to share practical insights from the renewable energy progress in Pacific and provide feedback to Japan, focusing on energy transitions and grid stability in areas such as Okinawa.

Island countries have limited options for energy transition compared to larger countries, yet they must pursue all possible measures to decarbonize. Future plans involve collaborating with Pacific countries to improve energy efficiency, including land and sea transportation, and to introduce smart grids and future clean energy sources such as hydrogen and ammonia.

Project for Energy Transition in the Pacific Islands Countries  
Fiji / Samoa / Tuvalu / FSM / Palau  
Apr 2024 – Mar 2029



# 6 Ocean and Environment

Promise 6

## Key points of cooperation:

- Waster management and conservation of coastal ecosystems
- Sustainable management of marine resources

Conservation of the marine environment is important to safeguard people's livelihoods and tourism resources, and for sustainable future use of marine resources. Striving for a circular economy, JICA is addressing the growing challenges of waste management by assisting in exporting

resources, reducing plastic pollution in the ocean, and promoting the 3R initiative (Case Study 8). JICA is also cooperating in the conservation of marine environment through the conservation of coastal ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangrove forests.

### Case Study 8

Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative on Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries Phase 3 (J-PRISM 3)  
Pacific Islands  
Jul 2023 – Jul 2028



## Towards Sound Material Cycle Society

### Preserving the Blue Continent for Future Generations



**Anthony Talouli**  
Director of SPREP



Participants from each country engaged in group work at a regional training course held at SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), established in 1993, is a regional organization dedicated to fostering environmental conservation and sustainable development among Pacific nations. SPREP's efforts focus on "waste management and pollution control". Due to changes in lifestyles, the amount of waste has rapidly been increasing and the type of waste are becoming more diverse. Many island countries lack the disposal facilities and skilled personnel to manage this situation, raising concerns about the impact on residents' health, as well as the fishing and tourism industries.

To overcome these challenges, SPREP partnered with JICA in 2011 and launched a waste management project, leading to a variety of initiatives.

One major initiative involved improving of the final disposal sites, as previously, waste was left exposed, leading to issues such as polluted water contamination of surrounding rivers, unpleasant odors, insect infestations, and increasing fire risks. Several countries adopted the Fukuoka method, a Japanese technology that involves covering waste with soil and using air and water pipes to facilitate safe decomposition, significantly enhancing sanitary conditions and safety. Another achievements include the development of human resources and institutional foundations such as training of waste management leaders and estab-



Inspection of a final disposal site in Samoa as part of a regional training course

lishment of efficient waste collection and transportation systems.

In July 2023, the project entered a new phase, continuing to build waste management capacity through regional training and activities across countries. It also promotes "3R + Return," which stands for Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Return, addressing the limitations of local facilities by returning recyclable waste to external markets.

Living on the "blue continent," we bear the responsibility to conserve and pass down the natural and cultural heritage inherited from our ancestors to future generations. JICA has been a trusted partner for over two decades, and we hope this partnership will persist for many years to come.



Brochure |  
Creating a Sound  
Circular Material Society  
in the Pacific Region



With the cooperation of JICA, a "Container Deposit System (CDS)" was introduced in Marshall Islands, whereby people who bring in containers are refunded their money. People collect empty cans, plastic bottles, and empty bottles from around town and line up at collection points.

Empty cans are compressed into blocks and exported overseas.



# 7 Technology and Connectivity

Promise 7

## Key points of cooperation:

- Strengthening quality infrastructure to improve Pacific connectivity
- Improving operation and maintenance capacities
- Strengthening digital connectivity and capacity of cybersecurity

To facilitate the efficient flow of people and goods both within and beyond the region, and to ensure access to social services, development of transportation infrastructure such as ports, airports, bridges, and the digital environment is crucial. Cyber-attacks pose a threat in PICs

making cybersecurity measures essential. JICA is cooperating in this initiative by assisting infrastructure development to boost connectivity between countries and region in the Pacific and reconstruction and maintenance of aging infrastructures (Case 9/10/11/12).

### Case Study 9

Nadzab Airport  
Redevelopment Project  
Papua New Guinea  
Oct 2015 – Mar 2025



## "Tomodachi" Airport, a Beacon of Friendship Supporting Regional Growth

Air transportation plays an important role for facilitating travel in Papua New Guinea, a nation comprising over 600 islands of different sizes. JICA contributed to the construction of a new passenger terminal and the upgrading of the runway at the international airport close to Lae, the second-largest economic city, which functions as an industrial and logistics hub. The airport was conceived by Prime Minister Marape and named Nadzab Tomodachi International Airport to symbolize the friendship between the two countries.



Cooperation for airport contributing to economic growth in Papua New Guinea

### Case Study 10

The Project for Upgrading of Wharf for Domestic Transport  
Tonga  
Jun 2015 – Mar 2018



## A Maritime Gateway Enhancing Community Livelihoods

The construction of the quay, wharf, and passenger terminal at Nuku'alofa, Tonga's capital, has significantly improved the safety and efficiency of passenger and cargo transport between the islands. This revitalization of passenger and cargo transportation plays a crucial role in driving economic growth across more than 170 islands in Tonga.



Panoramic view of the breakwater, anchorage, and quay wall constructed with JICA assistance

### Case Study 11

The Project for Reconstruction of Vaisigano Bridge  
Samoa  
Jul 2017 – Aug 2020



## Disaster-Resilient and Safe Bridge Symbolise Japan-Samoa Relations

The Vaisigano Bridge, which connects the capital city of Apia to the international port, was significantly damaged due to aging and repeated cyclones. This reconstruction of bridge has established a safe and disaster-resistant highway, that contributes to sustainable economic growth. Moreover, the participation of local Samoan companies in the construction led to the transfer of technology by Japanese companies and created job opportunities, further strengthening the friendship between the two countries.



Replaced Vaisigano Bridge

### Case Study 12

Project for Reconstruction of Nippon Causeway  
Kiribati  
Jul 2016 – Apr 2019



## A Road of Hope and Cooperation, Safeguarding People on the Frontlines of Climate Change

The Nippon Causeway, the sole major road in the region connecting the islands of Besio and Bailliki in Kiribati (originally constructed with Japanese cooperation), had deteriorated due to storm surges and climate change. JICA restored this vital road, enhancing Kiribati's resilience to climate change and supporting its social and economic development by securing essential lifelines.



The "Nippon Causeway", connecting Bailliki and the port town of Besio, a distance of 3.4 kilometers

# Initiatives with Co-Creation Partners



## Industry-government-academia collaboration

JICA is working to create new social value in Pacific Island countries by leveraging advanced technologies developed by universities and private companies as well as the experience of local governments, while promoting industry-government-academia collaboration.

### Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration × JICA

#### Expanding the "Kumejima Model" to Palau



**Kyoko Washiashi**  
GO FARM

The Pacific Islands, like remote islands in Japan, face challenges from climate change, such as water shortages and reliance on expensive fossil fuels with high transportation costs.

Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) offers a clean energy solution aimed at reducing carbon emissions, making it ideal for subtropical islands. On Kumejima Island in Okinawa, a project is underway with Saga University and private companies to develop industries using deep seawater for aquaculture and producing drinking water, which helps create jobs and boost local

development.

We aim to introduce this "Kumejima Model" to Palau, supported by JICA and the positive outlook from the Palau government, to establish a sustainable new industry and build trust with the local community.



Delegation from Palau Inspects Power Generation Facilities on Kumejima  
Photo: Xenosys Corporation

Data Collection Survey on the Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) and Kumejima Model Deployment in Island Countries in the Pacific Ocean Region, etc.  
Palau  
Sep 2023 - Feb 2026

## Science and Technology Cooperation

Universities and research institutes in Japan and Pacific island countries work together to promote international collaborative research\* that will lead to resolve global issues such as natural disaster prevention and mitigation and infectious diseases control and to improve the level of science and technology.

\*Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development - SATREPS

### Research Institutions × JICA

#### Studying Past Volcanic Activity to Mitigate Future Disasters



**Mie Ichihara**  
Professor of Earthquake Research Institute, The University of Tokyo

In January 2022, a major underwater volcanic eruption near Tonga caused widespread damage, including tsunamis, ash fall, and communication disruptions. The resulting tsunami reached not only Tonga and other Pacific countries, but also Japan. However, the causes of tsunamis from underwater eruptions and how best to respond are still not well understood.

To address this, research institutions and universities in Japan and other countries are working together to study past volcanic eruptions

and tsunamis in the southwest Pacific. We are also developing technologies to monitor volcanic activity. In parallel, surveys are being carried out to understand how people in the Pacific countries perceive disaster risks.

Tsunami boulders and coastal topography being measured by drones (Tonga)



The Project for Disaster Risk Reduction of Widespread Volcanic Hazards in Southwest Pacific Countries  
Fiji / Vanuatu / Tonga  
Apr 2024 - Mar 2029

## Cooperation with JICA volunteers

Contribute to solving challenges faced by local communities through JICA volunteers who are dispatched in cooperation with private companies, local governments, universities and other organizations. After completing the program, the experiences gained in the field are given back to their organizations and the local communities.

### University × JICA

#### Training Nurses who will Contribute to an Aging Society



**Miho Yoshioka**  
JOCV/Kagawa University

In 2025, a short-term nursing volunteer was dispatched to a college in the Federated States of Micronesia, where the population is aging, to introduce gerontological nursing. The goal was to train nurses to help prevent and manage lifestyle diseases and dementia.

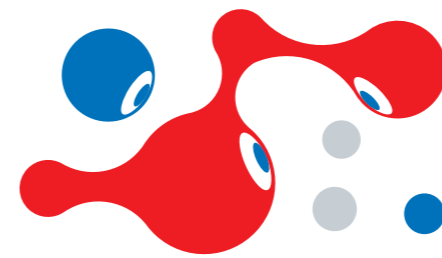
These trainings aimed to give local nursing students practical experiences through clinical training at hospitals. However, the students' abilities varied greatly, highlighting the needs for long-term support to address these differences. I also

learned the importance of patient-centered care that respects culture and customs. I plan to use this experience to enhance the quality of nursing education in Federated States of Micronesia and share insights with Kagawa University to benefit Japanese society.

Gerontological Nursing Training at the College of Micronesia



Memorandum of Understanding on Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers Signed with Kagawa University  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Nov 2024 - Mar 2027



Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

Pacific Islands

JICA

## Stories of Pacific Islands you can encounter in Japan

JICA is cooperating with the participation of developing countries, including Pacific Island Countries, in the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai. Through the promotion of cultural exchanges and international understanding, JICA disseminates the attractions of the Pacific Island region to the world.

JICA supported the formulation of exhibition plans for the pavilions of developing countries from March 2023 to July 2024, as part of the "Support Program for Developing Countries," which was a government commitment to developing countries wishing to exhibit at the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai. In the planning support, JICA assisted in consultation on exhibition design proposals to help representatives from countries exhibiting in Pavilion Types B and C to create attractive exhibition plans in line with the theme of the Expo. It provides the opportunity for the visitors to the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai to experience the attractions of Pacific Island countries through exhibitions and interactions with representatives from developing countries, and to learn about Japan's ODA cooperation.



Marshall Islands



Palau



Federal States of Micronesia



Solomon Islands



Nauru



Samoa



Vanuatu



Tuvalu



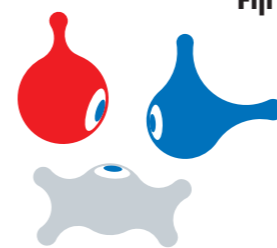
Tonga



Papua New Guinea



Fiji



You can experience the charming culture of the Pacific Islands right here in Japan!

Expo 2025  
official character  
MYAKU-MYAKU



<https://www.jica.go.jp/>

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