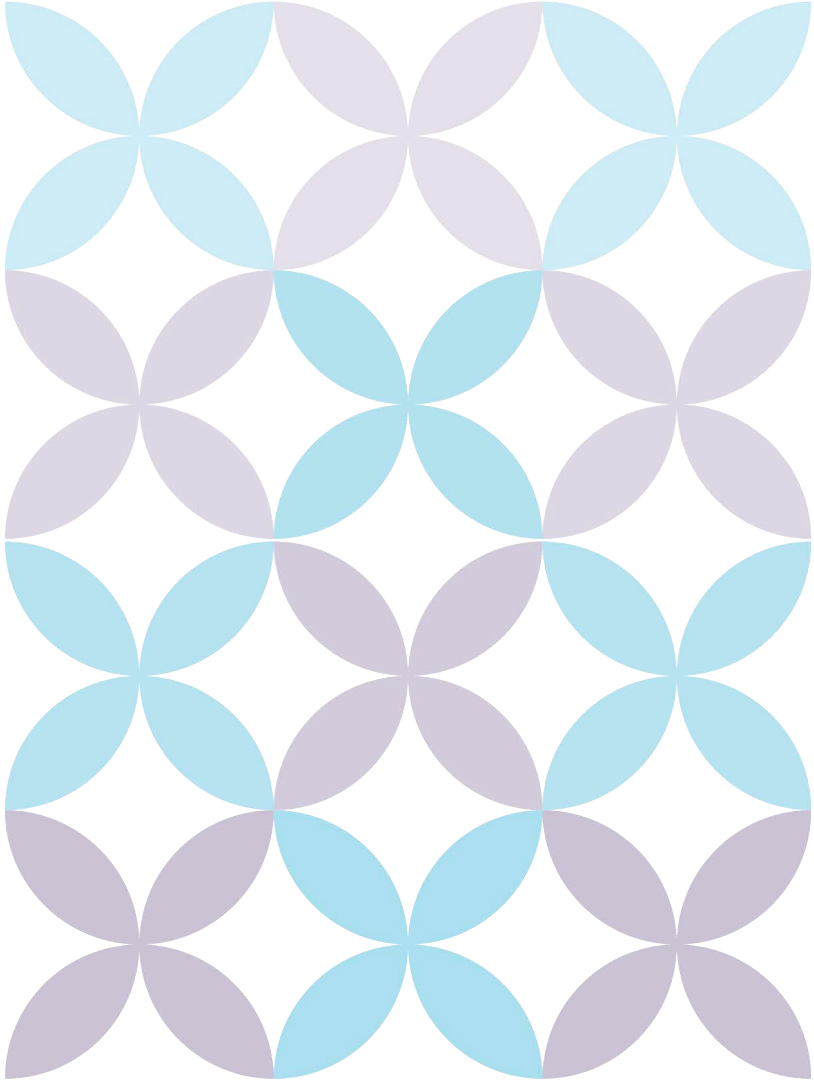


NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

Minister of Foreign Affairs' report on the International Development Cooperation non-departmental appropriation within Vote Foreign Affairs 2025–26



This report is prepared under s19B of the Public Finance Act 1989: Provision of end of year performance information by Ministers.

Cover photo: Volunteer Service Abroad partners with Loto Taumafai Society for People with Disabilities to address key gaps in inclusive education and disability support services across Samoa. A major achievement from the long-term partnership has been the introduction of Community Disability Services – a programme that has supported more than 200 children and young people with disabilities through assessments, therapies, learning resources, community awareness, and advocacy. Credit: Te Tūao Tāwāhi/Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)

New Zealand's International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme — Ngā Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti [24] is funded by a non-departmental appropriation within Vote Foreign Affairs. The Pacific and Development Group of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (hereafter 'the Ministry') manages the IDC Programme, disbursing the funding provided under this appropriation to a range of delivery partners (including New Zealand government agencies, partner governments, non-government organisations, companies, and regional and multilateral organisations).

The non-departmental IDC appropriation for the triennium July 2024-June 2027 is **$3.061 billion [25].** Three-year appropriations allow expenditure to be managed across years, which enables the Ministry to focus on longer-term quality and impact. A separate departmental appropriation is provided under Vote Foreign Affairs to fund the Ministry's management of the IDC Programme.

This report provides an overview of IDC Programme performance for the 2025–26 financial year. The first section features key achievements for the year, including the Ministry's work with the multilateral development system and with other development partners, and delivery of New Zealand's 2022–25 climate finance commitment.

The second section sets out achievements from across the entire IDC Programme, and impact towards the Ministry's three strategic goals:

- a safe, secure and just future
- a prosperous and resilient future
- a sustainable future.

[24] Ngā Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti can be translated as 'The paddles that bring growth from afar'

[25] As at 1 July 2026. For latest allocation figures see: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/aid-and-development/our-approach-to-aid/where-our-funding-goes/our-planned-idc-expenditure



The redeveloped Savalalo Market on Apia's waterfront reopened in March 2026. Rebuilding this important economic and community hub restored a vital asset lost in a 2016 fire, providing local vendors with a modern, accessible space to trade while attracting both residents and visitors. The project contributes to the wider revitalisation of Apia's waterfront and supports Samoa's ongoing economic recovery. By creating employment opportunities, strengthening local enterprise, and providing inclusive facilities for market vendors, the redevelopment is helping to boost tourism, support private sector growth, and enhance economic resilience for communities across Samoa. Credit: MFAT

International Development Cooperation Programme — Ngā Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti

The Ministry has primary responsibility for administering New Zealand's international development cooperation, which it does through the IDC Programme. We deliver funding[26], knowledge and skills to improve sustainable development and reduce poverty in developing countries, with a strong focus on the Pacific. Our humanitarian action saves lives and relieves suffering in natural disasters and protracted crises. We seek coherence across development, diplomatic, security, economic, climate change, and environmental objectives to ensure sustainable progress and advancement of New Zealand's interests and values. New Zealand's international development cooperation is an integral pillar of our foreign policy, reflecting our network of international relationships and commitments, and our values.

New Zealand's Policy Statement on International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development[27], and the Ministry's Strategic Framework provide an overarching strategic direction for our IDC — including how we allocate and deliver funding, work with partners, and achieve outcomes. We seek effective, inclusive, resilient, and sustained outcomes, and work in line with international development effectiveness principles.

[26] OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) determines at a high-level what can be counted and reported as Official Development Assistance (ODA) — i.e. support with a primary purpose of economic development and welfare of developing countries and provided on concessional terms. New Zealand's support under the IDC is more expansive than ODA, as some high-income Pacific countries are also eligible.

[27] ICESD. See: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Aid-Prog-docs/Policy/Policy-Statement-New-Zealands-International-Cooperation-for-Effective-Sustainable-Development-ICESD.pdf

Overview of 2025–26: Responding to global challenges while maintaining a strong Pacific focus

As global challenges continue to reshape the international development landscape, development needs across the Pacific and beyond are intensifying. New Zealand remains committed to working with likeminded partners to deliver practical and sustainable outcomes for our priority partner countries, while adapting to a rapidly changing global environment.

Global challenges and responses

Geopolitical fragmentation and reductions in international development funding continued to reshape global development cooperation in 2025–26. In 2025, official development assistance (ODA) from OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members and associates declined by 23 percent to USD$174 billion — the largest annual decrease on record. ODA levels are projected to decline further in 2026.

Initial OECD data for 2025 indicates that declining ODA was largely concentrated in core contributions to the United Nations system, which fell by 27 percent. In contrast, core support to the World Bank and regional development banks increased by 6.4 percent and 11.9 percent respectively.

At the same time, the international humanitarian system faced growing pressure. Global humanitarian funding fell from USD$43.3 billion in 2022 to USD$20.5 billion in 2025, limiting the ability of humanitarian organisations to respond to increasing need. In response, the United Nations has scaled back humanitarian plans globally and prioritised assistance to an estimated 87 million people facing the most urgent needs — out of 239 million people requiring humanitarian support in 2026.

Outside the Pacific, New Zealand's development cooperation remained focused on Southeast Asia, where targeted investments supported economic and climate resilience, governance, peace and security, and improved access to knowledge and skills. Priority support was directed to the least developed countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, and the middle-income countries of Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. New Zealand also continued to deliver a substantial regional programme through ASEAN.

In response to global crises, New Zealand provided IDC funding to conflict-affected contexts including Afghanistan, the occupied Palestinian territories, Ukraine and Myanmar. As a direct result of this support, more than 532,000 people received essential humanitarian assistance in 2025–26. IDC investments also supported climate and economic resilience initiatives in eastern and southern Africa, alongside programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean focused on low-emissions agriculture, renewable energy and scholarships.

A Pacific focus

While the impacts of reductions in ODA are beginning to emerge in the Pacific, effects have so far been uneven and partially mitigated by Australia, Japan and New Zealand broadly maintaining their levels of support. Although impacts on UN agencies operating in the Pacific have largely been indirect to date, risks are increasing as global funding pressures continue and donor resources become more constrained.

The flow-on effects of conflict in the Middle East, which intensified in early 2026, were strongly felt across the Pacific. Rising fuel prices, increased shipping costs and inflation placed additional pressure on Pacific economies that rely heavily on imported fuel and goods. The region remains among the most vulnerable to fuel price shocks globally due to limited transport connectivity, dependence on diesel-generated electricity and a high reliance on imported food. Ongoing conflict risks increasing poverty and food insecurity across Pacific country populations.

New Zealand's engagement in the Pacific remains partner-led, supporting the development priorities identified by Pacific countries themselves. Of the $956.2 million total IDC expenditure in 2025–26, 66.7 percent ($637.6 million) was invested in the Pacific, demonstrating New Zealand's enduring commitment to the region and its people.

During the year, New Zealand worked alongside like-minded partners to deliver long-term development outcomes, with a particular focus on social and economic resilience, peace and stability, climate change adaptation and good governance. New Zealand also supported responses to emerging crises, including a coordinated New Zealand Government response to the impacts of Tropical Cyclone Maila in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in April 2026; and a response to the dengue fever outbreak in Samoa in August 2025.

New Zealand continued to invest in regional unity and Pacific-led solutions through active participation in regional organisations and consistent advocacy for Pacific priorities. In our engagements with global partners, New Zealand championed approaches that align with established regional practices, strengthen regional institutions and support Pacific countries to lead on the issues that matter most.

Results at a glance

In 2025–26, as a direct result of New Zealand's international development cooperation funding:

20,225+
PEOPLE
participated in a **labour mobility initiative**

5,250+
PEOPLE
received training or capability-building support **in fisheries and oceans'**

2,000+
PEOPLE
in the **education workforce** received training or capability-building support

930+
PEOPLE
completed **tertiary or vocational scholarships**

295+
PEOPLE
benefitted from **enhanced learning through ICT**

273,700+
PEOPLE
benefitted from **sexual and reproductive health services**

6,110+
PEOPLE
in the **health workforce** received training for capability-building support

28,050+
PEOPLE
received training or capability-building support in **equity and inclusion**

5,346,500+
PEOPLE
benefitted from initiatives which aim to increase **resilience to climate change and environmental degradation**

532,560+
PEOPLE
were provided with essential and useful **humanitarian assistance** following a natural or human-induced disaster

2,605,950+
PEOPLE
benefitted from **improved infrastructure** and services

5,195+
PEOPLE
received training or capability-building support in **infrastructure**

313,470+
PEOPLE
received training or capability-building support in **peace and security**

21,220+
PEOPLE
received training or capability-building support in **governance**

1,509,057+
PEOPLE
were supported to **improve their livelihoods**

Solomon Islands

TOTAL SPEND: $53.58m

New Zealand support to the Solomon Islands' High Court contributed to fair and transparent handling of sensitive constitutional and economic matters- strengthening public confidence and judicial independence during politically sensitive periods, and contributing to stability and trust in Solomon Islands' justice system.

Naoero

TOTAL SPEND: $8.55m

Repair and upgrade of rainwater harvesting systems across 14 districts improved water storage by 300,000 litres and supported 96 vulnerable households, reducing water loss and strengthening drought resilience.

Papua New Guinea

TOTAL SPEND: $53.29m

Improved access to disability inclusive health and education services, with a focus on women and girls in rural and underserved communities. In Christian Blind Mission's first year, it reached more than 36,500 people with integrated eye care, ear and hearing services, and rehabilitation.

French Pacific

TOTAL SPEND: $1.60m

Funding supported refitting of three mobile enterprise resource vans operated by Association pour le Droit à l'Initiative Economique (ADIE) New Caledonia, providing financial inclusion and support for very small enterprises, particularly in rural, remote, and socially vulnerable areas of New Caledonia.

Vanuatu

TOTAL SPEND: $50.62m

50 returned seasonal workers received business training and support through Yumi Growem Vanuatu, resulting in increased business registration, revenue growth, and a shift toward local entrepreneurship.

Pacific impacts

Each box shows total IDC expenditure in that country. It also provides one example of a result achieved during 2025–26.

(Note that the funding is not directly linked to the result).

Fiji

TOTAL SPEND: $47.07m

Cure Kids Fiji strengthened early detection of rheumatic heart disease through screening of more than 13,500 people in schools, antenatal care and families, and training 25 health professionals and 43 community champions, improving continuity of care nationally.

Tonga

TOTAL SPEND: $47.70m

New Zealand and Australia supported construction of a 405km long undersea cable, greatly enhancing the reliability of internet connectivity in Vava'u and providing Tonga with a vital backup connection in the event of an emergency.

Niue

TOTAL SPEND: $39.89m

35 public servants across key infrastructure sectors received heavy machinery and vehicle training, strengthening workforce capability and safety, and contributing to more effective public services and long-term infrastructure resilience.

North Pacific

TOTAL SPEND: $17.06m

Hands-on training in risk assessment, vessel monitoring systems, and adoption of an electronic Port State Measures system strengthened fisheries oversight in FSM, significantly enhancing capability to detect illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

Kiribati

TOTAL SPEND: $31.76m

Distribution of internationally recognised electronic Seafarer Identification (eSID) cards to 400 seafarers, allowing them to maintain mobility, access global employment opportunities, and comply with maritime industry requirements.



Cook Islands

TOTAL SPEND: $37.13m

Fourteen participants from across the Cook Islands Government attended maritime incident response training through the Pacific Maritime Safety Programme, deepening incident response capability.

Samoa

TOTAL SPEND: $40.34m

The Savalalo Market rebuild completed and the market opened in March 2026, attracting locals and tourists, supporting vendors' livelihoods, and contributing to the revitalisation of the waterfront in Apia.

Tuvalu

TOTAL SPEND: $28.46m

8 hectares of newly reclaimed and elevated land on Fongafale delivered, and a Land Use Plan adopted by the Government of Tuvalu, through the Tuvalu Coastal Adaption Project Phase 1.

Tokelau

TOTAL SPEND: $51.33m

Three students completed the Diploma in Medical Laboratory Science and short courses in Microbiology/Molecular, Biochemistry, and Blood Transfusion Services. They are now employed in Tokelau as Laboratory Technicians, reducing reliance on offshore recruitment.



Business training session at a UN Women-funded Multi-Purpose Women's Centre in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. The Centres provide multi-sectoral support to women and girls, including emergency cash assistance, mental health and psycho-social support, literacy and numeracy training, and business and livelihood skills development. Credit: UN Women Afghanistan/Sayed Habib Bidell

Investment in multilateral development

New Zealand's investment in, and engagement with, the multilateral development system enables us to achieve development outcomes at a scale that would not be possible through bilateral programmes alone. Through financial contributions, governance engagement, and policy advocacy, New Zealand helps strengthen the international system that addresses global challenges such as poverty, conflict, instability, climate change, and human rights.

New Zealand works with a range of multilateral partners, including multilateral development banks, United Nations agencies, humanitarian organisations, and non-government organisations (NGOs). We focus our investment and engagement where it can have the greatest impact, combining financial support with active participation in governance and policy discussions to promote effective, innovative, and principles-based development. New Zealand is also a strong advocate for Pacific priorities within the multilateral system. In 2025–26 New Zealand actively engaged in reforms under the Secretary-General's UN80 Initiative in support of a more effective and efficient UN development system that delivers for our region.

As global ODA to multilateral organisations continues to decline — particularly core funding for United Nations agencies — New Zealand's contributions have become increasingly important. These reductions are being felt most acutely in the world's poorest and most fragile contexts. Through our financial support and engagement in international decision-making forums, New Zealand helps ensure resources remain focused on those most in need while supporting outcomes that align with both New Zealand and Pacific interests.

In 2025–26, New Zealand provided $95 million in core funding to multilateral organisations and actively participated in the governance mechanisms of funded agencies. Around 36 percent of New Zealand's total funding to the United Nations system is core funding or contributions to pooled funds, making New Zealand one of a small group of countries to meet the 30 percent target under the UN Funding Compact. Core funding provides multilateral organisations with the flexibility to respond to emerging priorities and deliver assistance where needs are greatest.

Examples of the impact achieved by UN agencies that New Zealand core funds include:

- A contribution of **$8 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** supported efforts to strengthen participatory governance across Asia and the Pacific, helping marginalised communities exercise their rights and influence public decision-making. UNDP strengthened human rights systems and institutions in 63 countries and territories and continued to drive innovation through its network of 91 Accelerator Labs operating in 115 countries. Its Youth Co:Lab initiative reached more than 300,000 young people, supporting youth leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship to advance the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

- New Zealand's **$6 million contribution to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** supported inclusive education, child protection, and social services in multiple countries. This included expanding access to education for children with disabilities in Viet Nam, strengthening social work systems in Sierra Leone, supporting near-universal birth registration in Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde, and contributing to social protection reforms in the Republic of Moldova that expanded support to nearly 50,000 vulnerable children.

Examples of impacts from multilateral development banks that New Zealand core funds include:

- New Zealand contributed **$21.7 million to the International Development Association (IDA),** the World Bank's concessional financing arm for low-income countries. During 2024–25, IDA committed USD$33.8 billion across Africa, South Asia, East Asia, the Pacific, and other regions, supporting investments in health, education, water, energy, climate adaptation, and crisis response. IDA continues to play a particularly significant role in the Pacific, where 96.5 percent of the World Bank's USD$3.5 billion regional portfolio is financed through IDA grants and concessional loans.

- New Zealand also provided **$12.5 million to the Asian Development Bank (ADB)**. In 2025, ADB committed USD$29.3 billion in development finance and mobilised a further USD$14.7 billion from partners. Across the Pacific, ADB manages a portfolio of USD$3.9 billion across 95 active projects. During the reporting period, these investments delivered 917 kilometres of roads, broadband connectivity in five countries, 21.86 megawatts of renewable energy generation, and improved water and sanitation services for more than 303,000 people.

New Zealand also contributed to multilateral funds that deliver outcomes globally. For example:

- A **$3 million contribution to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund** supported 48 initiatives across 28 countries, advancing women's empowerment, youth participation, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. This included support for the Bougainville peace process and efforts to strengthen political, institutional, and social conditions following the 2019 referendum.

- Through a **$23.5 million commitment to the Global Environment Facility (GEF)** for 2022–26, New Zealand is contributing to large-scale environmental outcomes. GEF-8 projects are projected to protect more than 222 million hectares of critical ecosystems, restore 10 million hectares of degraded land, mitigate 2.18 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, improve management of shared water resources across 47 transboundary ecosystems, and eliminate significant volumes of hazardous chemicals and waste.

- New Zealand's **NZD$9 million contribution to the World Bank's Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund** (URTF) for 2024–26 supported essential services and recovery efforts in Ukraine. During 2025, the Trust Fund helped restore electricity to 3.5 million consumers, heating services to 1.5 million residents, and repairs to 135,000 war-damaged homes, while also supporting health, education, and agricultural services.

Strengthening Multilateral Effectiveness

Alongside financial investments, New Zealand works to ensure that multilateral organisations deliver strong results and provide value for money. Through membership of the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), New Zealand contributes to independent assessments of multilateral organisations and uses evidence from these assessments to inform funding decisions and advocate for organisational improvements.

By combining targeted investment, governance engagement, and policy influence, New Zealand helps strengthen a multilateral system that delivers development and humanitarian outcomes at scale, advances Pacific priorities, and responds effectively to global challenges.

Supporting expansion of the World Bank's delivery in the Pacific

The **World Bank Papua New Guinea and Pacific Islands Umbrella Facility (PPIUF),** funded by New Zealand and Australia, supports the World Bank to increase both the scale and effectiveness of its work across the Pacific. The facility enables delivery of development programmes, including project implementation, policy advice, and analytical work, while also helping Pacific countries access additional funding through World Bank financing mechanisms.

A key measure of the facility's success is the growth of the World Bank's Pacific portfolio. Since 2013, **the portfolio has expanded more than seven-fold**, increasing from 32 operations with commitments of USD$432 million to 84 operations with commitments of USD$3.49 billion in 2025. This growth reflects the increasing demand for development support across the region and the World Bank's enhanced ability to respond to Pacific priorities. During 2024–25, World Bank-supported programmes delivered tangible benefits for Pacific communities. These programmes:

- **provided health and nutrition services to 1.2 million people**
- **improved transport access for 1.1 million people**
- **strengthened climate resilience for 288,109 people**
- **expanded broadband access to 129,700 people**
- **improved education outcomes for 8,843 students**
- **provided social protection support to more than 553,000 people**
- **strengthened food security for 26,647 people**
- **improved access to water and sanitation for 26,647 people**
- **provided access to electricity for 22,000 people, and**
- **placed 2,100 hectares under enhanced environmental management.**

The PPIUF has also strengthened the World Bank's operational presence in the Pacific. Since 2013, **World Bank staffing in the region has more than doubled, increasing in-country expertise and support for Pacific governments**. In 2025, the World Bank further strengthened its regional focus by replacing a single Country Management Unit based in Sydney with two Country Management Units based in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. This change brought decision-making and leadership closer to Pacific countries, improving responsiveness to local priorities and development needs.

Pacific countries also benefited from significant additional financing beyond their regular national allocations. In the second half of 2025, total World Bank commitments reached USD$448 million, with 42 percent sourced from contestable financing windows, crisis response mechanisms, trust funds, and co-financing arrangements. The PPIUF played a critical role in enabling access to these resources, **helping to increase the scale and impact of development investments across the region**.

At a time when global Official Development Finance is under pressure, the PPIUF remains an important mechanism for attracting additional development finance to the Pacific. **Through the World Bank's financing model, every USD$1 contributed by donors is estimated to leverage between USD$3-USD$4[28] in development finance through global capital markets, significantly increasing the value of donor investments**.

In 2025, following advocacy from New Zealand and other partners, the World Bank **launched its Small States Strategy**, reinforcing its commitment to addressing the unique challenges faced by small states, including Pacific Island countries. The strategy outlines how the World Bank will tailor its policies, financing, and support to better respond to the circumstances of small and vulnerable economies. Australia and New Zealand have committed to continue funding the PPIUF through to the 2028–29 fiscal year, providing an important platform for sustained development support across the Pacific.

[28] See https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/4d9f3d42dedc0bb5eb452fbf887ec0c5-0410012024/original/IDA-Financing-the-Future-V1-04-15-24.pdf

Working with other development partners

With a primary focus on the Pacific, New Zealand collaborates and coordinates with Australia and other governments to amplify development impact, mobilise additional resources, and support Pacific-led solutions to shared challenges. These partnerships support a Pacific-led approach to development and align with the priorities set out in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. New Zealand advocates for development financing and assistance to be coordinated in ways that support regional priorities and complement existing efforts. Examples of collaborative initiatives supported during 2025–26 include:'

Strengthening regional connectivity and resilience

- **New Zealand and Australia are jointly funding the Tu'i Vava'u international undersea cable in Tonga**. As a second international telecommunications connection for the country, the cable will reduce reliance on a single network link, improve resilience to natural disasters and technical disruptions, and enhance the reliability, capacity and quality of telecommunications services for businesses and communities.
- The **Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme** demonstrates the value of coordinated international action to strengthen disaster preparedness. **New Zealand has partnered with Australia, the United States, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom** to establish a network of humanitarian warehouses serving 14 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste. The programme enables emergency relief supplies to be deployed within 48 hours of a disaster, helping affected communities receive critical assistance more quickly. A warehouse has been completed in Kiribati and a second is under construction in Palau.

Investing in climate resilience and sustainable development

- **New Zealand and the United Kingdom** have jointly committed NZD$40 million to the **Transforming Island Development through Electrification and Sustainability (TIDES)** initiative. By using blended finance approaches that combine public and private investment, TIDES is expected to mobilise up to USD$100 million in additional financing for renewable energy projects across the Pacific. The initiative supports locally led energy transitions while building domestic capability and creating economic opportunities.
- New Zealand also contributes to the **Kiwa Initiative**, **alongside France, Australia, Canada and the European Union**. Through investments in nature-based solutions and technical assistance, the initiative helps Pacific countries strengthen climate resilience while protecting ecosystems and delivering benefits for communities.
- Similarly, **New Zealand and Ireland jointly fund the Low Emission Climate Resilient Development (LECRD) Programme**, which supports six Pacific governments to develop climate policies, legislation and planning frameworks. The programme strengthens countries' ability to respond to climate change while pursuing low-emissions and climate-resilient development pathways.

Supporting inclusive economic development

- In Papua New Guinea, **New Zealand, Australia and the Lae City Authority** are partnering to redevelop the **Lae Main Market** into a modern, safe and inclusive community facility. The project is expected to improve livelihoods and stimulate local economic activity, particularly for women market vendors. It is also generating local employment opportunities, with more than 150 people currently working on the project, including trainees and students from the Papua New Guinea University of Technology.
- **New Zealand, Australia and the Asian Development Bank** co-fund the **Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI),** that supports reforms to improve the business enabling environment across the Pacific. In Fiji, PSDI technical assistance helped develop the *Access to Business Funding Act 2025*, establishing the Pacific's first regulatory framework for crowdfunding and peer-to-peer lending. The legislation expands access to finance for small businesses that may not meet traditional lending requirements, supporting entrepreneurship and growth.

Strengthening essential services

- The **LaKaRo Renewable Energy Project** in Fiji is funded through the UAE-Pacific Partnership Fund, a joint initiative supported by **New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates**. The project will improve access to reliable electricity in the island communities of Lakeba, Kadavu and Rotuma, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, increasing energy security, and supporting local economic development.



Upgraded solar energy system in Nukunonu, Tokelau. The project is renewing and expanding Tokelau's renewable energy infrastructure, improving access to reliable clean energy, and reducing Tokelau's reliance on expensive imported fossil fuels. Commissioning of the upgraded system in Nukunonu is planned by August 2026. Following completion of similar upgrades in Atafu and Fakaofo in late 2026, most Tokelau's electricity needs will be generated by solar energy. Credit: SPREP

Delivering New Zealand's climate finance commitment

In October 2021, Cabinet agreed that New Zealand would provide NZD$1.3 billion in grant-based climate finance[29] between 2022 and 2025. This commitment elevated climate as a major strategic investment priority within New Zealand's IDC Programme. The commitment required at least 50 percent of the funding to be directed to the Pacific and at least 50 percent to adaptation, reflecting New Zealand's longstanding commitment to the region and the importance of building climate resilience. In December 2025, New Zealand met and exceeded this commitment, delivering NZD$1.32 billion in climate finance over four years through the IDC Programme. Of this, 61 percent was invested in the Pacific, 16 percent was directed to Southeast Asia, and 62 percent supported adaptation activities.

The Ministry designed the portfolio to deliver effective, inclusive and sustainable climate support. Climate finance was integrated into existing development systems, guided by a strategy and delivered through a mix of established and new partnerships. We trialled new and innovative mechanisms with potential for transformational change — enabling rapid scale-up while maintaining a focus on development effectiveness, partner ownership and long-term impact.

Positive results have already been delivered, as presented in this and previous annual reports. See *Goal 3: A Sustainable Future* (p.44–54) for a broad demonstration, and specific examples of multilateral investments and work with likeminded partners on p.7–10.

Many investments are expected to generate benefits over the longer-term. In July 2026, 221 activities funded through the commitment remain under implementation. New Zealand continues to provide significant climate finance to developing countries, particularly in the Pacific. Future investments will build on the foundations established through the 2022–25 commitment, support Pacific priorities, and strengthen resilience, sustainable development and climate action across the region and globally.

[29] Climate finance is the international term for funding that supports climate-related activities in developing countries. It includes grants, loans, technical assistance and other support for projects and programmes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or help communities adapt to climate change.

HOW WE PLANNED

Integrating climate finance into the IDC Programme

Rather than establishing a standalone climate fund, New Zealand embedded climate finance within existing IDC systems and partnerships. This enabled partner-led support through trusted mechanisms and delivery across bilateral, regional and multilateral channels.

Between 2022 and 2025, MFAT delivered $813 million of climate finance in the Pacific, supporting resilience and sustainable development across multiple sectors. Climate finance also enabled New Zealand to expand development cooperation in Southeast Asia, where $207 million was invested, primarily in renewable energy and climate-smart agriculture.

Establishing a strategic framework for investment

Delivery was guided by New Zealand's International Climate Finance Strategy, which focused on accelerating mitigation, enhancing resilience and adaptation, strengthening institutional capability and evidence-based decision-making, and leveraging investment for greater climate impact. In 2024, our strategic approach was updated to align with the Government's Foreign Policy Reset and MFAT's Strategic Framework, ensuring continued alignment with foreign policy and development objectives.

Prioritising adaptation and resilience

More than half of climate finance supported vulnerable countries to manage climate impacts, including sea-level rise, extreme weather events, food insecurity and water stress.

Key investments included climate-resilient infrastructure; disaster preparedness and early warning systems; climate-smart agriculture; climate information for decision-making; and community resilience initiatives, including water security, climate mobility, ecosystem restoration and fisheries.

For example, *Weather-Ready Pacific* is a Pacific-led programme to strengthen Pacific meteorological services, including natural disaster early warning systems, delivered by the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

HOW WE WORKED

Leveraging additional finance

The Ministry strengthened collaboration with Australia, France, Japan, Ireland, the European Union and United Kingdom, helping to deliver larger-scale investments and greater collective impact (see p.10). New Zealand funding also attracted additional investment from, and utilized the expertise and technologies of, the private sector.

For example, through the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Ventures activity, the ADB is co-investing with commercial investors in early-stage technology companies that contribute to achieving economic, climate and equity goals in Southeast Asia.

Expanding engagement with multilateral partners

Multilateral organisations played a significant role, delivering around 15 percent of the commitment. New Zealand increased support to the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and Global Environment Facility, and contributed to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage and the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund. These global funds invest at a large scale and reach into countries where New Zealand has limited presence. They provide access to specialised expertise and financing tools.

In 2025, the *Green Climate Fund* approved a USD$157m project, covering 14 Pacific countries, to enhance access to tuna for coastal and urban communities, strengthen national fisheries systems, and improve forecasting to manage tuna redistribution effectively.

Partnering with NZ agencies

The Ministry collaborated more deeply with government agencies and Public Research Organisations that contributed technical expertise across a range of sectors, delivering practical, evidence-based climate solutions.

The Ministry worked with Ministry of Primary Industries through the Global Research Alliance to reduce overseas agriculture greenhouse gas emissions at scale; and with MetService and Earth Sciences New Zealand to support Pacific capability in weather, climate monitoring, forecasting and warnings.

Supporting innovation

We used a wider range of innovative approaches to climate action.

For example, we were the first contributor to the Global Green Growth Institute's carbon markets capacity-building and transaction facility; supported the Marshall Islands Climate Change Directorate to use innovative approaches such as digitally preserving cultural resources, and utilising advanced geospatial technologies for surveying and shoreline change analysis. (See p.51)

HOW WE PROVIDED ASSURANCE

Independent assurance and accountability

The Ministry established a risk-based external assurance programme for our climate finance commitment to provide confidence that appropriate governance, management and delivery arrangements were in place.

A 2025 review by the Office of the Auditor-General gave us confidence that we had robust systems to deliver value for money and identified opportunities to make better use of activity-level information and strengthen portfolio-wide reporting on outcomes and impacts.

The Ministry will continue to monitor the effectiveness of investments, supported by a programme of climate finance evaluations between 2026 and 2028.

New Zealand's development and humanitarian programmes in 2025–26

The following pages provide an overview of how the Ministry works to deliver results, the focus on impact across the IDC Programme, and highlights of results achieved through New Zealand's IDC Programme in 2025–26.



An NH90 Helicopter successfully completed two drops to assist Papua New Guinea after Tropical Cyclone Maila on 21 April 2026. The second drop was to Open Bay, where East New Britain Governor Michael Marum joined the crew for the flight. Members of the community assisted with unloading. The load included food, household kits, water containers and shovels (pre-positioned International Organization for Migration stores) and medical supplies (UNICEF).

How we deliver results

International development cooperation is delivered through various partnerships and mechanisms, including:

Support for Pacific regional agencies

Pacific regional organisations play a vital role in helping Pacific countries and territories address shared challenges and pursue common opportunities. Strong regional institutions enable Pacific-led solutions and support implementation of regional priorities under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. As a member and major funder of Pacific regional agencies, New Zealand supports these organisations apply their technical expertise, regional knowledge, established partnerships and policy capacity to strengthen resilience and sustainable development across the region.

In 2025–26, New Zealand provided $24.1 million in core funding to support the work programmes and strategic priorities of the following six Pacific regional agencies:

- **Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)** — coordinates implementation of Pacific leaders' priorities, including policy advice on regional economic growth, political governance, and security.
- **The Pacific Community (SPC)** — provides scientific and technical expertise across sectors including health, education, agriculture, fisheries, climate change, disaster resilience, energy, gender and human rights.
- **University of the South Pacific (USP)** — research institute and the region's primary provider of tertiary education, including distance and flexible learning.
- **Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)** — advice and services to support Pacific countries maximise the economic and social benefits of sustainably managed tuna fisheries.
- **Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)** — delivers technical and policy expertise on environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity, ecosystem management and pollution control.
- **Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) —** delivers aviation safety and security services to the Pacific.

Support for civil society partnerships

Civil society organisations play an important role in promoting sustainable development and resilience while supporting human rights, democratic participation, social cohesion and community wellbeing. The IDC Programme works with New Zealand non-government organisations (NGOs) to deliver development and humanitarian outcomes across the Pacific and beyond. Through their established relationships with local organisations, communities and authorities, NGOs help ensure New Zealand's support reaches those who need it most, including vulnerable and marginalised populations and people living in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

In 2025–26, the IDC-funded Partnerships for Impact programme supported activities in 20 countries across the Pacific and South and Southeast Asia through 23 NGO partners and 45 programmes and initiatives. During the year, NGO partners reported that approximately 247,000 people benefited from development initiatives across a range of IDC priority areas, including improving livelihoods and economic opportunities; strengthening climate resilience and adaptation; advancing social inclusion and human rights; and supporting democratic governance and participation.

Support to multilateral agencies

Multilateral organisations remain critical to addressing global development and humanitarian challenges. They continue to operate in a difficult environment characterised by funding pressures, increasing humanitarian needs, declining progress on human rights and democratic governance, and setbacks in achieving the SDGs. Through its engagement with multilateral partners, New Zealand advocates for Pacific priorities, supports an effective and innovative multilateral system, and promotes principles-based development. The Ministry works with partners to advance sustainable and inclusive development, support peace and stability, uphold human rights, and respond to humanitarian needs.

In 2025–26, New Zealand provided $95 million in funding to 26 multilateral organisations and actively participated in their governance arrangements. Funding decisions were guided by New Zealand's foreign policy and development priorities, opportunities to maximise impact, and the value of maintaining New Zealand's international influence and credibility.

Manaaki scholarships

The Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme (MNZSP) supports individuals to access education and training that contributes to the development priorities of their communities and countries. Through scholarship and training pathways [30], the Programme builds knowledge, skills and leadership capability in areas identified by partner governments. In 2025–26, 814 scholars completed their studies and training programmes, including:

- 202 tertiary scholarship recipients (114 women)
- 518 participants in thematic and vocational short-term training programmes
- 94 participants in English Language Training for Officials programmes (57 women).

The largest proportion of graduates came from the Pacific (51 percent), followed by Southeast Asia (40 percent).

New Zealand also continued implementation of the Southeast Asia expansion of the Manaaki programme. During the year, 150 additional tertiary scholars from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam commenced study in New Zealand, while a further 150 scholars were selected to begin studies in 2027. The scholarship programme remains an important contribution to the ASEAN–New Zealand Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Plan of Action 2026–2030[31].

Humanitarian assistance

Humanitarian assistance remains a core component of New Zealand's international engagement. In 2025–26, New Zealand support provided essential humanitarian assistance to more than 532,500 people across 24 countries. A total of $70.9 million[32] was disbursed in response to humanitarian crises and disasters, including:

- $5.7 million (8 percent) for responses in the Pacific
- $21.6 million (30 percent) for responses in Southeast Asia
- $43.6million (62 percent) to global responses

In the Pacific, New Zealand responded to requests for assistance from Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands following Tropical Cyclone Maila in April 2026. Support included emergency relief supplies, aerial damage assessments, New Zealand Defence Force logistical assistance to remote communities, and funding for non-government organisations. A financial contribution assisted the Federated States of Micronesia's response to Super Typhoon Sinlaku, and deployment of a 14-person New Zealand Medical Assistance Team (NZMAT) to Samoa supported the response to a dengue fever outbreak.

Beyond the Pacific, New Zealand contributed to responses in several major humanitarian crises, including those affecting Myanmar, Ukraine, the occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, and Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. New Zealand also supported the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's response to the Bundibugyo Virus Disease outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, contributed to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, and continued to provide core funding to international humanitarian organisations.

Alongside operational support, New Zealand continued to advocate for compliance with international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians and humanitarian personnel, and safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access. New Zealand also promotes humanitarian action that is effective, accountable and locally led.

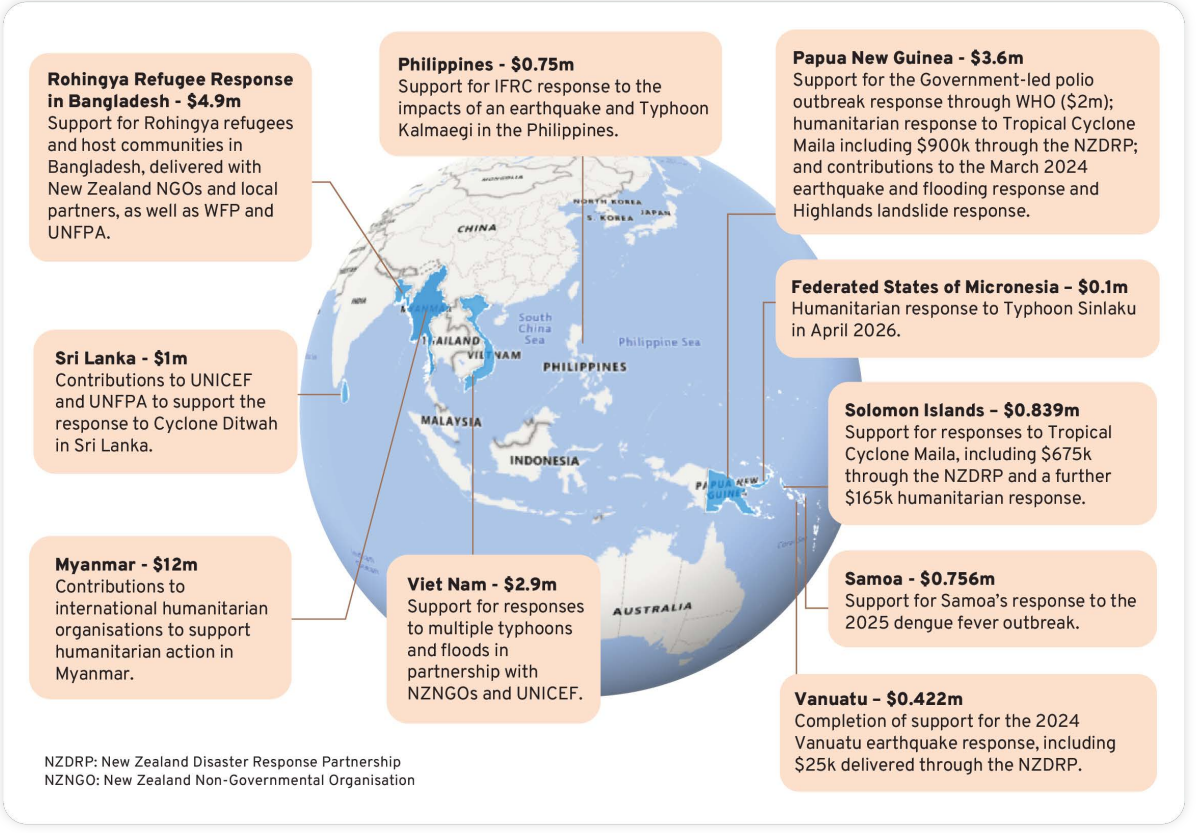
New Zealand's humanitarian assistance also focuses on preparedness and resilience. In 2025–26, New Zealand invested $10.5 million in Pacific preparedness initiatives, including support for the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme, a new phase of partnership with the New Zealand Red Cross, preparedness missions to Niue and Tokelau, early warning information provided by New Zealand's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) through the Deep Ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART) assets and the Meteorological Service of New Zealand, and technical assistance to Pacific national disaster management agencies through NEMA. This investment also maintained New Zealand's readiness to respond to future requests for assistance, including deployable emergency management, firefighting, urban search and rescue and medical response capabilities, humanitarian relief supplies, and early warning and forecasting services.

[30] The six scholarship and training pathways are in-New Zealand Tertiary; in-Pacific Tertiary; Thematic Short-term Training; Vocational Short-term Training; English Language Training for Officials; and ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations Fellowships

[31] See: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Final-ASEAN-New-Zealand-POA-2026-2030.pdf

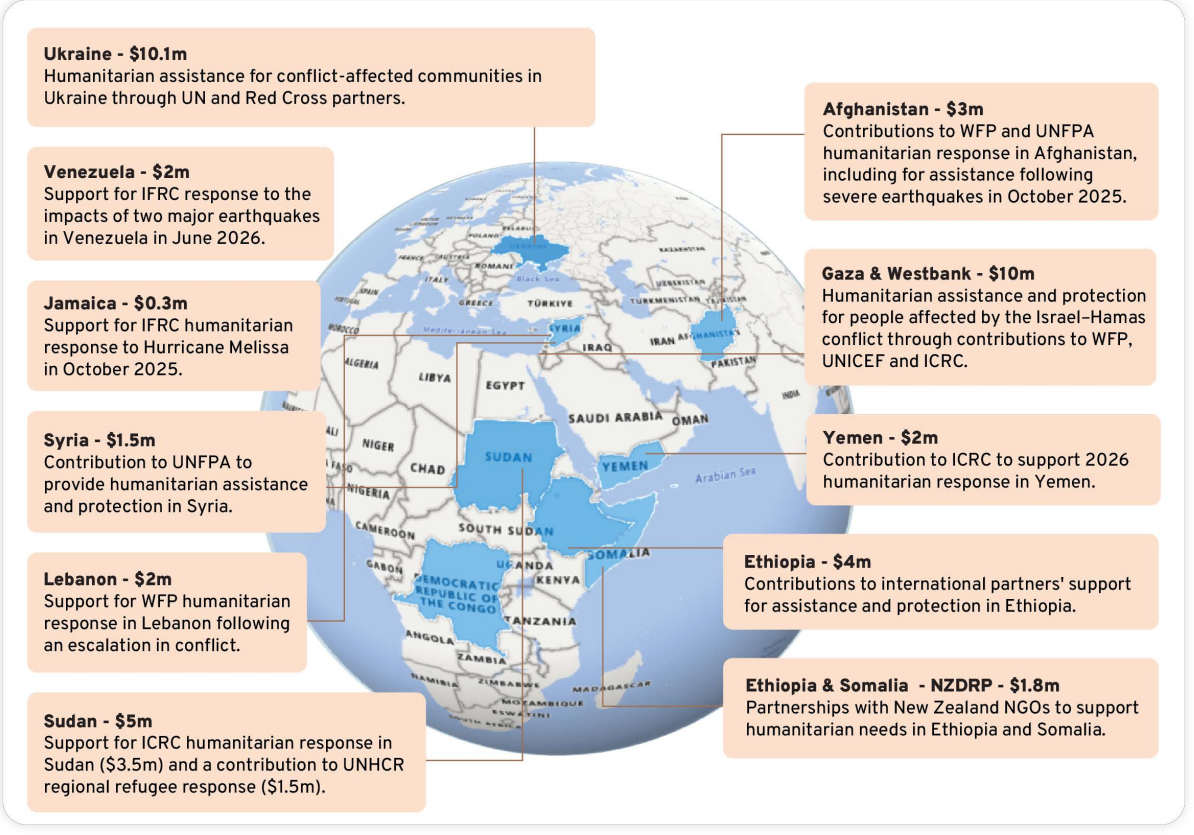
[32] This figure excludes funding for the Ministry's humanitarian preparedness investments.

FIGURE 1: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE — PACIFIC & SOUTHEAST ASIA



NZDRP: New Zealand Disaster Response Partnership
NZNGO: New Zealand Non-Governmental Organisation

FIGURE 2: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE — REST OF THE WORLD



Focus on impact

The IDC Priorities Framework[33] demonstrates how the IDC Programme contributes to the Ministry's three strategic goals[34] and sets out the key outcomes sought.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: A SAFE, SECURE AND JUST FUTURE

New Zealand promotes security and stability in the Pacific and Indo-Pacific through bilateral partnerships and engagement with regional forums. We deliver initiatives that address trans-boundary security issues; champion the rule of law; deliver regional capacity-building initiatives; and support well-governed institutions and established regional architecture. We also support our partners to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters and other crises. Our objectives for 2024–27 are:

- Pacific countries have strengthened democratic norms, accountable institutions, and public services.
- The Pacific has enhanced ability to address wide-ranging trans-boundary security threats.
- Pacific national security sectors can manage internal security challenges, consistent with human rights.
- Partner governments and other humanitarian actors in the Pacific are prepared for, and lead effective and inclusive humanitarian responses to, disasters and crises.
- New Zealand's global development assistance contributes to peace, security, and stabilisation.
- Crisis affected countries and communities can access the assistance and protection they need, especially those most vulnerable.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: A PROSPEROUS AND RESILIENT FUTURE

We work with partners to strengthen and support the social and economic resilience of Pacific and Indo-Pacific partners. We support inclusive human development, including in health, education, civic empowerment, and social protection; invest in sustainable economic development, including through trade, employment, labour mobility, food security, debt management, and support for private sector investment; and promote investment in essential services. Our objectives for 2024–27 are:

- Strengthened social resilience and inclusion supports achievement of the SDGs in the Pacific.
- Functioning Pacific economies, with strong and stable institutions, support livelihoods and benefit from trade, labour mobility and other safe people movement.
- South and Southeast Asia benefit from enhanced resilience and economic integration.
- Climate-smart agriculture generates increased economic returns and food security benefits.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

New Zealand promotes international cooperation to address climate change and other global environmental and natural-resource challenges. We enable, and advocate for, action to enhance the resilience of Pacific countries to climate impacts and natural hazards. We support developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change and deliver initiatives that address water insecurity and threats to biodiversity; champion climate-resilient infrastructure and emissions-reducing technologies; and support sustainable management of natural and shared resources, including fisheries. Our objectives for 2024–27 are:

- Pacific countries have enhanced resilience and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.
- Across the Pacific, biodiversity is sustainably used and managed, and ecosystems valued, maintained, and enhanced.
- Developing countries accelerate action on their mitigation priorities in a cost-effective way.
- Developing countries increasingly adopt emissions-reducing technologies and practices in agriculture, land-use, forestry, tourism, energy and land and maritime transport.

The following pages provide highlights of key achievements from across the entire IDC Programme toward each of the Ministry's three strategic goals.

[33] See: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Aid/Aid-General/IDC-Priorities-Framework-2024.pdf
[34] See the Ministry's Strategic Intentions: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/About-us-Corporate/MFAT-strategies-and-frameworks/Strategic-Intentions-2024-2028.pdf



'Make it 18' campaign. Credit: Save the Children Solomon Islands

Goal 1: A safe, secure and just future

Supporting children and young people to champion child rights in Solomon Islands

Children in Solomon Islands are helping to build safer futures for themselves and their communities through advocacy, awareness, and collective action in children's rights, safety, and wellbeing. They are doing this in partnership with three New Zealand NGOs (**ChildFund, Save the Children and World Vision**) and Solomon Islands civil society organisations known as the SIEVAP coalition (Solomon Islands Endim Vaelens Agenstim Pikinini / Solomon Islands Ending Violence Against Children).

Through awareness-raising activities, Child Advocacy Committees and youth clubs, children gained the confidence to speak up about harmful practices and promote the importance of protecting children at home and in the community. The initiatives helped parents, families, and community leaders better understand child safety and protection, strengthened respectful relationships between adults and children, and created safer environments where children's voices are valued and heard. The SIEVAP coalition has also empowered young people to take an active role in community decision-making and advocacy, enabling them to become leaders and agents of positive change within their communities.

At the national level, civil society organisations collaborated to advocate for stronger legal protections for children through the 'Make it 18' campaign. Working alongside children and young people, the campaign called for amendments to the Solomon Islands Marriage Act to raise the legal age of marriage from 15 to 18 years. The advocacy **contributed to the Solomon Islands Government announcing a proposed legislative amendment to align marriage laws with international human rights standards** and strengthen protections against child marriage.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate the value of supporting children's participation in decisions and actions that affect their lives. From community awareness and child protection efforts to national policy advocacy, children and young people are helping to create safer, more inclusive and more supportive communities. Their leadership and engagement are contributing to stronger protection systems, greater respect for children's rights, and better outcomes for future generations in Solomon Islands.



The ChildFund Children's Advocacy Committee dialogue with Honiara City ward members. Credit: ChildFund

Strengthening economic resilience and public sector reform across the Pacific

New Zealand provides **reform-linked general budget support** to nine Pacific Island countries, helping partner governments implement economic and public sector reforms that strengthen resilience, improve service delivery and support sustainable development. In **Samoa and Tonga**, budget support is delivered through coordinated multi-donor arrangements alongside the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australia, the European Union and the World Bank. Funding is released when agreed reform commitments are met, supporting progress in areas such as economic and fiscal management, public financial management, disaster resilience and private sector development. Both countries made strong progress in 2025–26.

In Samoa, reforms **improved access to finance, strengthened disaster preparedness and enhanced fiscal transparency**. The Credit Information Register Bill progressed through Parliament, supporting improved access to credit for businesses and individuals by reducing lending risks. The launch of the Instant Funds Transfer system enabled real-time payments and expanded access to digital financial services. Samoa also approved a new National Disaster Management Plan to strengthen preparedness for cyclones and floods. Legislative reforms to improve tax transparency resulted in Samoa's removal from the European Union's list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions.

In Tonga, several important reforms **laid the foundations for greater digital connectivity and economic resilience**. A new Digital Identification Act established a national digital identification system, improving the delivery of government services and support. The Privacy Act strengthened personal data protections, while the Electronic Transactions Act provided legal recognition for digital transactions and signatures, supporting the growth of the digital economy. Tonga also approved operational guidelines for issuing domestic government bonds, an important step toward developing domestic capital markets and diversifying sources of financing.

Following progress reviews in 2026, both Samoa and Tonga met the agreed requirements for New Zealand's planned budget support payments, demonstrating the value of reform-linked financing in supporting lasting economic reforms.

ADB's 'Strengthening Fiscal Resilience for Sustainable Development' is a policy-based and technical assistance initiative designed to help governments build economic stability and integrate climate-resilience into national budgeting and public finance management. **In Palau**, the programme **supported adoption of a national debt policy, strengthened institutional capacity, and improved debt management systems**. Reforms have also been carried out to strengthen fiscal resilience and climate integration — a Volatility Fund framework is now operational, and a Climate Resilience Fund framework is nearing completion, creating mechanisms to manage shocks and disasters. Implementation of a new government budget submission template mandates climate impact assessments for all spending proposals, embedding climate considerations into fiscal policy.

New Zealand's grant funding to Palau was used to purchase a modernised taxation system and complete Palau's final ADB policy reform item. This enabled the Government of Palau to unlock the full ADB policy reform funding commitment, further enabling delivery of essential services and strengthening long-term fiscal resilience.

New Zealand also partners with the Asian Development Bank to support the **Government of Naoero's** key economic reforms across fiscal and debt management, state-owned enterprise governance, and support for vulnerable groups, including women. Naoero's achievements over the past year include **increasing its revenue base** by raising Business Profits Tax from 20 percent to 25 percent for entities operating the offshore refugee processing infrastructure; increasing duties on sugary products from 30 percent to 50 percent; and **securing Cabinet approval of the National Women's Policy and the Gender-Responsive Climate, Disaster, and Pandemic Response Policy**.

New Zealand is a member of the **Government of Kiribati's** multi-donor Economic Reform Taskforce. During 2025–26 the inaugural Kiribati Public Financial Management (PFM) Act was passed, **establishing a robust and integrated legal framework for fiscal discipline, transparency and accountability**. The Act reduces the window for publishing audited government accounts to strengthen public trust; computerises the public finance cycle to ensure better control over budget execution and cash flow management; and establishes strict borrowing limits and financial reporting to minimise fiscal risks.

As part of New Zealand's continued support to the **Tuvalu Trust Fund,** New Zealand contributed to costs for the Tuvalu Trust Fund Advisory Committee (TTFAC) to travel to the islands of Vaitupu, Nanumaga and Nanumea to assess the implementation of a modernised Financial Management Information System on streamlining financial procedures and enhancing timeliness of reporting for local kaupule (island councils). Transition to a digital, modernised system aims to provides reliable infrastructure to reduce the administrative burden on outer-island local governments while **improving transparency and strengthening Tuvalu's public financial and public sector management**.

New Zealand's response to Tropical Cyclone Maila in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea

Tropical Cyclone Maila formed over the Solomon Sea in April 2026 as a slow-moving, high-intensity weather system. The cyclone caused widespread damage across Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, disrupting livelihoods and essential services. New Zealand mobilised its response at the request of both governments.

In Solomon Islands, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) conducted **aerial damage assessments using P-8 surveillance flights, enabling authorities to identify and prioritise the most affected areas**. Relief support included distribution of New Zealand-funded pre-positioned supplies held by World Vision Solomon Islands in Honiara, including **shelter materials, hygiene and kitchen kits, blankets, and tarpaulins. Agricultural tools were also donated to support early recovery efforts**.

In Papua New Guinea, an NZDF P-8 aircraft was deployed to undertake **aerial damage assessments, followed by the deployment of two C-130 aircraft to deliver humanitarian supplies**. These supplies included **agricultural and shelter toolkits, tarpaulins, chainsaw packs, generators, collapsible water containers, family hygiene kits, and mother-and-infant kits**. NZDF airlift operations continued to transport New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and partner-funded relief supplies to affected communities across the country. In total, **more than 40,000 kilograms of relief supplies were transported from Port Moresby and Lae to affected provinces**. An NZDF NH90 helicopter also supported **critical last-mile delivery to remote communities in East New Britain** that had become inaccessible by road due to landslides.

New Zealand's financial assistance included support for immediate in-country response activities and contributions through the New Zealand Disaster Response Programme to enable early recovery through NGO partners. The total value of New Zealand's relief and early recovery assistance was just under NZD$3 million across both countries.

New Zealand's response supported communities in some of the most remote and severely affected areas of Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, where access to water, food, and health services had been significantly disrupted. Rapid aerial assessments enabled assistance to be targeted effectively, while airlift operations ensured the timely delivery of essential supplies. Agricultural assistance supported communities to begin replanting, contributing to food security and early recovery. By responding quickly to identified needs and government priorities, New Zealand helped reduce the immediate impacts of the disaster, supported recovery efforts, and strengthened relationships with Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

Strengthening community policing in Timor-Leste

The **Programa Apoiu Seguransa Komunidade (PASK)** supports the Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) build safer, more resilient communities. By promoting closer collaboration between police and communities, the programme is helping improve public safety, strengthen trust in law enforcement, and enhance policing capability.

During 2025–26, community policing approaches expanded beyond the PNTL's central Community Policing Directorate and became increasingly integrated into police operations at the municipal level. This reflects **growing institutional adoption of community policing practices and is contributing to more proactive, prevention-focused policing that strengthens community trust and reduces the risk of conflict**. A key achievement was delivery of 44 Community Policing Council (CPC) training programmes across 10 municipalities, reaching 1,263 participants (30 percent were women). The training **strengthened local governance structures** by improving understanding of the respective roles of police, community leaders and local institutions in maintaining safety and security. The programme particularly strengthened the capability of Suco Councils to respond to public safety concerns and engage effectively with formal justice processes. As Suco Councils play a central role in community life — including coordinating health, agriculture, disaster response and social initiatives — enhancing their capacity contributes to broader community resilience, social cohesion and access to justice.

PASK also supported innovative approaches to community engagement. The **Women's Futsal PolKom Cup**, organised by the PNTL Community Policing Directorate, involved 48 secondary schools and culminated in a national tournament opened by Timor-Leste Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. The tournament **provided opportunities for young women to participate in leadership and community activities while strengthening positive engagement between youth and police**. It helped increase visibility of the PNTL as a supportive and approachable institution, complementing its law enforcement role and encouraging greater trust and participation.



Players and PNLT at the Women's Futsal POLKOM Cup. Credit: PNTL

Supporting parliamentary capability in Fiji

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Fiji Parliament Support Project**, funded by Australia, New Zealand and Japan, continued to strengthen parliamentary processes, enhance institutional capability, and improve public engagement with Parliament. A key achievement during the year was successful delivery of the **Fiji Youth Parliament**, a week-long programme that strengthened young people's understanding of parliamentary democracy, governance, and public policy. The initiative brought together 59 young participants from across Fiji, ensuring broad geographic representation and diverse perspectives. Women comprised half of all participants, and the programme included two persons with disabilities, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive participation.

Participants received training in parliamentary procedure, debate and policy analysis before taking part in a simulated parliamentary sitting. They debated issues such as youth employment, gender equality and public health, while engaging directly with government agencies and other policy stakeholders — enabling participants to explore national development challenges using evidence-based approaches, including SDGs and economic data.

Programme evaluations showed **strong gains in participants' knowledge, skills and confidence,** with demonstrated improvements in public speaking, debating and policy analysis skills, as well as a stronger understanding of Parliament's law-making and oversight functions. The programme also strengthened Parliament's civic education role by re-establishing large-scale youth outreach and testing innovative engagement approaches.

The initiative generated practical recommendations for future youth engagement, including establishing a Youth Parliament alumni network, expanding participation from rural and maritime communities, and creating opportunities for youth perspectives to inform parliamentary processes.

Follow-up surveys conducted five months after the programme found that its impact had been sustained, with most participants continuing to apply the skills and knowledge gained through the programme:

- **88 percent reported increased confidence in speaking on national issues,**
- **92 percent felt more confident engaging with Members of Parliament and government officials,**
- **81 percent had become involved in community initiatives,**
- **77 percent had taken on leadership roles, and**
- **65 percent had engaged with youth councils or similar organisations.**

Participant feedback also highlighted lasting improvements in leadership aspirations and access to opportunities, demonstrating the programme's contribution to developing informed and engaged future leaders in Fiji.

Strengthening cyber resilience in the Cook Islands

In June 2026, the **Cook Islands Cybercrime Laboratory** opened through a partnership between the Cook Islands Police Service and New Zealand Police. The laboratory provides specialist tools and capability to conduct mobile device forensics, investigate online fraud, combat cyber-enabled crime, and preserve digital evidence to court standards.

The new capability strengthens the Cook Islands Police Service's ability to protect vulnerable people and businesses from online harm, while reducing reliance on overseas forensic processing. It also enhances regional security cooperation by enabling more timely and effective responses to cybercrime across the Pacific. Supported by ongoing training and partnerships, the laboratory will **improve the Cook Islands Police Service's capacity to prevent, detect, investigate, and respond to evolving cyber threats**. This will help deliver faster investigations, strengthen criminal justice outcomes, and build long-term cyber resilience in the Cook Islands.

Supporting mine-affected communities to build safer and more prosperous futures in Cambodia

The **Clearing for Results Phase IV (CFRIV) programme** delivered significant development outcomes in Cambodia by combining mine clearance with livelihood support, rehabilitation services and stronger national mine action systems. Implemented by the UNDP and the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) between 2020 and 2025, the programme was supported by New Zealand and other international partners.

CFRIV integrated technical mine action activities with community development initiatives. This included conducting surveys of contaminated areas, clearing minefields, and disposing of explosive remnants of war. The programme also provided mine risk education, livelihood support, skills training and rehabilitation services for people affected by mines and unexploded ordnance.



A mine clearance instructor trains new deminers to operate a large-loop detector. Credit: UNDP Cambodia

Support for survivors included access to prosthetics, physiotherapy and vocational training, as well as assistance to establish small businesses and pursue employment opportunities. The programme also strengthened Cambodia's mine action sector through investments in data management, quality assurance systems and policy development, helping to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of national mine action efforts.

Over the five-year programme, **182.8 square kilometres of contaminated land were cleared and returned to safe use, benefiting more than 364,000 people**. The land released has supported agriculture, housing, schools and infrastructure development, creating new opportunities for communities and contributing to local economic growth. The programme also contributed to a **50 percent reduction in mine and explosive ordnance casualties**, reflecting improved safety and awareness in affected communities.

The benefits extend beyond mine clearance. **More than 1,000 mine survivors and family members gained vocational skills or established small businesses, improving their ability to earn an income and support their households. In addition, 49,055 people with disabilities, including more than 21,000 mine survivors and 12,132 women, accessed rehabilitation services that improved mobility, independence and quality of life**.


A risk education instructor delivers mine risk awareness sessions to communities and students, helping to keep people safe. Credit: UNDP Cambodia

These results demonstrate the value of integrating mine action with broader social and economic development. For individuals and families, access to safe land creates opportunities to farm, build homes, access services and generate income. For mine survivors, rehabilitation and livelihood support help restore independence and increase participation in community and economic life.

At the community level, safer environments and expanded access to productive land contribute to greater resilience, stability and development. New Zealand's support has helped transform mine-affected areas from places of risk into opportunities for growth and prosperity. The programme demonstrates that mine action is not only about removing hazards, but also about reducing poverty, promoting inclusion and supporting sustainable development outcomes.

Disaster preparedness across the Pacific

Alongside responding to major humanitarian events across the Pacific in 2025–26, New Zealand invested in initiatives to strengthen regional disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Through a partnership with the New Zealand National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), New Zealand **seconds personnel into National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) in Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands,** providing additional capacity and specialist expertise to support national disaster management functions. Secondees have helped develop sector and community disaster management plans that support implementation of national legislation. By assisting with technical drafting, community consultation, training and exercises, the programme has **strengthened disaster preparedness and planning**.

New Zealand also funds the International Planned Parenthood Federation to deliver the **Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies in the Pacific Programme**. During the final year of this phase, the Programme focused on integrating the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) into national disaster preparedness and response systems in Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Cook Islands. The MISP helps **reduce sexual and reproductive health risks during emergencies**, including gender-based violence, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancies. Its integration into national policies and preparedness frameworks has clarified roles and responsibilities, strengthened planning, and increased the likelihood that essential services can be delivered rapidly during emergencies.

In February 2026, further disaster response planning was undertaken in Tokelau, building on an interagency mission conducted in May 2025. This informed development of a **draft New Zealand Government Response Plan for Tokelau**, designed to improve New Zealand's ability to provide **timely and effective disaster assistance in a remote context**. The planning process incorporated local governance structures and community perspectives. Three containers of relief supplies were also pre-positioned in Tokelau, alongside firefighting equipment and residential smoke alarms, to support future rapid responses.

Through the World Health Organization, New Zealand invested in **strengthening Emergency Medical Team (EMT) coordination and health emergency response capability in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu**. The programme delivered training, workshops and simulation exercises at national and provincial levels, with more than 140 EMT personnel trained across the six countries. Since July 2024, it has supported EMT deployments for mass gatherings and emergency responses in Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu. Investment also supported standardised equipment, warehousing and supply chain systems, inventory management, and development of standard operating procedures. Together, these measures have **strengthened operational readiness, reduced reliance on international assistance, and enhanced national and regional health security**.

Together, these investments have strengthened disaster readiness, response coordination and health emergency capacity across the Pacific.

Supporting disaster responses in Southeast Asia

New Zealand provides humanitarian assistance in response to major disasters in Southeast Asia when support is requested by affected countries. During 2025–26, Viet Nam experienced an exceptionally severe weather season, with 21 significant weather systems, including 15 typhoons and six tropical depressions. The impacts were widespread, with more than 220,000 homes flooded, damaged, or destroyed, and significant disruption to education, health, and other essential services. In response, New Zealand committed **NZD$3 million to support humanitarian response and early recovery efforts**. This assistance included a contribution to UNICEF to support **access to safe water, healthcare, nutrition services, child protection, education, and multi-purpose cash assistance for affected communities**. New Zealand also provided funding through the New Zealand Disaster Response Partnership (NZDRP) to World Vision New Zealand, ChildFund New Zealand, Habitat for Humanity, and Tearfund to deliver multi-sector humanitarian assistance and protection services.

In the Philippines, an earthquake in Cebu Province in September 2025 was followed by two typhoons, affecting an estimated 1.95 million people. New Zealand contributed **NZD$750,000 through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to support the immediate response** of the Philippine Red Cross. This assistance helped provide **emergency shelter, hot meals, access to safe water, and health services for affected communities**.

By working through trusted international and non-governmental partners, New Zealand helped meet immediate humanitarian needs, support early recovery, and strengthen resilience in affected communities.

Strengthening community safety and access to justice through community policing in Vanuatu

Through the **Vanuatu New Zealand Policing Programme (VNZPP),** New Zealand Police work in partnership with the Vanuatu Police Force to train volunteer Community Safety Teams (CST) across Vanuatu's six provinces. This grassroots policing initiative equips community members to work alongside traditional Chiefs to resolve disputes, maintain peace, and improve local access to justice. A significant achievement during the year was the **establishment of Vanuatu's 23rd Community Safety Team** in White Sands, Tanna, made up of 40 trained volunteers.



A Community Safety Team volunteer receives their training Certificate of Completion from NZ Police. Credit: NZ Police

The Programme has also continued to build policing capability by supporting professional development within the Vanuatu Police Force and community policing structures. This has included **strengthening collaboration between police, Chiefs and local communities, and supporting the development of a competency-based training pathway for police recruits**. Key milestones include progress toward a Certificate in Policing for recruits and a Diploma in Policing for provisional constables.

These initiatives are contributing to safer and more resilient communities, improving access to policing and justice services, and increasing public confidence in the Vanuatu Police Force. By focusing on local ownership, community partnerships and workforce capability, the Programme is helping to build a strong foundation for sustainable improvements in community safety and justice over the long term.

Supporting Women's Leadership in Peace and Security Across Southeast Asia

The **AMPLIFY (Amplifying Women, Peace and Security Actions in ASEAN) programme** supports women's leadership in peacebuilding, community safety and security across Southeast Asia. The programme seeks to address the disproportionate impacts that conflict and insecurity can have on women, while increasing their participation in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. Operating across Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, with regional engagement spanning ASEAN, the programme supports women-led initiatives that strengthen peace, resilience and community safety, particularly in conflict-affected and vulnerable communities.

AMPLIFY invests in practical activities that build women's skills, confidence and influence. These include training for civil society organisations and community groups, leadership development for women leaders and activists, and workshops on conflict resolution, gender-based violence, and community leadership. The programme also provides safe spaces for women to connect, share experiences and organise around common challenges.

Alongside community-level activities, AMPLIFY works with governments and institutions to strengthen policies and frameworks on women, peace and security, including support for National Action Plans. Research and evidence generated through the programme helps inform policy development and improve programme design and delivery. The programme is delivering meaningful results. During the past year:

- **more than 3,800 people participated in community-level activities (77 percent were women).**
- **more than 3,000 women strengthened their skills in leadership, mediation and community engagement.**
- **participants in Cambodia and Laos reported significant increases in knowledge, confidence and practical application of new skills within their communities.**
- **more than 80 percent of civil society participants reported improved understanding of women, peace and security issues and increased engagement in national and regional dialogue.**

In Myanmar, where ongoing conflict continues to create significant challenges, the programme supported more than 360 women through psychosocial support services and safe spaces. Participants reported feeling less isolated, more confident, and better equipped to continue their work under difficult circumstances.

These efforts contribute to greater participation by women in community leadership and decision-making. In several locations, women's groups and networks are now leading peacebuilding initiatives and working directly with local authorities to address community concerns. At a broader level, stronger connections between civil society, governments and regional institutions are helping ensure women's perspectives are reflected in policies and programmes.

Strengthening integrity and anti-corruption efforts across the Pacific

New Zealand works with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Transparency International and other partners to **strengthen integrity systems, build anti-corruption capability, and promote accountability across the Pacific**. Through its partnership with UNODC, New Zealand supports Pacific governments to implement commitments under the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Teieniwa Vision, the Pacific's regional anti-corruption framework. This includes **support for national anti-corruption strategies in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Naoero and Palau**, helping governments identify priorities, coordinate action, and strengthen prevention and response measures.



The Tuvalu delegate presenting a Pacific SIDS resolution at SoSP for UNCAC. Credit: UNODC

A significant achievement in 2025–26 was supporting Pacific countries to develop and submit a Small Island Developing States (SIDS) resolution at the 11th Conference of States Parties to UNCAC, held in Qatar in December 2025. Through coordinated regional engagement, a Pacific delegation representing 12 countries secured consensus support for the resolution, which highlighted the particular vulnerabilities of small island states to corruption. Sponsored by Tuvalu, the resolution — *Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in Small Island Developing States* — attracted broad international support, including co-sponsorship from 15 countries and the European Union. This demonstrated **Pacific leadership and elevated regional perspectives in global discussions on emerging integrity challenges**, including technology, artificial intelligence and corruption.

New Zealand also supports Transparency International chapters and partner organisations across the Pacific, including in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, as well as Integrity Fiji, which is expected to regain full accreditation in 2026. These organisations **promote transparency, accountability and public awareness**, with programmes tailored to local priorities and focused on strengthening civic participation and understanding of integrity issues. During the year, their **training and awareness activities reached 6,634 people, including 3,259 women**.

Enhancing access to justice in the Pacific

The Ministry works through the **Pacific Justice Sector Programme (PJSP)** to improve access to justice across the Pacific. The Ina'ilau workstream focuses on **strengthening justice outcomes for women and children in Kiribati, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu**. A key priority is supporting local courts to be accessible, inclusive and trusted justice institutions, particularly in rural and remote communities where they are often the primary point of access to justice.

Through Ina'ilau, judicial leaders have been supported to strengthen the role of Island Courts, Local Courts and lay judicial systems within national justice frameworks–including improving court administration and oversight, promoting more equitable resource allocation, strengthening supervision arrangements, and encouraging inclusive recruitment practices. The Programme also delivered human rights training, developed bilingual guidance materials, and supported community outreach to increase public understanding of justice processes.

The Programme developed practical tools to support sustainable justice sector reform, including the Ten Minimum Standards for Island Courts in Vanuatu, a Code of Conduct for court clerks, Supervision Guidelines for magistrates, and a Workplan for Strengthening Local Courts in Solomon Islands. It also explored innovative approaches to service delivery, including assessing the potential use of drone technology to improve land case management. Together, these initiatives **support more accountable, accessible and effective local justice services**.

Targeted training and capacity-building activities in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu **strengthened the capability and confidence of judicial officers and court staff**. In Vanuatu, 37 participants, including 18 women, completed training workshops, while 53 participants, including 26 women, participated in training in Kiribati. Ongoing mentoring was also provided in Solomon Islands. Training focused on human rights, procedural fairness, court operations and gender inclusion, contributing to more consistent and equitable justice outcomes.

The Programme has delivered tangible improvements in the inclusiveness and effectiveness of local justice systems. In Vanuatu, the introduction of Minimum Standards and targeted recruitment initiatives resulted in near gender parity among Island Court Justices in Malo, Shepherds, Santo and Tongoa, where women previously had limited or no representation. The Programme has also strengthened judicial capability, improved coordination between formal and community-based justice systems, and enhanced regional collaboration through Te Kura PJSP, contributing to more accountable, accessible and people-centred justice systems across the Pacific.

Strengthening democratic institutions and electoral integrity

Strengthening democratic governance in Naoero

Naoero successfully conducted a peaceful and orderly national election in October 2025. In the lead-up to the election, the **Naoero Accountable and Inclusive Governance (NAIG) project** provided targeted technical assistance to the Naoero Electoral Commission, supporting electoral administration, implementation of recommendations from the Electoral Act review, and capacity building for election management. The project also identified opportunities to strengthen Naoero's electoral legislation and institutional arrangements. This support **enhanced the Commission's operational readiness and institutional capability, contributing to a more transparent, effective, and resilient electoral system**.

NAIG also supported broader governance reforms beyond the electoral process. With project assistance, Naoero developed its first digital Births, Deaths and Marriages system, **improving the accuracy, accessibility, and management of legal identity records and creating a foundation for future digital government services**. Naoero also completed its first comprehensive review of parliamentary Standing Orders since 1968, **modernising parliamentary procedures and strengthening legislative oversight**. This builds on previous support for Parliament's first Strategic Plan and Community Engagement Strategy, contributing to a more transparent, accountable, and responsive institution.

Strengthened institutional capability and public confidence in Vanuatu

The **Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project** has continued to strengthen electoral integrity, institutional capability, and public confidence in democratic processes. The project has supported the Vanuatu Electoral Office and Electoral Commission to successfully deliver national and subnational elections that have been **assessed as free, fair, and transparent, reinforcing public trust and strengthening electoral administration**.

Electoral integrity has been enhanced through improvements to voter registration systems, including the introduction of a digital national identity system. Civic participation has also increased through nationwide voter education campaigns delivered across multiple platforms and in local languages. These efforts contributed to **increased voter turnout, from 44 percent in the 2022 election to 50 percent in the 2024 referendum and 70 percent in the 2025 election**.

The project has also promoted more inclusive democratic participation. Initiatives such as the *Liftemap Fuja Gender and Inclusion Strategy* and the *She Can Lead* programme have supported women's leadership and participation in politics, while accessibility measures have improved opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in electoral processes. The programme also contributed to significant legislative reforms, including electoral legislation and constitutional amendments aimed at improving political stability and strengthening democratic governance.

Manaaki scholarship boosts Fiji capability in civic participation

Manaaki New Zealand Scholarships continue to build leadership capability and strengthen institutions across the Pacific. One example is Ravneel Chand, who completed a Master of Politics at the University of Otago under a Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship before returning to Fiji to apply his skills within the electoral sector.

Ravneel now serves as Manager Learning and Development at the Fijian Elections Office, where he leads electoral and operational training and voter education initiatives that support the delivery of transparent and effective elections. His interest in electoral participation was shaped by his work with persons with disabilities in Fiji, which highlighted the barriers some people face in exercising their democratic rights. "*While voting is often treated as a simple act, for many it can be a powerful moment of dignity and visibility.*"

His master's research examined voter motivation among persons with disabilities in Fiji using talanoa, a Pacific research approach based on open and respectful dialogue. The research provided valuable insights into how trust, accessibility, and inclusion influence participation in democratic processes and highlighted opportunities to strengthen engagement with underrepresented groups.

In addition to his current role, Ravneel contributes to the Institute of Democracy and Electoral Education, supporting the long-term professionalisation of electoral management in Fiji. He is also exploring how Pacific approaches can be applied more systematically to strengthen communication and trust between electoral institutions and communities.

Through his scholarship experience and subsequent leadership role, Ravneel is helping to strengthen electoral capability and civic participation in Fiji, demonstrating the long-term impact of New Zealand's investment in education and leadership development across the Pacific.

Supporting peace and social cohesion in the Papua New Guinea Highlands

The **United Nations Highlands Joint Programme** brings together multiple UN agencies to deliver coordinated support that addresses the needs of communities across Papua New Guinea's Highlands region. During 2025–26, the Programme strengthened inclusive service delivery, protection systems, and community resilience through support to frontline service providers and community-based protection mechanisms. A key focus was improving availability and quality of data to inform policy and service delivery. Family Support Centres were supported to strengthen the ethical and safe collection of data relating to gender-based violence (GBV) and sorcery accusation-related violence (SARV), **helping to address critical information gaps and support evidence-based decision-making**.

The Programme also **improved access to legal identity services** by integrating birth registration into hospital services across the Highlands. This approach enables families to register births at the point of service, strengthening coordination between health and civil registration systems while improving access to official identity documentation. **More than 200 births were registered between August–December 2025**.

To strengthen protection outcomes for vulnerable children and families, child-friendly spaces were established in communities and markets located in areas at risk of conflict. These spaces **provide safe environments for children** and can serve as hubs for emergency service delivery, including psychosocial support, child protection services, GBV prevention and response, and safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse. The Programme also supported **development of Standard Operating Procedures for Child Protection Case Management and Positive Parenting for Child Development initiatives in Western Highlands Province**.

In Southern Highlands Province, community engagement activities promoted awareness of gender-based violence, sorcery accusation-related violence, and peaceful conflict resolution. Through community dialogues and "Sports for Peace" activities, **youth-led anti-SARV awareness campaigns reached more than 3,000 community members**. Youth leaders involved in the programme have become recognised advocates against SARV and have played an important role in **supporting community dialogue and de-escalating violence**.



Anti-SARV awareness march, Mendi, Papua New Guinea, November 2025. Credit: ©UNFPA

The Programme also strengthened community-level planning and resilience. Consultations involving 146 government and non-government stakeholders supported development of Community Peace and Development Plans and Community-based Disaster Risk Management Plans, helping communities and local institutions to better manage conflict, reduce disaster risks, and strengthen social cohesion. Together, these initiatives have **improved access to essential services, strengthened community protection systems, and enhanced local capacity to prevent and respond to violence, conflict, and disaster risks across Papua New Guinea's Highlands regions**.

Strengthening police capability in Tonga

The **Tonga–New Zealand Police Programme (TNZPP)** successfully completed its fourth year supporting Tonga Police with training, curriculum development, investigations, intelligence, and leadership development. During 2025–26, TNZPP supported the Tonga Police College to redesign Recruit Training Modules, helping to modernise police training and ensure it aligns with operational requirements. A key achievement was development and handover of the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Development Programme, which provides structured leadership training for frontline supervisors. Strengthening supervisory capability is critical to building effective middle management, supporting high professional standards, and improving leadership of frontline policing teams.

A central focus has been supporting Tonga Police to assume greater ownership of Programme activities and capability development. This approach is helping to ensure that gains made through the partnership are sustainable and embedded within Tonga Police systems and structures. The handover of the NCO Development Programme demonstrates significant progress towards local ownership and leadership of police training. By **reducing reliance on external advisers and strengthening in-house training capability, the Programme is supporting a more capable, self-reliant, and sustainable police service**.

Eliminating Unexploded Ordnance in Iraq

Decades of conflict have left Iraq heavily contaminated by landmines, unexploded ordnance, and improvised explosive devices, posing ongoing risks to communities and hindering recovery. Since 2018, New Zealand has supported the **United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** in Iraq, contributing to sustained improvements in safety, recovery, and resilience through mine clearance, risk reduction, and capacity-building activities.

In 2025, with UNMAS support, national partners **cleared nearly 1.9 million square metres of contaminated land and safely disposed of almost 20,000 explosive items** in Ninewa Governorate. These efforts **enabled communities to safely resume farming and livestock activities, supported the restoration of electricity infrastructure, and improved access to essential services**. In Mosul, clearance of complex sites, including hospital compounds, allowed rehabilitation works to proceed, supporting the recovery of critical public infrastructure. In other areas, mine clearance enabled displaced families to return home and begin rebuilding their lives.

UNMAS also delivered explosive ordnance risk education to 22,190 people living in affected communities near ongoing clearance operations. These activities **increased awareness of explosive hazards, promoted safer behaviour, and reduced the risk of injury and death**.

A key focus of the programme has been strengthening national capability and ownership. Iraqi organisations played a leading role, with locally-led teams implementing clearance and risk management activities — demonstrating the effectiveness of nationally owned approaches. Training for government personnel, including hundreds of police officers acting as first responders, **strengthened the ability of national institutions to identify and respond to explosive threats, improving public safety outcomes**.

Together, these efforts removed physical hazards, restored access to land and services, supported economic recovery, enabled the return of displaced populations, and strengthened Iraq's capacity to manage explosive contamination.

Between 2018 and 2025, New Zealand provided approximately NZD$8 million in support of mine action in Iraq, including NZD$1.3 million channelled through the international NGO HALO Trust. This investment has contributed to significant progress in Iraq's ability to manage explosive hazards and support recovery, leaving national institutions better equipped to continue this work independently into the future.

Promoting and protecting the rights and wellbeing of women in Afghanistan

Since 2024, New Zealand has contributed to **UN Women's work to promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of women in Afghanistan**. Despite severe restrictions on women's participation in public life, evidence shows that programmes combining protection, livelihoods, and social support are improving women's safety, wellbeing, and ability to engage in their communities.

UN Women provides life-sustaining services through a network of community-based centres that serve as safe and accessible spaces for women and girls. These centres offer counselling, health support, education, vocational training, and protection services, helping women access assistance, rebuild social connections, and cope with trauma. Many women report that these services **reduce isolation, improve mental wellbeing, and strengthen resilience**. Increased demand for protection services between 2023 and 2024 highlights their importance to women and girls.

The programme also delivers economic benefits by helping women develop skills, establish small businesses, increase savings, and expand income-generating activities. Economic support such as microcredit, training, and savings groups **strengthens women's economic participation and decision-making within households**. At the same time, flexible funding and capacity-building support local civil society organisations to continue delivering assistance and advocating for women's rights.

UN Women also plays an important international advocacy and coordination role. Through systematic data collection and reporting, it provides one of the most credible evidence bases on the experiences of Afghan women and girls, **informing United Nations processes and international policy discussions**. The programme also strengthens gender integration across humanitarian responses, helping mobilise resources, improve access to services for women, and increase support for women-led organisations.

Overall, the programme is delivering tangible outcomes in a highly constrained environment. Women and girls are accessing essential services, improving their wellbeing, generating income, maintaining community networks, and contributing their perspectives to international discussions, while building greater resilience for the future.



Vegetable farmer and user of Proximity Designs' biological inputs sorts her healthy eggplant harvest in Myanmar's Dry Zone. Credit: Proximity Designs

Goal 2: A prosperous and resilient future

Strengthening the resilience of farmers in Myanmar

The **Myanmar Resilient Horticulture Programme** supports smallholder farmers to increase their incomes and resilience through improved farming technologies, sustainable agricultural practices, and advisory services. The programme is a partnership between New Zealand's Bioeconomy Science Institute Maiangi Taiao (BSI) and Proximity Designs, a Myanmar social enterprise working across the Central Dry Zone, southern Shan, and Ayeyarwady Delta regions. BSI provides technical expertise to support Proximity Designs development of biological farm inputs, micro-irrigation systems, and improved pest, disease, and soil management practices. The Programme also contributes funding for Proximity Designs' operations, including delivery of farm advisory services through extension workers, digital platforms, and agro-dealer networks.

During 2025–26, Proximity Designs delivered advisory services to over 186,000 farmers. **More than 47,000 farmers adopted agro-biological products, almost 50,000 adopted efficient irrigation systems, and over 104,000 adopted improved fertiliser, soil management, or integrated pest management practices**. Following the March 2025 earthquake in central Myanmar, over 10,000 farmers received Farmland Recovery Packages to restore soil fertility ahead of the planting season.

Farmers served by Proximity Designs **generated an estimated USD$45 million in additional net farm income while adopting regenerative farming practices that improved soil health across more than 546,000 acres of farmland**. These gains have strengthened both livelihoods and resilience by reducing production costs, improving productivity, and supporting more sustainable land management.

Regenerative farming practices have helped vulnerable smallholder farmers to reduce their dependence on loans for farm inputs, increase crop yields, break a cycle of recurring debt and begin building savings.

Strengthening literacy outcomes across the Pacific

Recent Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) data collected from more than 10,000 students across Fiji, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu identified significant challenges in reading comprehension while providing valuable insights into specific areas where learners were struggling. This deeper analysis enabled education systems to move beyond measuring achievement levels and focus on addressing the underlying barriers to learning.

PILNA provides reliable, regionally comparable data on literacy and numeracy outcomes, helping Ministries of Education identify learning gaps, monitor trends, and target interventions more effectively. This evidence has informed policy decisions and classroom practice, enabling more strategic investments in teaching and learning. Through the **Pacific Community's Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP),** countries are strengthening their ability to use data and evidence to improve education planning, policy, and delivery.

Students in Fiji, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu are demonstrating greater confidence in reading, participating more actively in classroom discussions, and showing stronger reading comprehension skills. Teachers report that students who were previously reluctant to engage in literacy activities are now participating more confidently, with improvements in both achievement and self-belief. These changes reflect the benefits of more targeted teaching approaches and evidence-based education policies.

Pacific education systems continue to face challenges associated with geographic isolation, resource constraints, and climate-related disruptions. Initiatives such as PILNA are helping countries build more responsive and evidence-based education systems, strengthening learning outcomes and supporting the development of the skills and capabilities needed for long-term social and economic resilience.



Students engaged in Literacy and Numeracy Testing in Fiji. Credit: SPC Education Quality and Assessment Programme

Strengthening Pacific Media

Pacific Cooperation Broadcasting Limited (PCBL) is an IDC-funded initiative that supports free-to-air broadcasters across the Pacific through the provision of New Zealand-produced content, support for locally produced programming, and professional development opportunities for media practitioners.

Media organisations across the Pacific operate in a challenging environment, facing declining advertising revenue, small audience markets, the costs of digital transformation, and technical capacity constraints. In some countries, there is increasing pressure on media freedom. Strengthening the capability and sustainability of Pacific media is therefore important for ensuring access to reliable information and supporting informed public participation.

In March 2025, journalists and broadcasters from **Tonga, Naoero, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tuvalu, the Cook Islands, and Samoa** attended the biennial PCBL conference in Auckland. The conference provided opportunities for **professional development, networking, and knowledge sharing**, with participants hearing from a range of media sector experts and exchanging experiences and ideas with regional counterparts. Participants also **gained practical experience** through engagement opportunities, including a media question and answer session with Foreign Minister Winston Peters during an event announcing changes to Pacific immigration settings.

The conference concluded with participants attending Auckland's Pasifika Festival as accredited media. Covering one of the world's largest celebrations of Pacific cultures provided **valuable experience in reporting on a major international event** and expanded opportunities for professional development.

Independent and capable media play an important role in supporting transparency, accountability, and public access to information. Through PCBL, New Zealand is helping strengthen the capability, connectivity, and resilience of Pacific media organisations, supporting a well-informed public and contributing to democratic governance across the region.

Strengthening agricultural export growth in Tonga

The **Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Plus (PHAMA Plus)** programme, funded by New Zealand and Australia, helps Pacific countries strengthen agricultural export pathways by addressing biosecurity, quality standards, and market access constraints. Across its lifetime, the programme has **supported improved livelihoods for approximately 320,000 households** and contributed to increased incomes, market access, and inclusive value chain development. In 2025–26, 44,685 people directly benefited from increased income.

In Tonga, PHAMA Plus supported a coordinated package of activities to strengthen the watermelon export sector. This included revitalising the Tonga Watermelon Export Taskforce, introducing export standard operating procedures, training farmers and biosecurity officers, upgrading packhouse and cold-chain infrastructure, and strengthening compliance and verification systems.

These interventions have delivered measurable results. Around 210 households are now engaged in export-focused watermelon production, contributing approximately 122 metric tonnes of exports annually. Export performance has increased significantly, with Tonga's largest exporter to New Zealand **doubling shipments from 180,000 kilograms to 360,000 kilograms over two years**. Farm productivity has also improved, with some growers **more than doubling yields through improved irrigation and farming practices**. Strengthened biosecurity systems have enhanced the sector's ability to manage risks and maintain access to key export markets.



Nishi Trading worker conducting post-harvest grading and inspection at Nishi's packhouse - a critical control point for quality, hygiene and export compliance. Credit: PHAMA Plus

The benefits extend beyond increased export volumes. Watermelon production is **providing a more reliable and higher-value source of income for rural households, improving financial stability and supporting livelihoods**. Improved coordination across the sector has reduced inefficiencies and enabled challenges to be addressed more quickly, while strengthened compliance systems have enhanced Tonga's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

By transforming a fragmented and high-risk value chain into a more coordinated and commercially viable export sector, PHAMA Plus is **strengthening rural incomes, supporting economic resilience, and creating opportunities for future growth in Tonga's horticultural exports**.

Supporting Samoa's response to a dengue outbreak

In 2025, Samoa experienced a major dengue outbreak that placed significant pressure on the national health system, particularly paediatric services, with children under 15 years disproportionately affected. In response to a request from the Government of Samoa, New Zealand delivered a coordinated package of clinical, logistical, and technical support in August 2025. This included deployment of a Forward Planning Team and a 14-member New Zealand Medical Assistance Team (NZMAT), later complemented by Australian personnel. The response provided surge staffing to key health facilities, particularly paediatric services, alongside essential medical supplies and remote public health and epidemiological support.

New Zealand's assistance **helped strengthen Samoa's health system capacity during the peak of the outbreak**. Additional clinical personnel supported hospitals to **manage increased patient demand and maintain delivery of essential healthcare services**. The provision of medicines and medical consumables helped address shortages and ensure continuity of treatment. The deployment also enabled Samoan health workers to re-focus on critical outbreak control activities, including surveillance, prevention, and community outreach.

The response **improved access to timely healthcare, particularly for vulnerable children, reduced the risk of severe health outcomes, and supported efforts to limit ongoing transmission**. New Zealand's support helped reinforce confidence in Samoa's health system during a period of heightened demand and contributed to a faster recovery from the outbreak. Samoan health authorities noted that the deployment of New Zealand and Australian medical personnel, together with the provision of essential medical supplies, played an important role in strengthening the national response.

Supporting infrastructure, livelihoods and economic development in Cook Islands and Samoa

The **Avarua Town Plan project (Te Tau Papa o Avarua)** is funded through the Cook Islands Infrastructure Trust Fund — established by New Zealand and the Cook Islands in 2019 to invest in infrastructure that delivers essential services and supports community wellbeing. Since its establishment, New Zealand has contributed $76 million to the Trust Fund, supporting projects that enhance economic resilience, public infrastructure, and quality of life in the Cook Islands.

The first phase of Te Tau Papa o Avarua, officially opened in October 2025, delivered Te Tāpora Kai (an authentic farmers and crafts market), Are Kai Moana fish market, and Terevete public amenities block. These facilities **provide safe, accessible, and modern trading environments for local vendors, strengthen grassroots economic activity, and enhance the visitor experience** at the Punanga Nui Market.

The project also included significant civil and landscaping improvements, including new accessways, permeable parking areas, and pedestrian safety enhancements, improving accessibility and traffic flow throughout the precinct.



Official opening of Te Tau Papa o Avarua. Credit: Cook Islands Investment Cooperation

Te Tāpora Kai now accommodates up to 70 vendors on Saturdays, alongside approximately 150 existing stalls across the wider market. The upgraded facilities support small business growth, cultural exchange, and community connection, while creating a more attractive destination for residents and visitors. Construction was delivered entirely by Cook Islands businesses and workers, ensuring the economic benefits of the investment remained within the local economy.

In Samoa, the redevelopment of the **Savalalo Market on Apia's waterfront** was completed in early 2026, with the market reopening in March. The rebuilt market restores an important economic and community asset lost in a 2016 fire and supports the livelihoods of local vendors while attracting both residents and tourists.

The project contributes to the wider revitalisation of Apia's waterfront and supports Samoa's economic recovery following the impacts of COVID-19. By creating employment opportunities, supporting local enterprise, and providing inclusive spaces for market vendors, the redevelopment is helping **strengthen tourism, private sector growth, and economic resilience**.

Vocational short-term training scholarships enhance heavy machinery capability in Niue

In August and September 2025, 35 public servants (34 men and one woman) from key Niue Government departments, including Transport, Utilities, and Environment, completed an eight-day Heavy Machinery and Vehicle Training programme in Niue. Funded through the Manaaki New Zealand Vocational Short-Term Training Scholarships programme, the training combined classroom-based learning at the University of the South Pacific Niue Campus with practical workplace assessments.

The programme **strengthened participants' safety awareness, equipment maintenance practices, and operational skills, achieving a 100 percent completion rate**. Participants received a completion certificate and equipment-specific Certificates of Competency from AllTrain NZ.

By strengthening the capability of government plant operators, the training **improved workforce skills in critical public service sectors while supporting safer and more effective operation of infrastructure and equipment**. The programme also created pathways for further professional development and certification, helping to build long-term technical capability within Niue's public sector.



A trainee from the Heavy Machinery and Vehicle Training receiving their completion certificate. Credit: MFAT

Strengthening access to inclusive reproductive health services

For women facing disability, stigma, or previous pregnancy loss, the quality of healthcare can be as important as access itself. When women are treated with dignity, provided with clear information, and supported to make informed choices, they are more likely to seek care and maintain positive health outcomes. Through support to **Marie Stopes Asia Pacific**, women in **Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste** are accessing reproductive health services that are both accessible and responsive to their needs.



A Marie Stopes International worker funded through New Zealand's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights programme. Credit: Department of Health of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB)

In Papua New Guinea, a 25-year-old woman with a hearing impairment chose to travel past a closer clinic to access services at a Marie Stopes centre in Port Moresby because she believed she would receive more respectful and non-discriminatory care. There, she received tailored counselling and was able to select a contraceptive method that suited her circumstances. In Timor-Leste, a woman with a history of multiple miscarriages received counselling with her partner before choosing a contraceptive implant, enabling her to recover fully and plan future pregnancies more safely. She later shared information about family planning and healthy birth spacing within her community, helping raise awareness of reproductive health and maternal wellbeing.

These examples highlight the value of person-centred care in building trust in health services and supporting informed choice. By encouraging women to seek information and support without fear of judgement, Marie Stopes Asia Pacific is helping improve health outcomes for women, families, and communities.

New Zealand's regional support for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), delivered through the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF),** is also strengthening reproductive health services across Naoero and the North Pacific.

In **Naoero**, the number of women using modern contraception increased from 318 to 385 in 2025. All supported facilities maintained a full range of contraceptive methods with no reported stockouts, while **family planning coverage increased by 62 percent** compared with 2024. Reliable supplies of maternal health medicines and trained health workers across all health facilities also contributed to **safer and more accessible services**.

In the **Republic of the Marshall Islands**, IPPF support enabled *Youth to Youth in Health* to restore and expand services in Majuro, delivering 1,224 sexual and reproductive health services to 200 clients and reaching more than 880 young people through outreach and education. UNFPA support ensured **consistent access to essential medicines and contraceptives**, with more than 1,000 women using modern contraception. The introduction of the self-injectable contraceptive DMPA-SC is expected to further improve access for women living in remote outer atolls.

In **Palau**, strong supply chain systems maintained the availability of a broad range of contraceptive methods and prevented stockouts. In the **Federated States of Micronesia**, demand continued to grow, with 2,746 women using modern contraception in 2025. Improved supply chain management and reporting have supported **reliable service delivery and expanded access to family planning options**.

Together, these investments are strengthening health systems, expanding access to quality reproductive health services, and enabling women and girls across the Pacific to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Faster access to measles vaccines is helping protect Pacific children during outbreaks

When measles risk increases, delays in vaccine access can leave children vulnerable and limit countries' ability to respond quickly. UNICEF is helping reduce this risk by ensuring Pacific countries can access measles vaccines rapidly, enabling timely action to protect communities from potential outbreaks.

UNICEF has established a **regional stockpile of 65,000 measles vaccine doses in Fiji**, reducing reliance on lengthy international procurement and shipping processes. In 2025, the stockpile supported catch-up immunisation activities in **Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, and Kiribati**, helping health authorities address immunity gaps and reduce the risk of outbreaks.

This capability is particularly important in Pacific countries, where outbreaks, natural disasters, and transport disruptions can affect access to essential health services. Having vaccines available within the region enables ministries of health to respond quickly while maintaining routine immunisation services and avoiding the need to divert resources to emergency procurement.

The vaccine stockpile is complemented by broader support to strengthen immunisation systems across the Pacific. UNICEF has worked with countries to improve vaccine storage, cold-chain planning, and supply management, helping **ensure vaccines remain safe, available, and ready for use**. In 2025, workshops in Naoero and Vanuatu built on earlier work across the region, with 185 participants developing **country-specific actions to strengthen vaccine management, cold-chain systems, maintenance planning, standard operating procedures, and supply reliability**.

Together, these investments are improving regional preparedness for measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases. By strengthening immunisation systems and ensuring rapid access to vaccines, they are helping build more resilient health systems that can respond effectively to future outbreaks and other disruptions, while safeguarding the health of Pacific children and communities.

Strengthening women's leadership in Pacific sport

While female athletes have played a central role in many of the Pacific's greatest sporting achievements, opportunities to transition into leadership and governance roles after retirement remain limited. Barriers such as restricted access to leadership development and limited pathways into decision-making roles continue to constrain women's participation in sports administration and governance.

To help address these challenges, the New Zealand Olympic Committee launched the pilot **Wāhine Toa Oceania Leadership Programme** in 2025. The programme supports retired female Pacific athletes to transition into leadership and governance roles within sport. Participants included former Olympians, Paralympians, and Pacific and Commonwealth Games athletes from across the region. Adapted from a successful New Zealand model, the programme combines leadership training, mentoring, and practical project work, while fostering regional connections and collaboration across countries and sporting codes.

Seven participants from six Pacific countries completed the nine-month pilot programme. Early results demonstrate **increased leadership confidence and capability, with participants taking up new governance, advisory, and technical roles within sporting organisations**. Projects undertaken during the programme also contributed to organisational improvements, including the **development of safeguarding policies and strengthened governance practices in several countries**.



Wāhine Toa Oceania participants at workshop in Fiji. Credit: New Zealand Olympic Committee

The programme has amplified athlete perspectives in sports governance and strengthened advocacy for women and girls in sport. It has also established a growing network of female leaders, creating a pipeline of future mentors, administrators, and decision-makers who will help shape a more inclusive and effective sporting sector across the Pacific.

Supporting resilient agricultural systems in East and Southern Africa

Since 2023, New Zealand has been the largest donor to the **Ukama Ustawi** (Agriculture Diversification in East and Southern Africa) initiative, implemented by the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The programme supports farmers, governments, agribusinesses, and communities to develop more resilient, productive, inclusive, and nutrition-sensitive agricultural systems across the region.

A significant achievement in 2025–26 was completion of the **Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy**, which provides a roadmap for strengthening Tanzania's seed sector and supporting agricultural growth, climate resilience, and food security. Developed through a partnership between CGIAR and Tanzania's Ministry of Agriculture, the Strategy is the country's first comprehensive framework for improving seed availability, access, quality assurance, and the enabling environment for investment and innovation through to 2030. It includes ambitious targets, such as increasing the area planted with improved seed to six million hectares and expanding the national agro-dealer network from 3,000 to 12,000.

The programme also delivered results through outreach, innovation, and partnerships that support climate-smart agriculture and resilience. During the year approximately 9.9 million people benefited from the programme — with **New Zealand's contribution supporting an estimated 4 million people**. Around 27 percent of beneficiaries were women, and approximately **90 percent benefited from increased resilience to climate change and environmental degradation**. Of this:

- more than 800,000 people in Zambia accessed agro-climatic advice through the Munda Makeover television series.
- a partnership with ZEP-RE (Africa Reinsurance) and ACRE Africa provided 200,000 insured smallholder farmers with climate-smart advisory services, strengthening climate risk management and resilience.
- publication of Ethiopia's Public-Private Partnership Strategy strengthened pathways for attracting private investment in climate-smart agriculture and water management through structured public-private collaboration.

Together, these initiatives are helping strengthen food security, improve agricultural productivity, and build resilience to climate change across East and Southern Africa, while supporting more sustainable and inclusive economic development.

Strengthening community resilience through defence cooperation in the Cook Islands

Exercise Tropic Twilight 2025 demonstrated how defence cooperation can deliver practical development outcomes for Pacific communities. Undertaken by the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), the exercise brought together engineers from the New Zealand Army 25 Engineer Support Squadron, alongside medical, logistics, and trade personnel from Australia, Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu, to deliver infrastructure improvements on the island of Ma'uke in the Cook Islands.

The activity focused on **strengthening climate and disaster resilience through upgrades to critical community infrastructure**. Works included remediation of water bores, improvements to Ma'uke School, maintenance of the solar farm, upgrades to community halls, and enhancements to water collection and storage systems. Additional projects included improvements at the hospital, installation of a solar hot water system, furniture assembly, and further upgrades to solar and water infrastructure. The exercise was supported by the delivery of 44 tonnes of equipment and building supplies by air and sea.

The works delivered immediate benefits to Ma'uke's approximately 240 residents. Improvements to bore pumps and water systems helped **secure a more reliable water supply**, while upgrades to the solar farm reduced overheating risks and supported **more reliable electricity generation**. At Apii Ma'uke, the island's only school, infrastructure improvements **enhanced safety and accessibility for students and staff**.

The exercise strengthened essential services and community infrastructure, including water, energy, education, health, and community facilities. It also provided opportunities for knowledge sharing and skills exchange in areas such as plumbing, carpentry, and electrical trades. Beyond the infrastructure outcomes, the exercise strengthened regional partnerships and people-to-people connections, reinforcing New Zealand's longstanding relationship with the Cook Islands and its commitment to supporting resilient Pacific communities.

Strengthening health services and infrastructure in Kiribati

New Zealand is making significant investments to improve health infrastructure and health outcomes across Kiribati. Through its partnership with the Kiribati Ministry of Health and Medical Services, New Zealand is supporting the construction of 25 public health clinics across the outer islands. During 2025–26, **five clinics were completed** in Tabiteuea South, Arorae, Kuria, Taboiaki (Nonouti), and Abatao (North Tarawa). Clinics in Tabiteuea South and Arorae are already operational, while the remaining facilities are expected to open following completion of staff accommodation and patient facilities. Once fully operational, these clinics will **improve access to primary healthcare and sexual and reproductive health services for more than 20,000 people living in outer island communities**.



Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa clinicians delivering training to health workers in North Tarawa. Credit: Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa

New Zealand also supports the Healthy Families Project, implemented by the Kiribati Healthy Families Association in partnership with Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa. During the reporting period, the project continued to expand access to quality sexual and reproductive health services while strengthening partnerships with government agencies, traditional and church leaders, communities, and youth. These efforts have increased community ownership of sexual and reproductive health initiatives and sustained advocacy at both national and local levels. As a result, **uptake of contraceptive services has increased, alongside greater participation in sexual health and cervical cancer screening services in both South Tarawa and the outer islands**.

In 2025, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, with support from New Zealand, Australia, the World Health Organization, and the Pacific Community (SPC), developed the *Kiribati Health Promotion Foundation Bill*. The Bill reached its second reading in Parliament in April 2026 and provides a legal framework for establishing a Health Promotion Foundation, mandated to **mobilise, receive, and manage dedicated funding for health promotion and non-communicable disease prevention activities in Kiribati**.

New Zealand's support is also strengthening the health workforce. Five of the twelve trainees enrolled in the Medical Assistant training programme **successfully completed their studies**, with a further five expected to graduate in 2026.

Through UNICEF's First 1,000 Days programme, a Child Community Nursing Outreach Programme was piloted in Betio to improve maternal and child health services. The programme reached more than 9,600 people — around 56 percent of Betio's population — and enrolled 1,375 households in ongoing follow-up systems. It **directly supported 131 pregnant women and 1,164 children under five** through 409 outreach visits across 29 communities, delivering growth monitoring, nutrition counselling, immunisation follow-up, and maternal health services at household level.

Together, these investments are strengthening healthcare infrastructure, expanding access to essential services, building workforce capability, and improving health outcomes for communities across Kiribati.

Increasing disability-inclusive health and education services in Papua New Guinea

In 2025, New Zealand supported Christian Blind Mission (CBM) to improve **access to disability-inclusive health and education services in Papua New Guinea**, with a particular focus on women and girls in rural and underserved communities. In its first year, the programme exceeded expectations, reaching more than 36,500 people through integrated eye care, ear and hearing services, and rehabilitation support. Significant results were achieved, including **928 eye surgeries, large-scale screening and treatment activities, increased access to assistive devices, and improved access to inclusive education services for children with disabilities**. Women and girls represented nearly half of all beneficiaries reached.

A key achievement has been strengthening local systems to deliver services closer to communities. Health workers across provincial hospitals, church-run health facilities, and community clinics were trained and equipped to provide services ranging from basic screening to specialised treatment and surgery. This hub-and-spoke model has strengthened referral pathways and expanded access to care in remote areas.

By building local capability and increasing access to community-based services, the programme is improving health and education outcomes for people with disabilities while supporting greater inclusion, gender equality, and long-term system strengthening in Papua New Guinea.

Building resilient businesses across the Pacific



Vanuatu bakery owner standing next to her new stove bought with BLP grant funding. Credit: Business Link Pacific

Business Link Pacific (BLP) is a key component of New Zealand's support for private sector development in the Pacific, helping strengthen the resilience, productivity, and prosperity of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). In 2025, New Zealand invested in BLP initiatives across **Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu** to improve access to business advisory services and affordable finance.

In **Vanuatu**, following the December 2024 earthquake in Port Vila, BLP partnered with the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry to establish an earthquake recovery grant scheme to help businesses rebuild, restore operations, and strengthen resilience to future shocks. By January 2026, 26 grants had been paid out, with a further 24 in progress. The grants supported businesses across a range of sectors, including arts and crafts, cleaning services, and food production, **enabling many to reopen, retain staff, and resume income-generating activities**. By supporting business continuity and recovery, the initiative contributed to economic recovery and community resilience in an earthquake-affected area.



Handover of a new delivery truck in Fiji. Photo credit: BLP Pacific

In **Fiji**, BLP's Co-Investment Fund supports business growth by matching private sector investment in expansion projects. One recipient, Dispatch & Delivery PTE Limited, used co-investment funding to purchase a delivery truck, significantly increasing its transport capacity. The investment enabled the company to **expand delivery services across the Navua–Nausori corridor and improve distribution of hardware supplies, including to the outer islands**. This has enhanced business efficiency, supported growth, and improved access to goods for communities and businesses.

In **Papua New Guinea**, BLP expanded services into Western Highlands Province, an area with historically limited access to formal business support. By improving access to business advisory services and finance, the programme has created new opportunities for enterprise development, employment, and income generation. During the year, BLP's partnerships with Kina Bank and Women's Micro Bank (Mama Bank) **enabled 149 MSMEs to access NZD$3.6 million in loans**. BLP provided subsidised business advisory services to 54 businesses, more than half of which were women-led.

Through targeted support for business recovery, growth, and access to finance, BLP is helping build more resilient and inclusive local economies across the Pacific, supporting long-term economic development.

When Florence Bunari wanted to grow her tourism business and reach more international customers, support from Business Link Pacific (BLP) helped turn that ambition into reality. Florence owns Buna Treks and Tours, a Papua New Guinea tourism company that has grown from a family-run business into a limited liability company employing three permanent staff and more than 35 guides and porters on a casual basis. The company operates trekking experiences, including on the iconic Kokoda Trail.

Through Business Link Pacific, Florence completed a business health diagnostic assessment to identify priority areas for growth. With support from a BLP-funded business adviser, an advisory subsidy, and the Centre for Excellence in Financial Inclusion, Buna Treks and Tours developed its first business website, creating new opportunities to connect with international customers and expand its global reach.

Reflecting on the experience, Florence said the BLP subsidy made the investment affordable and helped the business take an important step towards achieving its growth goals. She also highlighted the value of the tailored advice she received, which helped her better understand business improvement priorities and the website development process. The new website has strengthened the company's ability to market its services internationally, supporting business growth in Papua New Guinea's tourism sector. The case demonstrates how targeted business advisory services can help Pacific entrepreneurs build capability, adopt new technologies, and access wider markets, creating employment opportunities and supporting local economic development.



Buna Treks and Tours, Papua New Guinea. Credit: Business Link Pacific

Improving school readiness in Timor-Leste

The **HANDS programme** (Halimar, Aprende no Descobre Susesu) is a Timor-Leste Ministry of Education initiative, supported by New Zealand, to improve access, equity, and quality in early childhood education (ECE). Since 2020, through the programme, **the number of ECE facilities has increased from 454 to 792**, with steady growth in enrolment. In 2025, the ECE Intensive Programme — a 15-week school readiness programme — supported 3,411 children across 121 centres, almost double the number of participating centres from 2024. This expansion is helping **improve school readiness, increase participation in formal education, and support better learning outcomes**.

Significant progress has also been made in the quality of teaching and learning. By 2025, all 765 permanent ECE teaching positions were filled. **95 percent of teachers were qualified, and more than 560 completed professional development training during the year**. This included 230 teachers who successfully completed online training through a new Blended Learning Programme, demonstrating the potential of scalable and cost-effective approaches to teacher development. Strengthening teacher capability is a key contributor to improved learning outcomes and supports more consistent quality across the education system.

The institutional foundations of the ECE sector were strengthened through implementation of the Pre-School National Systems Decree Law. The legislation establishes **minimum standards, clarifies municipal responsibilities, and formalises the National Base Curriculum**, recognising preschool education as a formal part of the education system for children aged three to five years. During the year, 337 public preschools were licensed, and 13 municipal preschool network plans were developed, providing a structured approach to planning, resource allocation, and expansion.

Complementing sector-wide reforms, the Lafaek Learning Media programme distributed curriculum-aligned magazines to schools and households nationwide. **Regular reading rates reached 96 percent among Grade 1 students and 92 percent among Grade 2 students**, exceeding the programme target of 75 percent for both boys and girls. Among surveyed parents, 97 percent reported using the magazines at home to support their children's learning.



Distribution of Lafaek magazines in Bobonaro, Timor-Leste. Credit: Lafaek Learning Media

New Zealand's long-term support for early childhood education in Timor-Leste demonstrates how coordinated investment in access, quality, and system strengthening can deliver lasting improvements in education outcomes. The results achieved in 2025–26 have strengthened teaching quality, expanded participation in early learning, and improved literacy development, helping lay the foundation for lifelong learning and development.

Cacao farming and agritourism improves livelihoods in Samoa

The **Improved Livelihoods Cocoa Samoa programme** supported development of premium cocoa production and agritourism on the island of Savai'i. By strengthening these complementary value chains, the programme aimed to increase rural incomes, create employment opportunities, and improve resilience to climate and economic shocks.

During the reporting period:

- **grower income increased from WST2,800 to WST8,070 per hectare**, driven by a 53 percent increase in productivity, value add through processing cocoa beans into cacao paste, and higher market prices beans.
- **international market visibility expanded** through access to European markets and participation in events such as the Pacific Cacao and Chocolate Show.
- **four export supply chains were established**, providing access to markets in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

The programme has strengthened the role of cocoa as an important source of income in Savai'i, with 81 percent of households now engaged in cocoa cultivation and 70 percent of beneficiary households' agricultural income derived from cocoa production. These achievements have strengthened Samoa's cocoa sector by improving productivity, increasing incomes, and expanding market opportunities. The programme has contributed to greater economic resilience, enhanced food security, and stronger rural livelihoods. With increased agricultural output now exceeding the programme's total investment of less than NZD$1 million, and with sustainable practices and market partnerships in place, the programme has established a strong foundation for continued growth and long-term impact.

Youth-led pathways to employment and empowerment in Tonga and Solomon Islands

Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) often face significant and persistent barriers to economic participation. Addressing these barriers requires integrated approaches that combine skills development, psychosocial support and clear pathways into employment.

Through its partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC), the **Pacific Youth Engagement, Empowerment and Economic Pathways (PYEEEP) programme** supports young people in Tonga and Solomon Islands to transition from training into employment and income-generating activities. In 2025, **88 participants completed accredited training programmes, with most progressing to internships, further education or paid employment opportunities**.

Early results indicate positive employment outcomes. Approximately **65 percent of graduates from earlier cohorts in Tonga and 44 percent in Solomon Islands are currently engaged in income-generating activities**, including formal employment, self-employment and seasonal work overseas. Employers report improved work readiness, confidence and professionalism among participants, and many continue to provide opportunities for graduates.

PYEEEP prioritises young people facing the greatest barriers to participation, including women, young mothers, rural youth and young people with disabilities. Its wrap-around support model provides transport assistance, childcare, mentoring and psychosocial support, helping to address practical and social constraints that can limit participation. The programme has achieved an **overall graduation rate of approximately 84 percent across cohorts**, demonstrating the value of sustained, targeted support in enabling engagement among those most at risk of exclusion.

The programme is delivering tangible social and economic benefits. **Graduates are contributing to household incomes, supporting education costs and reducing financial pressure on their families**. Participants have also reported **increased confidence and leadership capabilities, resulting in greater involvement in community activities and decision-making processes**. The programme is contributing to positive shifts in gender norms and strengthening recognition of young people as active contributors to economic and social development.

Early detection and prevention of cervical cancer in Niue

In April 2026, with support from the **Polynesian Health Corridors (PHC) programme**, Niue launched its first organised **national cervical screening programme**. This represents a significant public health milestone, strengthening the early detection and prevention of cervical cancer, complementing Niue's existing HPV immunisation programme and contributing to the World Health Organization's global strategy to eliminate cervical cancer.

Moving from opportunistic screening to an organised national programme ensures eligible women are offered screening at regular intervals, improving coverage, equity of access and health outcomes. For small island nations, organised prevention and early detection can reduce avoidable illness, decrease the need for complex overseas treatment and enable more efficient use of limited health resources.

Led by the Niue Department of Health, the programme introduces human papillomavirus (HPV) testing using a self-collection method. Women can choose to collect their own sample using a simple swab either at home or at the hospital, or have a sample collected by a health worker. Samples are tested locally in Niue using point-of-care technology, enabling faster diagnosis and timely follow-up care where required.

PHC support focused on workforce capability and programme readiness. In-country training was provided to nurses and medical officers to support implementation of the screening programme, including clinical education and service delivery preparation. A total of **33 health workers (27 women and 6 men) received cervical screening education and training**.

New Zealand also funded a **colposcopy bed to support specialist follow-up care**. This enables referred patients to be **examined in-country by a regularly visiting gynaecologist** funded through New Zealand's core and sector support programme, improving access to diagnostic services and reducing the need for overseas referrals.



Staff from PHC, the Kirby Institute and Niue's Department of Health celebrating the completion of the cervical cancer screening training. Credit: Niue Foou Hospital

Restoring eyesight in Solomon Islands

Delivering eye health services in Solomon Islands presents challenges common across many Pacific countries. Large portions of the population live in geographically remote areas, making access to health services, including eye care, difficult. Workforce shortages, limited health infrastructure and vulnerability to environmental shocks further constrain access to essential eye health services. Through its partnership with **The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ**, New Zealand supports development of resilient and sustainable eye health services across the Pacific.

A key focus has been on developing the local eye health workforce and strengthening national eye care services. Solomon Islands **now has five resident eye doctors, three of whom are graduates supported by The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ. Of the country's 36 eye nurses, 32 have received Foundation-supported training**. The Foundation has also supported the **establishment of the Regional Eye Centre**, which provides specialist eye care services to patients from across Solomon Islands. The centre delivers a range of services, including sight-restoring cataract surgery, helping to reduce avoidable blindness and improve quality of life for people affected by vision impairment.

When Paul, a 62-year-old from Malaita Province in Solomon Islands, lost his sight due to cataracts, he was no longer able to work or carry out daily activities independently. For seven months, he was unable to see from either eye and relied heavily on his wife and children for support. Prior to losing his sight, Paul had spent almost 20 years operating a small business at a local market to provide for his family. Vision loss forced him to stop working, affecting both his independence and income.



After learning about the Regional Eye Centre in Honiara, Paul and his wife travelled from Malaita to access treatment. He underwent cataract surgery at the Centre and experienced an immediate improvement in vision when the bandages were removed following his first operation. Paul remained in Honiara for several weeks while medical staff monitored his recovery before undertaking surgery on his second eye. Following the successful completion of both procedures, his sight was restored and he is now preparing to return to work and resume supporting his family.



Paul, post-surgery. Credit: Fred Hollows Foundation

Reflecting on the impact of the treatment, Paul said: "I feel very happy. For seven months I couldn't see anything, but now I can see with both my eyes. What the Government of New Zealand did for us is very helpful. Thank you very much for helping the people of Solomon Islands."

Paul's experience illustrates the life-changing impact of accessible eye health services. Through support for The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ and the Regional Eye Centre, New Zealand is helping to restore sight, improve quality of life and strengthen access to essential eye care services for people across Solomon Islands.

Manaaki scholarships boost capability in health empowerment in Laos

Thepmala Sadettan of Lao PDR completed a Master of Public Management through a **Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship**. Following her studies, she returned to Lao PDR and joined the World Health Organization's Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Unit, where she **supports national immunisation programmes aimed at improving public health outcomes**. In her current role, Thepmala contributes to the nationwide HPV vaccination campaign, working with schools to increase vaccine coverage among adolescent girls and reduce the future burden of cervical cancer. She also supports routine childhood immunisation programmes, helping to deliver essential vaccines to children under five years of age, including in remote and underserved communities.

Thepmala's postgraduate studies focused on leading and managing change in public sector organisations, with a particular emphasis on health systems. The knowledge and skills she gained have supported her efforts to **strengthen health resilience in Lao PDR and promote improved health outcomes for women and girls**. Reflecting on the value of the scholarship, Thepmala encourages others to apply: "*The scholarship will broaden your horizons, academically and professionally, and help you create positive change when you return to your home country*."



Manaaki scholar, Thepmala Sadettan. Credit: New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Thepmala's experience demonstrates how Manaaki New Zealand Scholarships contribute to developing skilled professionals who are applying their expertise to address national development priorities and improve the wellbeing of their communities.

Building infrastructure capability in Kiribati

Prior to the **Kiribati Utilities Reform Programme (KURP),** Bauro Mikaere and his colleagues in the Kiribati Public Utilities Board faced ongoing challenges associated with ageing infrastructure. Equipment failures and power outages regularly disrupted electricity services for the approximately 70,000 residents of South Tarawa. They had limited technical capability, few formal systems or procedures, and relied heavily on international funding and technical assistance to undertake complex work. Reflecting on this, Bauro recalls: "*We were under a lot of pressure. We didn't have the systems or confidence to handle many of the technical challenges ourselves*."

KURP was established to improve the reliability and efficiency of electricity services through infrastructure upgrades, replacement of ageing equipment, and the introduction of modern technology. A key feature of the programme was its investment in workforce development, including extensive training and capability building for local staff. The introduction of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) brought **greater consistency and professionalism to operations**. Combined with technical training and upgraded infrastructure, these changes **enabled staff not only to use modern equipment but also to operate and maintain it independently**.



The new Betio powerhouse, constructed by the Public Utilities Board, with NZ-funded generator units in the foreground.
Credit: Kiribati Public Utilities Board

A significant achievement was the increased capability and confidence of the workforce. For Bauro and his team, a defining moment came during installation of new powerhouse equipment. Rather than relying on external contractors, the team took the lead in carrying out installation and calibration work themselves. As Bauro explained: "*This was something we couldn't do before. It saved time, reduced costs, and showed us what we are capable of.*"

The benefits of the programme became evident through **improved service reliability and stronger organisational capability**. **Power outages declined, operational performance improved, and staff developed the technical skills and confidence required to manage increasingly complex responsibilities. Reliance on external technical assistance also reduced significantly.**

Beyond the technical improvements, KURP helped foster a stronger culture of collaboration and continuous learning. "*We support each other more now,*" Bauro said. "*We share knowledge and continue learning together as a team*."

Today, the systems and practices introduced through KURP remain embedded in daily operations. Staff follow structured procedures, apply improved safety practices, and approach their work with greater professionalism and confidence. The organisation is better equipped to operate and maintain critical infrastructure independently, reflecting the lasting impact of investments in both systems and people.

Looking back on the programme, Bauro reflected on its contribution to the organisation and its staff: "*KURP has made a real difference in our lives and our work. It has helped us grow as professionals and as a team. Because of MFAT support, we are stronger, more capable, and ready for the future.*"

Strengthening livelihoods and improving nutrition in the ASEAN region

New Zealand's partnership with the NGO **SurfAid** strengthened agricultural livelihoods and improved nutrition outcomes in remote communities in eastern Indonesia. Through the **Nusa Tani** programme, 19,202 people benefited from integrated interventions focused on nutrition-sensitive agricultural production and income generation, improved health and nutrition practices for mothers and young children, and increased women's access to resources and participation in decision-making. Key achievements during 2025 included:

- **improved child nutrition outcomes**, with the prevalence of stunting among children under five decreasing from 17 percent to 13 percent, and the prevalence of wasting decreasing from 8.5 percent to 6.5 percent.
- **increased adoption of sustainable farming practices** by participating households.
- **greater participation by women in household financial and agricultural decision-making**. The proportion of women contributing to decisions about the sale of harvests increased from 66 percent in 2024 to 85 percent in 2025, strengthening their confidence, agency and economic participation.

Together, these outcomes have contributed to more resilient farming systems, improved household wellbeing and greater economic empowerment for women in participating communities.

Enhancing food security and resilience in East Africa

The **Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA)** initiative is improving livelihoods and strengthening food systems for smallholder farmers in **Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania**. By increasing the commercial viability of agricultural value chains, the initiative helps farmers improve market access, increase productivity and generate higher incomes, contributing to greater food security and resilience in rural communities. A cornerstone of the initiative is its network of Farmer Service Centres that provide access to trained model farmers and local hubs offering technical advice, market information, financial services and agricultural inputs. Through these Centres, farmers receive training in climate-smart agricultural practices, helping to improve crop yields and strengthen connections to markets.



Hannah Karanja practices and trains farmers on conservation agriculture as a sustainable practice for improved livelihoods.
Credit: WFP/FtMA by Speakout Media, Leonard Odini

The initiative has also expanded opportunities for women and young people. Through linkages with complementary programmes, including the FtMA Youth in Work initiative in Kenya, **participation by youth in agricultural value chains has increased, alongside greater inclusion of women and other underrepresented groups**.

By the end of 2025**, 3,189 Farmer Service Centres were supporting 700,936 smallholder farmers across the three countries**. Evidence indicates that participating farmers are achieving stronger outcomes than non-participating farmers, demonstrating progress towards national and local food security, economic development and climate resilience objectives. Key results achieved between 2023 and 2025 include:

- **68 percent increase in volume of crops marketed through participating farmers** from 136,909 tonnes to 229,471 tonnes.
- 81 percent of farmers reported positive changes after adopting improved post-harvest handling and storage practices, **reducing losses and increasing the value of produce sold.**
- **Increased proportion of women, youth and marginalised groups reporting high levels of participation and growth from FtMA-supported value chains**, from 38 percent in 2024 to 45 percent in 2025.
- **Increased proportion of affiliated farmers reporting more knowledge and skills in business management, financial literacy, marketing, climate-smart agriculture and crop selection**, from 55 percent to 90 percent.

These results highlight the contribution of the Farm to Market Alliance to stronger agricultural productivity, enhanced market participation and more inclusive, climate-resilient food systems across East Africa.

Building skills for life beyond seasonal work

The **RSE Worker Training Programme** equips Pacific seasonal workers with practical skills to maximise the benefits of employment in New Zealand and support successful reintegration when they return home. Delivered in partnership with the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), the programme entered a new phase in 2025 with the launch of **NOA – Village of Learning.** Grounded in a Pacific framework, NOA emphasises cultural relevance, responsiveness to partner country priorities, and clear pathways from learning to employment, entrepreneurship and livelihood opportunities.

NOA delivers training through two complementary streams. *NIU – Planting the Seed* provides accessible learning modules that help workers prepare for a safe and successful experience in New Zealand. Participants can gain nationally recognised qualifications, strengthening their future employment prospects. *Mānava Learning* focuses on reintegration outcomes, offering vocational and life-skills training in areas such as small engine maintenance, construction, plumbing, business development and financial literacy through the Money Mastery course.

In its first year, NOA demonstrated strong uptake and reach. **More than 1,700 Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers completed 110 courses** across Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty, Nelson Marlborough, Central Otago, Auckland and Northland. Early results indicate **high levels of participant satisfaction, increased confidence in financial management, and greater preparedness for life and work after returning home**. Many participants reported plans to establish small businesses or apply newly acquired technical skills in their home countries.

The programme's tailored delivery model, which matches facilitators and participants based on language, culture and lived experience, has contributed to strong engagement and completion rates. With more than 15,000 Pacific workers participating in the RSE scheme annually, the programme extends the benefits of seasonal employment beyond short-term income generation. By building transferable skills, strengthening financial capability and supporting pathways into employment and entrepreneurship, it is contributing to improved livelihoods, greater economic resilience and sustainable development outcomes across the Pacific.

Transforming smallholder livelihoods in Timor-Leste

New Zealand has supported the **Raising Incomes through Sustainable Export Agriculture (RISE) programme s**ince 2021 – improving smallholder livelihoods in Timor-Leste through agricultural rehabilitation, diversification and market access delivered in partnership with Cooperativa Café Timor (CCT). **By December 2025, RISE had reached more than 18,000 farmers, benefiting over 77,000 family members and dependants, and improved at least 2,100 hectares of farmland**.

The programme combines practical on-farm support with access to reliable markets. Farmers have rehabilitated low-productivity coffee trees, adopted climate-smart practices such as shade management and composting, and diversified into higher-value crops including cocoa, vanilla, cloves and pepper. The programme has also supported farmers through provision of tools, seedlings and extension services, alongside complementary health initiatives that contribute to household wellbeing. Improved farm management and rehabilitation have **increased coffee yields**, with further gains expected as trees mature. Higher productivity strengthens economic returns without expanding cultivated land, supporting both livelihoods and environmental sustainability.

The programme has also delivered **significant income gains**. In 2025, **farmers received USD$7.85 million in payments for nearly 9,000 tonnes of produce**, including coffee, cocoa, vanilla, pepper and cloves—the highest revenues reported by CCT in three decades. **Average household income from coffee increased by 123 percent, from USD$260 in 2021 to USD$579 in 2025. These gains have strengthened household economic security and enabled greater investment in food, education and healthcare.**

A key strength of RISE is its market-linked approach. By maintaining reliable purchasing arrangements, CCT ensured farmers could continue selling their produce even when other buyers exited the market, helping to stabilise incomes in remote rural areas. The programme is also strengthening long-term resilience through crop diversification, which is emerging as an important secondary source of income. In a context where climate shocks and fluctuating commodity prices regularly affect rural livelihoods, RISE demonstrates how integrated support — combining agronomic improvement, diversification and market access — can increase incomes while laying the foundation for more resilient and sustainable rural growth.

Strengthening inclusive education in Tonga through partnership and system leadership

The **Tupu/Tubu Programme** is delivered in partnership with the University of the South Pacific to support teachers, school leaders and communities across **Tonga, Cook Islands, Fiji and Vanuatu** to create more inclusive learning environments. The programme aims to ensure all students can participate equitably in education and learn according to their individual needs.

In Tonga, a key focus has been strengthening teacher capability and supporting practical implementation of inclusive education. Over the past two years, **820 teachers, school leaders and education officials have participated in professional learning programmes and workshops to better identify diverse learner needs and apply appropriate support strategies in the classroom**.

The programme also builds collaboration between schools and families, **helping to improve participation of children who may otherwise face barriers to education**. Schools have reported instances of children enrolling or returning to school because of greater confidence among parents that their child's needs will be supported. One school principal described how a child was enrolled after their mother was encouraged by the school's strong reputation for inclusion.

Tupu/Tubu is implemented in close partnership with the Tonga Ministry of Education and Training's Inclusive Education team, ensuring activities align with national priorities and are embedded within existing systems. The programme also supports schools to incorporate inclusive education into their planning, translating inclusive education principles into practical actions at the school level.

The Tonga experience demonstrates how strong government partnership, teacher development and community engagement can create more inclusive school environments. By embedding inclusive education within national systems and school planning processes, Tupu/Tubu contributes to sustainable improvements in participation, belonging and learning outcomes for all children.



Educators engaging in inclusive education practice in Nuku'alofa Tonga. Credit: MFAT



Distribution of Sawyer bucket water filters at Tabwakea village, Kiritimati Island, have improved access to safe drinking water. Credit: MFAT

Goal 3: A sustainable future

Extending access to safe and secure drinking water on Kiritimati Island

Kiribati faces significant water security challenges due to its limited freshwater resources. Most of the country's water supply is sourced from shallow groundwater reserves that are highly vulnerable to saltwater intrusion and contamination. Rising sea levels, population growth and inadequate infrastructure further reduce water quality and availability.

To address these challenges, the Pacific Community (SPC), in partnership with Kiribati's Ministry for Line and Phoenix Islands Development, is implementing a project to **improve water security on Kiritimati Island**. The project is strengthening water supply and reticulation infrastructure, expanding access to safe drinking water, and building institutional capacity for sustainable water resource management.

The project has delivered **substantial improvements in household water security**. More than 1,500 Sawyer bucket water filters have been distributed, and **over 90 percent of households, schools, health facilities, government offices and tourism operators now have access to safe drinking water**. Communities have reported **significant reductions in diarrheal disease and other water-borne illnesses, while the time spent treating water has decreased by 65 percent**. These time savings have particularly benefited women, who are typically responsible for household water management.

Women's leadership has been a key feature of the programme. Fifteen women from the Nei Baneawa and Itoiningaina groups have been trained and engaged as Community WASH and Energy Champions, supporting household water security and water quality initiatives. The champions lead filter training, community outreach, household support, monitoring activities and public awareness campaigns.

The programme has also **strengthened women's participation in community decision-making and service delivery**. Women's leadership has been formalised through paid roles in filter distribution and monitoring, active participation in governance processes, and targeted support for vulnerable households, including people with disabilities. These approaches are helping to improve access to safe water while strengthening community ownership and the sustainability of water services on Kiritimati Island.

Safeguarding vulnerable coastal communities in Samoa

The **Climate Finance Partnership Arrangement** between the Governments of Samoa and New Zealand demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding vulnerable coastal communities from the impacts of climate change. Through targeted financing and technical collaboration, the partnership is helping Samoa respond to rising sea levels, coastal erosion and increasingly severe weather events that threaten communities, infrastructure and livelihoods.

A significant achievement under the partnership has been **construction of the Lauli'i seawall**. The project was prioritised due to extensive coastal erosion and the community's exposure to coastal hazards. It was delivered through a coordinated effort involving Samoa's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, and Samoa Tourism Authority, reflecting a collaborative and evidence-based approach to climate adaptation.



Newly constructed Lauli'i seawall, Samoa. Credit: MNRE

The Lauli'i seawall has **delivered immediate benefits by stabilising the coastline and reducing the impact of waves and storm surges.** Homes, community infrastructure and key transport links are now better protected from further erosion and coastal flooding. The project has **strengthened community resilience, reduced the risk of displacement and helped safeguard livelihoods. It has also improved the reliability of access routes that are critical for emergency response and economic activity.**

Building on this success, the partnership is supporting additional coastal protection works in Fasito'o Uta, Satupaitea, Manase and Saipipi, including seawalls, rock walls and beach replenishment measures designed to address local conditions and risks. By investing in critical infrastructure and strengthening technical capability, the partnership is enhancing the long-term resilience of Samoa's coastal communities. It demonstrates how targeted climate finance can reduce climate-related risks, support sustainable development and strengthen the resilience of communities most exposed to the impacts of climate change.

Water catchment support for communities

A two-year project delivered by UNICEF Aotearoa, UNICEF Timor-Leste and local partner PERMATIL is improving community water security in Timor-Leste through the development of community-based water catchments. The project supports 9,177 people across 25 communities in the Aileu and Dili municipalities by helping communities retain and manage water during dry periods.

The initiative combines community consultation, local capacity building and practical conservation measures. Working closely with local authorities, the project has trained community facilitators and mobilised volunteers to construct water retention structures, including terraces and ponds. This community-led approach has **strengthened technical skills, built local ownership and increased confidence in managing water resources, resulting in improved access to water and stronger stewardship of the local environment**.

Communities report that nature-based water conservation measures have **reduced erosion and improved the reliability of local water sources during both heavy rainfall and dry periods**. The success of these activities has encouraged neighbouring communities to adopt similar approaches. For example, Lismori sub-village implemented water conservation measures after observing the positive results. According to Ms Livia Mendonca, a youth community facilitator in Lismori, the water retention structures are creating opportunities to improve local livelihoods by increasing the availability of productive land for crops such as pineapple, taro and corn. "*Having a more stable water supply will support food security and generate additional income for farming families. If we can increase food production in the community, our people will have better nutrition, improved health, and greater financial stability*."



UNICEF staff hearing from Ms. Livia Mendonca, one of the community facilitators in Lismori sub-village. Credit: UNICEF Timor-Leste

The project demonstrates how community-led climate adaptation can strengthen resilience by combining traditional land stewardship knowledge with modern conservation practices. Improved water access, reduced environmental risks and enhanced livelihood opportunities are contributing to stronger community resilience. Active participation by young people, together with strong support from community elders, has also strengthened intergenerational knowledge sharing, social cohesion and shared responsibility for environmental protection.

Support for Niue's marine protection efforts

In 2025, New Zealand hosted a **Niue Ocean Wide (NOW)** delegation, made up of Resource Management Advisory Council representatives from Niue's 14 villages. The Ministry and other New Zealand government agencies including the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Department of Conservation (DOC), worked alongside iwi representatives, non-government organisations, philanthropic partners, and community leaders to provide an overview of New Zealand's approaches to marine resource management and conservation.



NOW delegation visit to Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre. Credit: MFAT

During the visit, **delegates engaged with iwi leaders, scientists, business owners, and government agencies to learn about sustainable development and natural resource management practices**. Key sites visited included Te Hāwere-a-Maki/Goat Island, where delegates explored the long-term benefits of marine protection; Tiritiri Matangi, which demonstrated predator-free conservation initiatives; and Waiheke Island, where species-focused rāhui are supporting ecological restoration. Delegates also visited Māori-led enterprises in Taupō and Rotorua that integrate environmental stewardship, education, and tourism. These experiences provided opportunities for participants to reflect on how similar approaches could be adapted to support community-led resource management in Niue.



Through support from the Ocean Conservation Commitments initiative — an innovative financing mechanism that contributes to the protection of one square kilometre of Niue's ocean for 20 years — the NOW Trust continues to play a key role in advancing conservation outcomes within Moana Mahu, Niue's marine protected area. Trust-funded initiatives include community-led resource management across villages, as well as activities that strengthen climate resilience and support sustainable development.

Climate Resilient Islands in Papua New Guinea programme

The impacts of climate change pose significant risks to food security, coastal protection, and livelihoods in Papua New Guinea. **Climate Resilient Islands**, implemented by Live & Learn Environment Education, strengthens local knowledge and capacity to support more sustainable, equitable, and climate-resilient communities. During 2025–26, the programme achieved the following results:

- In partnership with the Red Cross, **disaster risk management training was delivered to eight communities**. Participants developed skills in hazard and vulnerability assessment, risk prioritisation, disaster preparedness planning, location-specific risk mapping, and community SWOT analysis. **Each community also received a disaster preparedness kit**.
- Support for communities in Limbin focused on **strengthening coffee production**. A technical assessment identified opportunities to relocate coffee plantations closer to homes to **improve accessibility and management**. Plans were developed to integrate coffee crops with fruit trees near taro fields, **helping to improve productivity and land use efficiency**.
- In Marai and Nokon (New Ireland Province), communities worked with Live & Learn PNG, Ailan Awareness, and local government partners to **restore mangrove and coral reef ecosystems**. These ecosystems play a vital role in supporting food security, protecting coastlines, and providing resources for daily living. Communities also **introduced traditional fishing restrictions to support the recovery of fish stocks and began developing alternative protein initiatives, including poultry projects, to reduce pressure on marine resources**.



Mangrove nursery for restoration work in Marai Village, Papua New Guinea. Credit: Live & Learn Papua New Guinea.

Manaaki scholarships boost capability in environmental sustainability

Nida Nafila, an environmental engineer from Indonesia, completed a Master of Water Science and Management through New Zealand's **Manaaki Scholarship Programme**. The scholarship equipped her with advanced technical expertise and new perspectives that have **strengthened her contribution to water and environmental management in Indonesia**.

Growing up near the Ciliwung River in Jakarta, Nida witnessed the impacts of flooding, water pollution, and poor waste management firsthand. These experiences inspired her commitment to improving environmental and water systems outcomes and motivated her to deepen her knowledge and skills. Following her return to Indonesia, Nida founded Generasi Ciliwung (Gen-C), a community-led river education initiative that works with young people living along the Ciliwung River. Drawing on knowledge gained through her studies, Nida **uses science-based learning, storytelling, and environmental activities to build awareness of water stewardship and environmental protection**.



Nida Nafila conducting a Generasi-Ciliwung workshop for children and women in the region. Credit: Nida Nafila

Gen-C also promotes sustainable menstrual products and supports education on women's reproductive health. Through practical, community-based workshops, the initiative works with children and women in vulnerable and flood-prone communities. Participants learn how to make reusable sanitary pads from locally available natural materials, helping to **reduce waste and prevent single-use products from entering river systems**.

Nida credits her Manaaki Scholarship with helping her create lasting impact in her community. Reflecting on her experience, she said: "*The scholarship reminds me that support given to one person can create wider impact when that person returns home and shares it with others. For that I will always be grateful*."

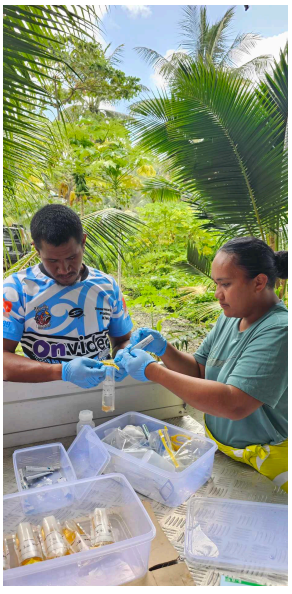
Sustainable coastal fisheries and aquaculture

Coastal fisheries and aquaculture play a vital role in food security and economic resilience across Pacific Island countries and territories, providing 50–90 percent of dietary protein and generating income for many households. Through the **Sustainable Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (SCoFA) project**, the Pacific Community (SPC) is supporting Pacific Island governments and communities to strengthen local and national capacity and promote a coordinated regional approach to the **sustainable management and development of coastal fisheries and aquaculture**. In the fisheries sector, support focuses on strengthening legislation, developing fisheries management plans, improving compliance, and advancing community-based fisheries management. In aquaculture, the project supports production through improved biosecurity, mentoring, technical assistance, and the transfer of technology and knowledge to communities.

The project has delivered new training courses on fisheries legislation, compliance, and fisheries management planning, alongside the development of educational resources. Across the Pacific, **at least 10 legislative and regulatory instruments have been developed or updated to strengthen the sustainable management of coastal resources**. The **Pacific Regional Aquaculture Strategy** has been completed, and the **Pacific Regional Framework on Aquatic Biosecurity** has been updated. Training programmes and grants have **supported communities to cultivate and market traditional aquaculture species**, including tilapia, giant clams, and sea cucumbers.

The project is also investigating opportunities to diversify Pacific aquaculture through the **development of new species**, including freshwater eels, pearl oysters, mangrove oysters, freshwater prawns, sea cucumbers, and marine finfish. This work has the **potential to create new economic opportunities, strengthen food security, and increase the resilience of Pacific communities to future environmental and economic pressures**.

Strengthening water security and resilience in Tokelau and Naoero



Water quality testing in Tokelau. Credit: Tokelau EDNRE

Tokelau and Naoero are two Pacific atoll nations participating in the **Pacific Partnership for Atoll Water Security**. Funded by New Zealand and delivered through the Pacific Community (SPC), the programme supports governments and communities to strengthen water security and build resilience to drought and climate change.

In Tokelau, the multi-year programme is led by the Department of Economic Development, Natural Resources and Environment (EDNRE). It focuses on upgrading and repairing water infrastructure, improving water quality monitoring, strengthening local technical capacity, and promoting sustainable water management practices. During 2025–26, activities included repairing leaking household and community water tanks across Fakaofo, Nukunonu, and Atafu; maintaining rainwater harvesting systems; and rehabilitating damaged spouting and catchment infrastructure. A major initiative, Operation Raindrop, mobilised trained teams to repair 193 household water systems and community tanks. This included cleaning, sealing, and recoating concrete tanks to reduce leakage and extend their lifespan. As a result, **communities gained an additional 520,000 litres of water storage capacity**.

Tokelau also introduced water quality testing programmes, installed filtration systems, and trained local staff and communities in safe drinking water management and water conservation. These efforts have **reduced water loss, increased the reliability of water supplies during dry periods, and improved access to safe drinking water**. Water quality monitoring has helped identify contamination risks, contributing to **improved public health outcomes**, while capacity-building initiatives have enabled local technicians and community members to maintain water systems independently, **supporting long-term sustainability**.

In early 2026, 10 Tokelauan water technicians received hands-on training in polyethylene (PE) tank repair, equipping them with the skills and tools needed to repair damaged tanks and train others in their communities. More than 60 leaking PE tanks have already been identified for repair. For Tokelau's remote communities, where rainwater is the primary source of freshwater, these investments have **strengthened drought resilience, improved water security, and supported more sustainable, locally managed water systems**.



Water technicians from across Tokelau's three atolls training in repair of PE water tanks. Credit: SPC

In Naoero, the programme is led by the Department of Climate Change and National Resilience (DCCNR). Activities focus on repairing and upgrading rainwater harvesting infrastructure, improving water monitoring systems, and strengthening community capacity for sustainable water management. Across all 14 districts, the programme is repairing leaking tanks and concrete cisterns, installing and rehabilitating gutters and downpipes to improve rainwater capture, and connecting harvesting systems to existing storage infrastructure. Additional support includes water quality testing, drought preparedness initiatives, training in system maintenance and water management, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) activities.

The programme has **increased accessible drinking water storage by approximately 300,000 litres**, significantly improving water availability for households. Repairs to tanks and rainwater harvesting systems have **reduced leakage, improved system efficiency, and enabled households to capture and store more rainwater for use during drought periods**. These improvements have **increased the reliability of water supplies while extending the lifespan of critical infrastructure**.

Training in water quality testing, system maintenance, and drought management has strengthened technical capability within the DCCNR, public health agencies, and local communities. This has supported **more coordinated, evidence-based decision-making** and helped ensure that water systems can be maintained locally beyond the life of the programme.

For Naoero, where freshwater resources are limited and climate variability is high, these outcomes are significant. Strengthened rainwater harvesting systems have **improved household resilience, reduced reliance on external water supplies, and contributed to better health outcomes**. By building local capability and strengthening water infrastructure, the programme is supporting a **more sustainable and resilient water future for Naoero**.

Securing Tonga's soil for generations

Soil is a finite and non-renewable resource in Tonga, underpinning food security, livelihoods, water quality, climate resilience, and cultural identity. However, increasing population pressure, agricultural intensification, mechanisation, and geological and climate-related shocks — including the 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Haʻapai volcanic eruption and tsunami — have contributed to declining soil health and fertility across the country. In the absence of long-term management goals and a shared understanding of soil condition and trends, farmers face pressure to prioritise short-term productivity, leading to practices such as excessive fertiliser use, reduced fallow periods, and abandonment of degraded land. These pressures accelerate soil degradation and threaten the long-term sustainability of agricultural production.

Through the **Climate Smart Agriculture and Sustainable Land Management (CALM) project**, long-standing national, regional, and international partnerships have transformed decades of scientific research and local experience into a coherent national framework for soil security. The project supported applied soil research, post-disaster reassessment of legacy and new soil monitoring sites, capacity building within Tongan institutions, and the co-development of the **Kingdom of Tonga National Soil Strategy, which was formally launched in March 2026**.

The Strategy is the product of collaboration between Tonga's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests (MAFF), national non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, regional organisations, and scientific partners from Australia and New Zealand. It was developed under the leadership of Tongan soil scientists and policymakers, ensuring national ownership and relevance.

Tonga's first National Soil Strategy provides a clear roadmap for reversing soil degradation and safeguarding soil health for future generations. Grounded in Tongan values of stewardship and land inheritance, the Strategy promotes sustainable soil management practices, strengthened national capability, supportive policies and guidance, and robust monitoring and evaluation systems. It recognises soil as a living system and encourages practices such as improved fallow management, cover cropping, reduced soil disturbance, balanced nutrient management, and restoration of soil organic carbon.

Importantly, the Strategy responds to Tonga's unique land tenure context by establishing a shared evidence base to support sustainable land management decisions. This helps align the interests of landowners, farmers, and government around long-term productivity and soil stewardship, rather than short-term resource extraction.

The completion of Tonga's first National Soil Strategy marks a significant **shift from fragmented interventions to a coordinated, long-term approach to soil security**. It serves as a national call to action, clarifying roles and responsibilities across government, communities, the private sector, and development partners. By linking soil health to agricultural productivity, ecosystem resilience, and livelihoods, the Strategy provides a pathway for farmers to protect and enhance soil resources while maintaining production. For CALM, it demonstrates how sustained investment in science, local leadership, and partnerships can translate into nationally owned policy frameworks that safeguard critical natural resources and support the wellbeing of current and future generations.

Communities in New Caledonia act against coastal erosion

New Zealand's contribution to the **Kiwa Initiative**, alongside France, Australia, Canada, and the European Union, supports nature-based solutions and technical assistance that deliver tangible benefits for Pacific communities and ecosystems. Coordinated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the **Scaling-up Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Islands project** promotes restoration and sustainable management of coastal and terrestrial ecosystems in **Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna**.

In Ouvéa, in the Loyalty Islands of New Caledonia, communities are addressing coastal erosion through locally led, nature-based solutions. Eight low-cost coastal plant nurseries have been established to propagate native species, including Scaevola taccada and Sporobolus virginicus, which help **stabilise sandy soils and strengthen shorelines against storm surges and sea-level rise**. More than 200 community members, including women and young people, participated in training on nursery establishment and management. As the plants mature, seedlings will be planted along vulnerable coastlines to restore native vegetation and enhance natural coastal protection.

By combining traditional knowledge with ecosystem-based adaptation approaches, the project is **strengthening community ownership of climate adaptation efforts while improving the resilience of coastal ecosystems and the**

Supporting innovative finance for coral reef resilience in the Pacific

New Zealand continues to play an influential role in advancing innovative finance solutions for coral reef conservation and climate resilience through its position as the only Pacific member of the Executive Board of the **Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR).** Established in 2020 by the United Nations and a global public-private coalition, the GFCR is a 10-year blended finance initiative that supports sustainable businesses delivering positive outcomes for coral reef ecosystems, local economies and coastal communities. Through its strategic financing model, the Fund has leveraged more than USD$161 million in public and private investment and supported over 150 reef-positive enterprises globally.

The GFCR delivered strong results in the Pacific during 2025. In **Fiji,** a 'Blue Lending Facility' was established in partnership with the Fiji Development Bank, combining concessional finance and guarantees to expand access to capital for reef-positive businesses. The facility has identified a pipeline of enterprises requiring more than USD$1.3 million in investment, **directly supporting livelihoods while strengthening locally managed marine area resilience**.

In **Papua New Guinea**, GFCR financing is helping to grow small-scale reef-positive enterprises through technical assistance, grants, and a loan guarantee facility delivered in partnership with a women-focused microfinance institution. The initiative is expected to unlock finance for up to 375 women-led businesses, with early results demonstrating **increased income from sustainable fisheries activities**. This highlights how climate resilience, economic empowerment and gender inclusion can be advanced simultaneously through targeted investment.

As a member of the Executive Board, New Zealand has contributed to the strategic direction and governance of the Fund, including helping to shape the design of the newly approved Solomon Islands programme and providing oversight of fund performance and operations. Through this leadership role, New Zealand is helping to **increase Pacific access to innovative finance mechanisms that support coral reef protection, strengthen climate resilience, and create sustainable economic opportunities for coastal communities**.

By mobilising investment, strengthening local enterprises and promoting sustainable ocean-based livelihoods, the GFCR is demonstrating how blended finance can deliver tangible environmental, social and economic benefits. New Zealand's continued engagement is helping to ensure Pacific countries are well positioned to benefit from innovative financing approaches that protect critical marine ecosystems while supporting resilient and inclusive development.

Strengthening the foundation for climate smart agriculture in the ASEAN region

New Zealand's investment in the **ASEAN Climate Smart Agriculture Initiative,** delivered by MPI and the New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre, has strengthened Southeast Asian countries' capacity to reduce agricultural emissions while improving resilience and productivity. The initiative has enhanced the technical systems, partnerships and evidence needed to support low-emissions agricultural development across the region.

A key achievement has been **improving countries' ability to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions**. Support for development of Tier 2 greenhouse gas inventories in six countries has improved the quality of emissions data, enabling governments to better inform Nationally Determined Contributions, agricultural mitigation strategies and policy decisions. The establishment of regional greenhouse gas measurement hubs in Viet Nam and the Philippines has also expanded access to technical equipment, specialist training and collaborative research, **strengthening regional capability in emissions measurement and management**.

Improved data collection and analysis have enabled countries to assess mitigation options — including more efficient livestock management practices — supporting evidence-based approaches to lowering agricultural emissions. Progress has also been made in strengthening national monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems. In Viet Nam, the programme supported the development of a rice emissions MRV framework that now underpins the country's one million hectare low-emissions rice programme. Similar systems have been piloted in Indonesia, providing governments with **stronger tools to measure progress, demonstrate results and attract investment in low-emissions agriculture**.

By strengthening technical capability, improving emissions monitoring systems and fostering regional collaboration, the initiative has built a stronger foundation for climate-smart agriculture across Southeast Asia. The programme has **enhanced countries' ability to reduce emissions, improve productivity and access emerging opportunities in agricultural carbon markets, supporting a more resilient and sustainable agricultural sector**.

Supporting a regional approach to climate change research

The **Pacific Ocean Climate Crisis Assessment (POCCA)** is an initiative led by the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the University of Canterbury that addresses a critical gap in the Pacific region: the limited availability of locally grounded, evidence-based research to inform climate change policy, adaptation, and resilience planning. The project documents Pacific perspectives on the climate crisis, adaptation, and resilience across 16 Pacific island countries.



Pacific and New Zealand academics and researchers gather in Fiji to collaborate on the Pacific Ocean Climate Crisis Assessment research. Credit: USP

Completed in 2025, POCCA was a landmark undertaking in interdisciplinary climate research. It brought together more than 80 Pasifika academics and researchers spanning the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and Indigenous knowledge systems, alongside experts from all New Zealand universities and partner institutions in Australia and the United States.

As the largest climate research initiative undertaken in the Pacific to date, POCCA generated a robust body of regionally relevant evidence to **support more effective climate decision-making**. The assessment prominently featured at the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29), where its analyses of climate finance, loss and damage, and economic impacts were widely referenced and well received. Its findings are now being used by Pacific governments, regional organisations, and international partners to inform climate policy and advocacy at regional and global levels. Importantly, POCCA has **strengthened the credibility and visibility of Pacific perspectives on climate change by providing strong evidence grounded in Pacific knowledge, experiences, and priorities**.

The initiative's impact continues beyond the completion of the assessment. POCCA has established a lasting regional network of researchers and practitioners, strengthening opportunities for future collaboration and knowledge sharing. Its findings have also **informed curriculum development across tertiary education institutions and contributed to undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional training programmes**. POCCA stands as a transformative initiative that has **advanced interdisciplinary climate research, strengthened evidence-based policymaking, and elevated Pacific voices and knowledge systems in global climate discourse**.

Strengthening climate resilience and preserving cultural knowledge in the Marshall Islands

New Zealand is supporting the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) to address **climate change-related loss and damage** by strengthening national capacity, improving climate data systems, and preserving Marshallese culture and knowledge. The RMI Climate Change Directorate (CCD) leads implementation of the programme, advancing evidence generation, partnerships, and community engagement.

The programme is delivering tangible results. Institutional capability has been strengthened through practical, on-the-job learning, with CCD staff working alongside Loss and Damage experts and applying Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology to map coastlines and generate high-quality risk and resilience data. This technology helps to quantify the impacts of climate change, including severe king tides, coastal erosion, and land loss, **providing evidence to support future investment and funding proposals for coastal protection and adaptation measures**. LiDAR surveys are generating detailed coastal elevation data that will strengthen national planning and decision-making, with final outputs expected in October 2026.

The programme is also improving the accessibility and use of climate information through partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC) and local organisations. Through the Non-Economic Loss and Damage Project, Jo-Jikum (a youth-led non-profit) is documenting Indigenous knowledge, oral histories, and legends from outer atoll communities, while developing 12 Marshallese Language Arts booklets. These resources will be integrated into local school curricula, **helping to preserve cultural knowledge and strengthen understanding of climate change impacts among future generations**.

By combining scientific evidence generation with cultural preservation and inclusive community engagement, the programme is **strengthening the Marshall Islands' ability to understand, document, and respond to climate change impacts**. It is also helping to **safeguard Indigenous knowledge, reinforce cultural identity, and build a stronger evidence base** to support future adaptation and resilience efforts.

Leveraging New Zealand's renewable energy expertise outside of the Pacific

ASEAN Renewable Energy Facility – Lao PDR

Lao PDR has pursued an ambitious vision to become the "Battery of Southeast Asia", granting hydropower concessions to private operators to supply domestic and regional electricity markets. As several major concessions approached expiry, the Government faced increasing fiscal pressures alongside unsolicited proposals offering substantial upfront payments in exchange for long-term control of strategic energy assets. This created a risk that short-term fiscal considerations could outweigh longer-term public value and energy security objectives.

Through support under the ASEAN Renewable Energy Facility, the Government **strengthened its capability to assess and negotiate concession options**. Technical assistance provided robust financial, legal, and economic analysis tools, alongside structured decision-making frameworks to evaluate options such as concession extensions, asset transfers, and competitive tendering processes. Capacity-building activities improved the Government's ability to independently assess complex proposals and understand associated fiscal, strategic, and economic trade-offs.

As a result, the Government has **strengthened its ability to make informed, evidence-based decisions regarding the future of key hydropower assets**. Analysis identified **opportunities to maximise long-term economic returns and enhance energy security**, while highlighting risks that some proposed arrangements could undervalue nationally significant assets. Overall, the project has **improved Lao PDR's ability to manage hydropower resources as strategic economic assets, supporting fiscal sustainability, reducing the risk of undervalued agreements, and promoting more resilient long-term development outcomes**.

New Zealand–Africa Geothermal Facility (AGF)

The New Zealand–Africa Geothermal Facility, established in 2017 through a partnership between New Zealand and the African Union Commission, supports geothermal development in East Africa by reducing early-stage project risks, improving project quality, and strengthening institutional capability. In 2025–26, the AGF delivered technical assistance across **Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Djibouti, and Rwanda**, complemented by regional training programmes available throughout East Africa. Geothermal professionals received training, mentoring, and technical support, while capacity building was reinforced through train-the-trainer models, peer learning, and project-based assistance.

The Facility contributed to **tangible progress in geothermal development across the region**, including support for applications to the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility, improvements in project preparation and proposal quality, and engagement with financiers that helped secure conditional grant funding.

Several interventions demonstrated strong value for money. In Tanzania, support advanced preparations for the country's first geothermal drilling campaign at Ngozi. In Ethiopia and Djibouti, technical advice strengthened project prioritisation, regulatory frameworks, and drilling readiness. Asset management training delivered across multiple countries improved preventative maintenance practices and strengthened health, safety, and environmental management systems, generating estimated lifecycle savings that exceeded programme costs.

Over time, the Facility is expected to **increase the success rate of geothermal investments, support reliable low-carbon energy generation, reduce dependence on fossil fuels and climate-sensitive hydropower systems, and strengthen institutional resilience across the sector**. The programme has also enhanced New Zealand's reputation as a trusted, flexible, and technically credible partner in renewable energy development.

New Zealand Caribbean Renewable Energy Facility (FRENZ)

The New Zealand Caribbean Renewable Energy Facility supports Caribbean partners to achieve their renewable energy and climate objectives by providing specialist technical expertise needed to attract investment and implement renewable energy projects, with a particular focus on geothermal energy. In 2025–26, FRENZ supported development of an **Integrated Resource and Resiliency Plan to guide the long-term development of Grenada's electricity sector over the next 20 years**. In addition to providing technical analysis, the Facility facilitated collaboration between the Government of Grenada, the energy regulator, and the state-owned utility to build consensus around a least-cost electricity strategy that delivers reliable and affordable energy, supports decarbonisation, and remains resilient under a range of future scenarios. Other FRENZ achievements during the year include:

- supporting geothermal exploration and development activities in **northern Dominica.**
- assessing geothermal infrastructure in **Saint Vincent** following a 2021 volcanic eruption and supporting the review and rehabilitation of solar assets damaged by Hurricane Beryl.
- completing a regional geothermal workforce and skills gap analysis in collaboration with the **Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States**.

Expanding renewable energy access and skills development in Fiji and Niue

New Zealand is supporting transition to renewable energy across the Pacific through investments that improve energy security, reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels, and create economic and educational opportunities.

The **LaKaRo Renewable Energy Project in Fiji**, co-funded with the United Arab Emirates, is improving access to reliable electricity for the island communities of Lakeba, Kadavu and Rotuma. Historically dependent on diesel generators, these communities have experienced routine electricity shortages, with scheduled blackouts of up to 12 hours per day affecting households, schools, health services, businesses and critical infrastructure. The project has installed renewable energy generation systems and battery storage to replace diesel-powered electricity generation, with commissioning scheduled for 2026.

Once fully operational, the new systems are expected to deliver substantial environmental and economic benefits. **Annual diesel savings are projected to exceed 175,000 litres across the three islands, reducing carbon emissions by more than 450 tonnes each year while improving the reliability and availability of electricity for communities and businesses**. This will support economic activity, public services and community wellbeing, while reducing exposure to volatile fuel costs.

The **Niue Renewable Energy Programme (NREP),** implemented by Sunergise, is also due to be commissioned in 2026. It is expected to **save approximately NZD$6,500–8,950 per day in diesel imports for electricity generation and contribute significantly to the Government of Niue's target of achieving 80 percent renewable energy generation**.



The completed renewable energy site in Niue. Credit: Sunergise

The programme has also invested in building local skills and knowledge. A targeted Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education programme engaged primary and secondary school students through practical activities focused on renewable energy, while teachers received training to incorporate these concepts into ongoing classroom learning. The Government of Niue, in partnership with Sunergise, provided the opportunity for tertiary students to complete online renewable energy courses.

By combining renewable energy infrastructure with education and skills development, these investments are strengthening energy resilience, reducing emissions, and helping build the workforce and expertise needed to support a more sustainable future across the Pacific.

Digitising fisheries monitoring to improve data quality and decision-making

New Zealand is supporting more efficient and reliable fisheries monitoring across the Pacific through the **Offline Longline Observer (OLLO) application,** developed by SPC. Tuna fishery observers play a critical role in collecting information on fishing effort, catch volumes, fisheries science and compliance with regulations. Historically, data was recorded on paper forms, creating challenges for data quality, accessibility and timely reporting.

OLLO is helping to modernise this process by enabling observers to collect and submit data electronically, reducing errors and minimising the need for data cleaning and double handling. The application is now used by the Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Adoption of the system continued to grow in 2025. Of the 145 longline fishing trips completed during the year, 57 percent were recorded using OLLO, up from 35 percent in 2024. Training has played an important role in increasing uptake, with all longline trips undertaken by French Polynesia and Samoa recorded through OLLO following observer training programmes.

The transition to digital data collection is already delivering significant benefits. Observer feedback highlights **improved data accuracy, easier access to information, and substantial gains in efficiency**. Most notably, data reporting timeframes have been reduced from weeks or months to just days or hours, **enabling fisheries agencies to access critical information more quickly for monitoring, management and compliance purposes**.

Strengthening capability for climate finance governance in Cook Islands

Climate action is a national priority for the Cook Islands under the National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ and their Nationally Determined Contribution, and additional support for implementation capacity is helping to translate these ambitions into sustained impact. Through the **Climate Finance Capacity Support Programme**, New Zealand is partnering with the Cook Islands to strengthen core public sector systems and embed specialist expertise across priority areas — including finance, infrastructure, energy, tourism, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. This country-led approach focuses on strengthening institutional foundations, improving cross-government coordination, and supporting delivery of climate initiatives aligned with national priorities.

To date, financial management reforms are reducing audit backlogs, improving data quality, and strengthening fiduciary oversight, helping to **enhance readiness for direct access to international climate finance**. Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems have also been strengthened, **enabling better tracking of results, increased accountability, and more adaptive management of climate investments**. In the infrastructure sector, government agencies are **increasingly applying climate risk assessments and improved asset management practices to support a shift from reactive maintenance to proactive, resilience-focused investment planning**. This includes planning for critical health infrastructure across Rarotonga and the Pa Enua.

Embedded technical support is also helping to advance renewable energy and tourism priorities. The New Zealand-funded Aitutaki Stage 2 Renewable Energy Project has progressed through improvements to system design, procurement readiness, and local capability. Once completed, the project is expected to **significantly reduce reliance on diesel** while incorporating community engagement and social inclusion considerations. The release of the Cook Islands Destination Stewardship Plan 2025–2035 in April 2026 established a new **framework for managing tourism in ways that support environmental sustainability, protect cultural heritage, and enhance community wellbeing**.

Collectively, these reforms demonstrate a shift towards a **more integrated and systems-based approach to climate governance**. While still at an early stage, the Cook Islands is now better positioned to **manage climate risks, coordinate climate action across government, and demonstrate the institutional capability required to access and manage larger and more complex sources of international climate finance**.

Turning climate risk information into action across the Pacific

While many Pacific island countries have extensive experience responding to natural hazards, limited access to detailed, locally relevant risk information has constrained long-term planning, investment prioritisation and early action. To address this challenge, New Zealand is supporting the **Pacific Risk Tools for Resilience (PARTneR) programme,** which is equipping Pacific governments with advanced climate risk mapping and forecasting tools that transform complex climate data into practical information for decision-making.

Led by Pacific institutions in partnership with regional and technical agencies, the programme supports the **Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu** to model climate risks associated with cyclones, flooding, sea level rise and drought. By combining national data with local knowledge, countries are developing stronger evidence bases to inform planning, investment and resilience-building efforts.

The programme is already delivering practical benefits. In **Vanuatu**, climate risk maps are helping governments and communities identify areas that may become unsuitable for development due to sea level rise and coastal erosion, supporting more informed land-use planning decisions. In **Samoa**, flood modelling along the Vaisigano River has strengthened the evidence base for resilient infrastructure investments and informed funding decisions aimed at reducing future flood risk. In **Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands**, drought forecasting tools are improving preparedness by enabling governments to anticipate water shortages earlier, giving communities additional time to store water, protect crops and secure essential supplies.

A key achievement of the programme is its focus on developing country-owned systems. Risk models are developed collaboratively using the best available national data and are designed to be maintained, updated and used by government agencies over time. This approach **strengthens national capacity, improves coordination across climate, planning and infrastructure agencies, and ensures climate risk information remains relevant for future decision-making**. While the programme continues to evolve, the tools are already reshaping how Pacific governments plan for climate impacts. By turning climate forecasting into actionable insights, the PARTneR programme is helping countries move from reactive disaster response to proactive, risk-informed decision-making. This is **strengthening resilience, improving the targeting of scarce resources, and enabling Pacific Island countries to make more informed investments that support sustainable development and long-term climate adaptation**.

Helping Pacific children prepare for natural hazards

The **Weather Ready Pacific Programme** is improving disaster preparedness among Pacific children through the distribution of the child-friendly *COPE: Be Ready for Disasters!* booklets. Designed for children aged 6–12, the resources **help young people understand natural hazards, prepare for emergencies, and stay safe during disasters**.

The booklets cover seven key hazards that affect Pacific communities — cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, floods, storm surges, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions — and are translated into local Pacific languages to maximise accessibility and reach. In 2026, new editions were produced in Gagana FakaTokelau and Vagahau Niue, supporting hazard education in Tokelau and Niue.



Launch of the Weather Ready Pacific "COPE: Be Prepared for Disasters" booklets in Tokelau, May 2026. Credit: SPREP

A Tokelauan-language version, written in clear, accessible language and supported by engaging illustrations, was launched in Tokelau in May 2026. By providing culturally relevant and age-appropriate learning resources, the programme is helping to build disaster awareness from an early age, strengthen community preparedness, and equip the next generation with the knowledge and confidence to respond safely to natural hazards.

Combining coastal protection and coral restoration to build community resilience in Tuvalu

The **Tuvalu Coastal Adaptation Project Phase II** is strengthening the resilience of vulnerable coastlines through major coastal protection works while restoring the natural ecosystems that support communities and livelihoods. A key component of the project is coral transplantation, an ecosystem-based adaptation measure that helps protect and regenerate reef systems that are critical for food security, coastal protection and biodiversity.

As land reclamation and shoreline protection works have progressed, corals and other marine species from affected areas have been carefully relocated to safer reef sites. In partnership with the local youth organisation Fuligafou, the project has established coral nurseries, delivered technical training, and undertaken community awareness activities to support long-term reef restoration. The initiative is expected to **support restoration of coral reef along the 800m of reclaimed land, helping to offset construction impacts while enhancing marine biodiversity and strengthening the natural coastal defences that communities depend on**.

Significant progress was made during 2025, including the identification of donor and recipient reef sites and the establishment of a coral nursery to support ongoing regeneration. Training workshops strengthened local skills in coral propagation, monitoring and ecosystem management, building the capacity of government agencies, civil society organisations and community members to lead future conservation efforts.

The project has also empowered local communities, particularly youth and women, to take an active role in managing and protecting marine resources. **By combining engineered coastal protection with ecosystem restoration, the project is delivering lasting climate resilience while strengthening local ownership and stewardship of natural resources.** This integrated approach is helping safeguard both communities and the reef ecosystems they depend on, providing a model for climate adaptation in vulnerable atoll nations.



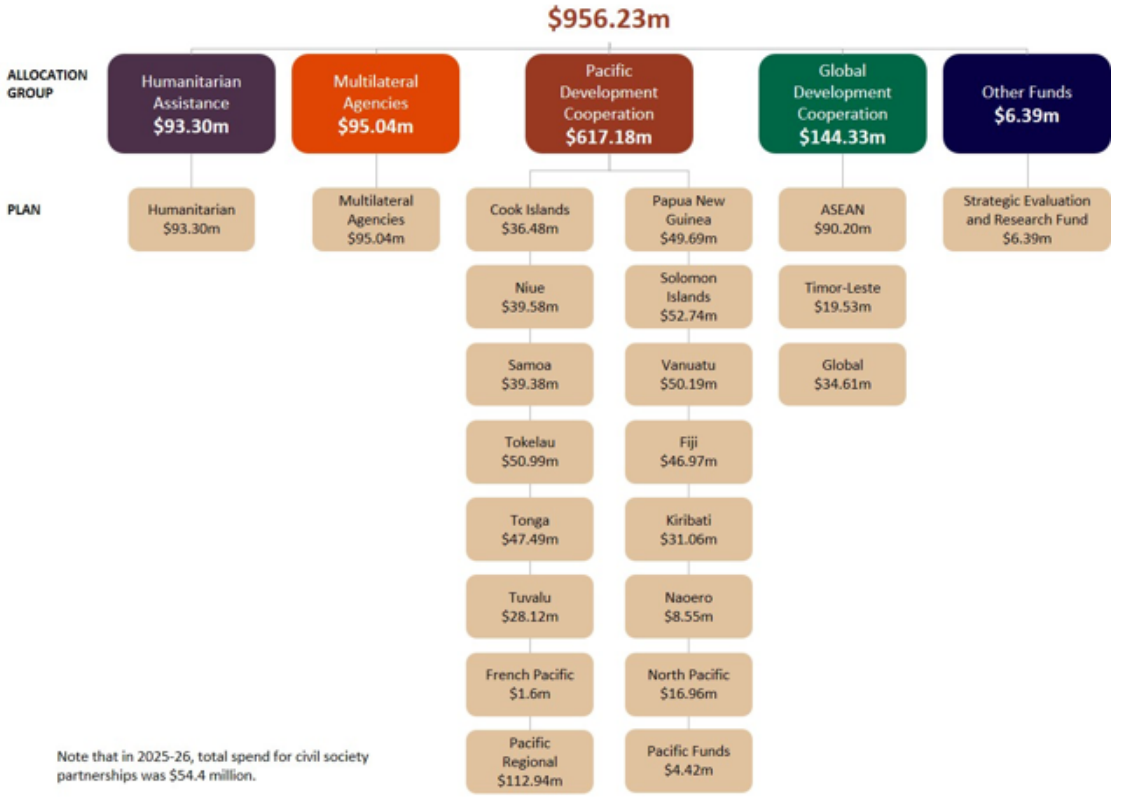
Coral nursery establishment and maintenance. Credit: UNDP

Delivery of the IDC in 2025–26

New Zealand's total IDC spend for 2025–26 was NZD$956.2 million. The following pages provide an overview of where IDC Programme expenditure was delivered, the sectors it contributed to, and performance against key indicators.

The Crown IDC appropriation is split into five allocation groups (Humanitarian Assistance, Multilateral Agencies, Pacific Development Cooperation, Global Development Cooperation, and Other Funds). For each of these allocation groups, multi-year plans provide strategic direction for how funding is planned and spent. The below diagram shows expenditure over the year by allocation group and plan. Each bilateral and regional plan includes expenditure on scholarships, multi-country activities, partnership activities, and High Commission/Embassy Funds for that country or region.

FIGURE 3: IDC 2025–26 EXPENDITURE BY ALLOCATION GROUP AND PLAN



The following table provides a geographic view of IDC expenditure, by region and sub-region. Individual countries are specified where they received more than NZD$1 million in IDC. This view includes all spend apportioned to relevant countries, including humanitarian assistance.

New Zealand's primary focus is on the Pacific, where we spent NZD$637.6 million, or 66.7 percent of IDC. Our secondary focus is on Southeast Asia, where we spent NZD$124.48 million (13% of total IDC).

TABLE 1: IDC 2025–26 EXPENDITURE BY REGION, SUB-REGION AND COUNTRY

REGION, SUB REGION & COUNTRY	EXPENDITURE 2025-26 ($)	% OF TOTAL IDC
PACIFIC	**637,610,984**	**66.7%**
Polynesia	**247,790,145**	**25.9%**
Cook Islands	37,131,313	3.9%
Niue	39,889,133	4.2%
Samoa	40,341,345	4.2%
Tokelau	51,331,340	5.4%
Tonga	47,697,841	5.0%
Tuvalu	28,464,030	3.0%
Polynesia regional / Other Polynesia	2,935,143	0.3%
Melanesia	**207,047,037**	**21.7%**
Fiji	47,067,751	4.9%
Papua New Guinea	53,294,309	5.6%
Solomon Islands	53,583,701	5.6%
Vanuatu	50,615,745	5.3%
Melanesia regional / Other Melanesia	2,485,531	0.3%
Micronesia	**57,977,777**	**6.1%**
Kiribati	31,764,778	3.3%
Republic of the Marshall Islands	7,578,558	0.8%
Federated States of Micronesia	3,730,102	0.4%
Naoero	8,552,244	0.9%
Palau	5,751,720	0.6%
Micronesia regional	600,375	0.1%
Pacific regional	**124,796,024**	**13.1%**
Pacific regional	124,796,024	13.1%
ASIA	**161,752,472**	**16.9%**
South & Southeast Asia	**134,398,899**	**14.1%**
Bangladesh	5,150,211	0.5%
Cambodia	16,125,239	1.7%
Indonesia	17,880,512	1.9%
Laos	17,479,803	1.8%
Malaysia	2,427,964	0.3%
Myanmar	24,150,238	2.5%
Philippines	10,831,716	1.1%
Sri Lanka	3,078,254	0.3%
Thailand	3,006,737	0.3%
Timor-Leste	19,729,459	2.1%
Viet Nam	12,832,384	1.3%
South & Southeast Asia regional / Other South & Southeast Asia	1,706,381	0.2%
Central Asia	**6,450,150**	**0.7%**
Afghanistan	6,400,000	0.7%
Asia Central regional / Other Central Asia	50,150	0.0%
Middle East	**19,723,712**	**2.1%**
Lebanon	2,000,000	0.2%
Occupied Palestinian Territories	14,009,938	1.5%
Syria	1,500,000	0.2%
Yemen	2,000,000	0.2%
Other Middle East	213,774	0.0%
Asia Regional	**1,179,711**	**0.1%**
Asia Regional	1,179,711	0.1%
AFRICA	**25,982,704**	**2.7%**
Ethiopia	5,618,732	0.6%

Kenya	1,359,136	0.1%
Tanzania	1,430,325	0.1%
Rwanda	1,085,714	0.1%
Sudan	3,500,000	0.4%
Africa regional / Other Africa	12,988,797	1.4%
EUROPE	**13,040,000**	**1.4%**
Ukraine	13,000,000	1.4%
Europe regional / Other Europe	40,000	0.0%
AMERICAS	**9,054,016**	**0.9%**
Venezuela	2,015,000	0.2%
America regional/Other America	7,039,016	0.7%
MULTILATERAL & WORLDWIDE	**108,794,271**	**11.4%**
GRAND TOTAL	**956,234,446**	**100.0%**

New Zealand's IDC funding is strategically directed to sectors that align with the needs of partner countries and New Zealand's strengths. These sectors address critical global and regional challenges while promoting sustainable, inclusive development. The three sectors with the highest expenditure in 2025–26 were multi-sector activities (core support to multilateral and regional agencies); government and civil society; and education.

TABLE 2: IDC 2025–26 EXPENDITURE BY SECTOR

SECTOR GROUP	TOTAL
MULTISECTOR AND GENERAL SUPPORT	**296,772,697**
Multisector	191,035,421
Commodity Aid and General Programme Assistance	89,792,769
Administrative Costs of Donors	10,742,541
Debt Relief	3,570,000
Unallocated/Unspecified	1,631,965
GOVERNANCE	**186,850,955**
Government and Civil Society	160,967,469
Other Social Infrastructure and Services	25,883,485
EDUCATION	**116,478,491**
Education	116,478,491
HUMANITARIAN	**104,039,909**
Humanitarian Aid	104,039,909
AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND OTHER PRODUCTION SERVICES	**100,131,679**
Agriculture	48,343,187
Fishing	28,403,280
Construction	8,863,898
Trade Policies and Regulations	6,137,719
Industry	5,412,863
Tourism	2,001,630
Forestry	969,102
HEALTH	**93,270,708**
Health	46,617,103
Water and Sanitation	27,380,730
Population Policies/Programmes and Reproductive Health	19,272,876
ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES	**58,690,008**
Energy	28,319,861
Transport And Storage	12,597,560
Banking And Financial Services	10,062,445
Communications	4,609,443
Business And Other Services	3,100,699
GRAND TOTAL	**956,234,446**

The Ministry has various targets and commitments associated with the way that IDC expenditure is managed. The tables below show how we are performing against key targets.

TABLE 3: IDC 2025–26 PERFORMANCE AGAINST KEY TARGETS

Commitment	Target	2025–26 actual	2024-27 triennium to date	Commitment source
IDC spend in the Pacific	At least 60% of IDC	$637.6 million 66.7% of total IDC	$1,210 million 63.4% of total IDC	ICESD Policy Statement
IDC spend on Aid for Trade in the Pacific[35]	At least 20% of IDC in the Pacific	$109.8 million 17.2% of IDC in the Pacific	$223.3 million 18.4% of IDC in the Pacific	PACER Plus Implementation Arrangement
IDC spend on initiatives where gender equality and women's empowerment is a principal objective	4% of IDC	$46.6 million 4.9% of total IDC	$94.5 million 4.9% of total IDC	Ministry internal target, based on OECD DAC average
IDC spend on initiatives where gender equality and women's empowerment is a significant objective	60% of IDC	$434.1 million 45.4% of total IDC	$911.1 million 47.7% of total IDC	Ministry internal target, based on OECD DAC average
IDC spend with NGO Partnerships	3.5% of IDC over 2024–27 triennium	$54.4 million 5.7% of total IDC	$94.1 million 4.9% of IDC	Ministry internal target for allocation of IDC

TABLE 4: IDC PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2022–25 CLIMATE FINANCE COMMITMENT

Climate Finance Commitment January 2022 to December 2025		
	Target for 2022–25 Commitment	**Actual to 30 December 2025**
Expenditure	$1.300 billion	$1.324 billion
Proportion of climate finance expenditure applied to the Pacific.	At least 50% in the Pacific	61.4% ($813.2 million)
Proportion of climate finance expenditure applied to adaptation.	At least 50% for adaption	62.3% ($824.5 million)

[35] Aid for Trade is an initiative developed by the World Trade Organisation to promote development assistance to developing countries to improve their ability to reap the benefits of trade liberalisation. New Zealand is a participating donor in this initiative, with a focus on enabling better outcomes for the Pacific.

International Development Cooperation (MYA)



What we intend to achieve

This appropriation is intended to achieve progress by Pacific island and developing countries against their sustainable development priorities and against the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

TABLE 5: ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

	2025–26		2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION RESULTS	**Budget Standard**	**Actual**	**Actual**	**Actual**	**Actual**
Number of Pacific island countries that remain on track on their economic and public sector reform programme	Maintain or improve trend	9/ 9 assessed as on track. (Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)	7/7 countries assessed as on track (Kiribati, Naoero, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)	8/8 countries assessed as on track (Fiji, Kiribati, Naoero, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, PNG)	5/6 countries assessed as on track (Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands)
Number of people participating in a labour mobility initiative	Maintain or improve trend	20,226 people (M: 18,614; F: 1,610; unspecified: 2)	17,348 people (M: 15,872; F: 1,476)	17,911 people (M: 16,214; F: 1,697)	15,792 people (M: 14,357, F: 1,418, unspecified: 17)
Number of people directly benefitting from activities that aim to increase resilience to climate change and environmental degradation	Standard dependent on need [36]	5,346,543 [37] people (M: 3,682,474; F: 1,550,179; gender diverse - 1,567; unspecified - 92,324)	2,999,155 people (M: 747,102; F: 723,185; gender diverse: 84,152; Unspecified: 1,444,716)	79,994 people (M: 37,290; F: 38,276; unspecified: 4,428)	5,947 people (M: 2,344, F: 2,216, unspecified: 1,387)
Number of people supported to improve their livelihoods	Standard dependent on need	1,509,057 [38] people (M: 777,009; F: 532,432; Unspecified: 199,616)	9,829,596 people (M: 4,721,871; F: 4,694,797; unspecified: 412928)	480,518 people (M: 24,6297; F: 203,453; gender diverse: 71; unspecified: 28,528)	184,255 people (M: 72,459, F: 92,763, unspecified: 19,033)
Number of people directly benefitting from improved infrastructure and services	Standard dependent on need	2,605,999 people (M: 691,236; F: 819,551; unspecified: 1,095,212)	2,192,954 people (M: 395,735; F: 400,177; unspecified: 1,397,042)	136,272 people (M: 48,164; F: 47,910; unspecified: 39,526)	64,145 people (M: 9,453, F: 9,491, unspecified: 45,201)
Number of people benefitting from sexual and reproductive health services	Standard dependent on need	273,701 people (M: 30,588; F: 239,148; unspecified: 3,965)	163,842 people (M: 18,701; F: 136,727; unspecified: 8,414)	192,424 people (M: 713; F: 96,732; unspecified: 94,979)	172,123 people (M: 56,339, F: 115,784)

[36] Performance measures with standard 'dependent on need' aggregate the number of beneficiaries reached through a collection of IDC-funded initiatives every year. In general, where funding increases, we would expect the number of beneficiaries reached to slowly increase. However, this varies gently from year-to-year depending on the stage of delivery of individual initiatives. As such, it is not appropriate to assign a specific overall target of 'increasing trend' standard to these aggregated measures, and this could lead to perverse incentives around volume of delivery.

[37] The primary reason for the significant increase in results in 2024–25 and again in 2025–26 is because several IDC activities with potential to impact on large population groups have progressed to delivery and have continued to demonstrate impact (i.e. Ukama Ustawi Programme in Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia Mega-Deltas initiative in South and Southeast Asia).

[38] The primary reason for the significant increase in results in 2024–25 is primarily because the Ukama Ustawi Programme in Eastern and Southern Africa progressed to delivery. Results for 2025–26 are lower due to a reduced funding envelope for the programme effective January 2026. Results are conservative estimates and expected to increase once outstanding partner evidence is finalised, with further growth anticipated in the following reporting year as the UU+ Scaling Fund innovations, selected this year, move into full implementation, and the growing season resumes.

Number of people benefitting from enhanced learning through ICT	Standard dependent on need	298 people (M: 56; F: 75; unspecified: 167)	3,394 people (M: 97; unspecified: 3,297)	8347 people (M: 3,325; F: 4,371; unspecified: 651)	12,598 people (M: 5,030; F: 5,434; gender diverse: 39; unspecified: 2,095)
Number of people receiving training or capability-building support in priority sectors [39]	Standard dependent on need	381,326 people (M: 163,853; F: 155,606: gender diverse: 663; unspecified - 61,204)	140,068 people (M: 40,947; F: 47,120; gender diverse: 7; unspecified: 51,994)	92,325 people (M: 44,404; F: 37,714; gender diverse: 519; unspecified: 9,452)	101,536 people (M: 26,480; F: 26,828, gender diverse: 5; unspecified: 48,222)
Number and percentage of people, who have been awarded scholarships, that complete tertiary or vocational/professional scholarships	>90% of people who were awarded scholarships	Vocational / professional: 100%. 731/731. (M: 361, F: 370) Tertiary: 100%. 203/203. (M: 89; F: 113; unspecified: 1)	Vocational / professional: 100%. 758/758. (M: 372; F: 384; unspecified: 2) Tertiary: 100%. 209/209 (M: 95; F: 113; unspecified: 1)	Vocational / professional: 100%. 702/702. (M: 368; F: 330; unspecified: 4) Tertiary: 100%. 174/174. (M: 69; F: 105)	Vocational / professional: 100%. 332/332. (M: 145; F: 185; unspecified: 2) Tertiary: 82%. 164/201. (M: 75; F: 89)
Number of affected people provided with essential and useful assistance following a natural or human induced disaster	Standard dependent on need	532,567 people (M: 206169; F: 284,615; unspecified: 41,783)	360,136 people (M: 95,234; F: 110,281; unspecified: 154,621)	159,652 people (M: 15,360; F: 18,828; unspecified: 125,464)	251,633 people (M: 75,934; F: 87,091; unspecified: 88,608)
Number of hectares of natural resources and natural ecosystems strengthened by NZ supported activities	Maintain or improve trend	490,566 hectares	1430.4 hectares		
Number of countries NZ is supporting to deliver on, and accelerate delivery of, their National Adaption Plan or equivalent	Standard dependent on need	22 countries	17 countries		
Tonnes of CO2 emissions reduced as a result of NZ's IDC Activities	Maintain or improve trend	1904.5 tonnes	47.81 tonnes		
Quality					
Percentage of Activities with effectiveness rated as good or better [40]	Maintain or improve trend	67%	72.5%	70%	73%

Financial Performance (figures are GST exclusive)

30/06/25 Actual $000		30/06/26 Actual $000	30/06/26 Appropriation $000	30/06/26 Variance $000
953,134	International Development Cooperation (MYA)	956,234	996,045	39,811

Explanation of significant budget variance

Expenditure for the year was lower than planned due to several factors including delays arising from partner country constraints, such as elections and natural disaster recovery; contractual delays, and delayed launch of internationally co-funded investments. This is a multi-year appropriation, to be delivered over a triennium, and as such, under-expenditure will be transferred to the remaining year of the triennium through the Retention of Underspend mechanism to fund delayed activities.

[39] Priority sectors are Health, Education, Equity and Inclusion, Infrastructure, Fisheries and Oceans, Governance, and Peace and Security.
[40] Ministry Activity Completion Assessments

Ensuring effective development cooperation

IDC Programme Strategic Framework

The IDC Programme, and its priorities and investments, is influenced by several strategies and strategic policies, three of which have been endorsed by Cabinet - the Ministry's Strategic Framework; the New Zealand Government's Pacific Reset, and its subsequent Resilience Approach; and New Zealand's International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development (ICESD) Policy Statement. The IDC Priorities Framework establishes the priorities for what we deliver - It provides a line of sight between the IDC Programme, and the Ministry's Strategic Framework and strategic policies.

These documents provide direction for 20 Plans that span our bilateral, regional and Multilateral / Humanitarian programmes. The Plans articulate what we will do, who we will work with, how we will work, and how we will measure success. They are an essential part of ensuring that New Zealand's IDC is effective – directing funding allocation, activity design, pipeline planning, performance measurement and governance.

Per our partner-led approach, the Plans align with New Zealand's Statements of Partnerships with partner governments to ensure they are focused on outcomes that we jointly prioritise.

IDC Programme policies and processes

The Ministry's approach to managing the IDC Programme draws on New Zealand's commitments to the ICESD Effectiveness Principles and Agenda 2030, which are articulated in our development quality domains. These are reflected in the standards we use to manage the IDC Programme, and how we report on its performance.

The Ministry has a set of standards that define 'high-quality activity design and management' that we audit and evaluate against. Compliance with these standards ensures that IDC will be effective, inclusive, resilient, and sustained. The standards focus on engagement with others based on values and transparency; mutual accountability with partner governments; responding and adapting to local context; and a focus on results.

Using credible evidence to make decisions, learn, improve, and stay accountable for the IDC funding we spend and the impact is key. We measure results and impact at all levels of the IDC Programme, including through annual assessments of all activities, independent evaluations of programmes, and qualitative and quantitative measurement of impact across the entire IDC.

- Internal assessments of progress are carried out annually through activity implementation, and at activity conclusion, to appraise achievement of outcomes.
- Independent evaluations of projects, and of entire country or region programmes, assess whether IDC interventions were relevant, cohesive, achieved the outcomes sought, and delivered results in an efficient and sustainable way. This allows us to trace the impact of IDC over time. Over the 2024–27 funding triennium the Ministry will evaluate progress against plans that guide the delivery of the IDC. To date, evaluations have been completed for the Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, Naoero, Tonga, and Timor-Leste programmes, and a formative evaluation for the Climate programme. Several others are underway. Evaluation findings inform the design of new activities and activity phases, and evaluation reports are published on the Ministry's website, making findings and recommendations publicly available.
- Performance measures for the IDC appropriation are reported on previous pages. Impact delivered through training and capability-building is a specific focus across the IDC Programme, aligned to our ICESD development approach of providing sustained impact beyond IDC funding.
- In addition, the Ministry is also measured on its effectiveness in managing the IDC Programme under the departmental appropriation category 'Management of New Zealand's International Development Cooperation'. The full set of measures against this appropriation is set out on p.64–65 of the Ministry's Annual Report 2025–26 and include key areas of focus such as mainstreaming of climate objectives and gender equality objectives across the Programme, channelling of funding through Pacific partner governments, and quality of activity management.

- We continue to make improvements to our performance measurement framework and reporting for the IDC Programme as data improves and becomes available, to ensure we are supporting effective decision-making and accountability.
- IDC Programme governance is focused on ensuring that New Zealand's IDC is on track to meet commitments and achieve outcomes; and has a role in balancing the IDC Programme's investment portfolio to achieve the government's strategic outcomes.

Improving how we manage the IDC Programme

The 2024 Activity Based Review (ABR) of the IDC Programme recommended ongoing reshaping to strengthen strategic alignment. An operating model review of the IDC Programme completed in 2025 recommended a strengthened structure to deliver against key ABR recommendations, including clarifying roles and responsibilities, improving policy and programming alignment, and improving international development cooperation delivery performance. The new structure and operating model maintain the integration of development and foreign policy, but with a clearer delineation between specialist policy and programming functions, and development design and Activity-delivery functions within the Pacific and Development Group. Increased capacity for international development policy engagement and for humanitarian responses are two key features of the new model.

In March 2026, the Pacific and Development Group transitioned to the new structure and operating model. The new structure supports a workforce that is scalable and flexible, able to respond to shifting priorities in a complex and rapidly changing region and world. It has the capacity and capability to steward the $5 billion development portfolio in line with Government and international standards, and it will work coherently and collaboratively across the Ministry, with NZ Inc agencies, and across our wider network in the Pacific and globally. Longer-term initiatives to embed and evolve the operating model will ensure it achieves the desired outcomes and remains fit for purpose.

We will continue to focus on strengthening efficiency and effectiveness in our work, including through:

- building a more strategic and coordinated approach to how over 30 New Zealand government agencies work in the Pacific;
- working more strategically with regional agencies, to support Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) centrality and the ambitions of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific; and
- developing a more strategic cross-Ministry approach to leverage finance into Pacific from other donors, private sector and philanthropic organisations.