



PACIFIC REGION INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITY

*A partnership for better infrastructure
services in Pacific Island Countries*



Australian Government
AusAID



What is the Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility (PRIF)?

PRIF is a multi-partner coordination and financing arrangement to support long-term infrastructure planning, development and management in Pacific island countries.

PRIF provides assistance for economic infrastructure in the areas of energy, telecommunications, transport (land, sea and air), water and sanitation, and solid waste management.

The current PRIF partners are: the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the New Zealand Government via the New Zealand Aid Programme, and the World Bank Group (WBG).

Why the PRIF?

Infrastructure links people to services, markets and jobs and helps people to live healthy and productive lives. In some Pacific island countries up to 60% of the population has no access to safe drinking water, up to 70% has no sanitation services and up to 85% has no access to electricity. In response to this challenge, PRIF aims to improve infrastructure services in the region and build expertise and capacity to ensure the ongoing sustainability of infrastructure services.

PRIF puts into practice recent commitments made by country governments and development agencies to improve infrastructure and development effectiveness in the Pacific such as the *Pacific Plan* and the *Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific*.

PRIF is about a new approach with a focus on:

- **Country-led development**
- **Sector-based approaches**
- **Harmonised and long-term support**

Through deeper coordination, PRIF will be better able to help countries maximise opportunities for improvements in infrastructure service provision.

What countries are eligible for PRIF assistance?

Assistance is currently available to the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

What assistance does PRIF offer?

PRIF is about supporting and encouraging countries to take long-term, sustainable and cost effective approaches to infrastructure services.

PRIF aims to achieve better infrastructure outcomes by providing flexible and long term support to Pacific island countries. Support includes technical assistance, investment, capacity building and budget support where agreed as part of a sector-wide infrastructure strategy.

How can countries apply for assistance from PRIF?

PRIF promotes a country-led approach where the priorities for infrastructure investment are set by each country and align with overall development goals and priorities.

Countries seeking assistance can channel their requests through their existing relationships with any of the PRIF partners. Alternatively countries can contact the Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Centre (PIAC) which has been established as a central point for technical assistance.

PIAC will assist countries to access on-demand advice and short-term technical assistance in a range of areas including sector planning and budgeting, policy, regulation, management, and activity preparation.

PIAC may be contacted by email at piac@theprif.org or by telephone **+61 2 8270 9416**.

How will the PRIF help strengthen private sector involvement in the infrastructure sector?

PRIF's long-term support will ensure a consistent and reliable platform which will help encourage the involvement of the private sector, both foreign and domestic.

In Vanuatu, the PRIF has initiated the *Vanuatu Transport Sector Support Program*. This program will work with the Government to finance and manage infrastructure works as well as design and package contracts such that they can be delivered by the domestic private sector.

How will the PRIF help boost capacity and jobs in the infrastructure sector?

PRIF will assist Pacific island countries to undertake maintenance works that maximise the potential for local contracting.

At its core, the PRIF is about building the capacity of Pacific island countries to better manage their

infrastructure needs over the long-term. This includes working with governments to improve systems for long term financing of maintenance, and working to strengthen the domestic private sector to provide these services. Capacity building assistance may be sourced through assistance from PIAC as well as through PRIF-funded activities.

[How does the PRIF affect current bilateral relationships?](#)

PRIF is not about replacing existing bilateral relationships and agreements, but rather helps to coordinate, integrate and enhance partner strategies and activities with the development goals of individual countries.

[How will the PRIF interact with donors who are not PRIF partners?](#)

PRIF will actively seek to coordinate closely with development partners who are not currently involved in PRIF to improve the overall effectiveness of infrastructure assistance.

[What are some examples of activities supported by the PRIF?](#)

PRIF has already provided support to a range of activities, including:

Energy

The PRIF partners are working with other development partners and organisations in the region to provide support for increased and equitable access to reliable and affordable energy. This includes exploring options for extensions to existing networks and supporting off-grid solutions for local generation that can provide rural populations with reliable access to energy.

PRIF is supporting the *Energizing the Pacific* initiative which has established a forum for donor coordination for more effective programming of energy sector assistance in the Pacific.

PRIF is supporting the Government of Tonga to prepare the Tonga Energy Roadmap 2010-2020. This support will help identify options for the Government of Tonga to increase the proportion of its grid-based electricity supply from renewable energy sources. The Government is using the Roadmap to coordinate donor support and make better use of limited resources.

Telecommunications

PRIF is working with Pacific island countries to build on existing good work in telecommunications across the Pacific. The World Bank is providing a range of assistance in the telecommunications sector including through the *Pacific Regional Telecommunications Regulatory Resource Centre*, the *Pacific Regional Connectivity Project*, the *Tonga-Fiji Connectivity Project*, and work in Kiribati and Solomon Islands regarding policy, regulations and community service obligations.

Transport

Transport has been identified as an early priority and PRIF has already commenced long-term transport infrastructure support in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu. In Solomon Islands, PRIF is supporting the development of a transport sector program to build on the existing *Road Improvement Program*. The transport sector program will include a greater focus on building domestic private sector capacity to undertake maintenance and rehabilitation.

In Vanuatu, PRIF has initiated the *Vanuatu Transport Sector Support Program*. This program will work with the Government to strengthen systems to finance and manage infrastructure works and ensure a more reliable and maintained transport system. The program will also enhance local employment opportunities for men and women through the use of labour-based appropriate technology.

Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

The water, sanitation and solid waste management sub-sectors are an area of particular interest for PRIF. Increasing levels of support will be required to assist Pacific Island Countries achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015. PRIF partners are providing support for water and sanitation by building on and improving sectoral support in urban areas of Samoa, Kiribati and Vanuatu.



Photo: AusAID

Achieving the Millennium Development Goal target of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015 will require increasing access to almost 370,000 people per year.

While considerable progress has been made over the last decade, in 2006 less than half the population in the Pacific had access to improved water and sanitation services.

Source: 'Sanitation, hygiene and drinking-water in the Pacific island countries: converting commitment into action', WHO 2008

Generating employment opportunities: The use of labour-based approaches to road maintenance creates job opportunities. This example in Solomon Islands allows villagers to be employed to keep sections of road in their local area maintained.



Photo: ADB

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT PRIF

Please visit the PRIF website: <http://www.theprif.org>

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