

Country Assistance Policy for the Kingdom of Tonga

April 2012

1. Background

Pacific Islands Countries, including the Kingdom of Tonga, face several inherent constraints for development, including the wide dispersal of lands across the vast territorial seas (dispersiveness), the limited size of its designated domestic market (smallness), and the far distance from the centers of global markets (remoteness)

Tonga faces these structural constraints to promote autonomous economic growth and social development, as it has limited natural resources and small number of population; it imports vast majority of commodity goods and depends largely on remittances overseas and development assistance for its foreign currency earnings. It is also vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. Addressing vulnerabilities of social infrastructures is necessary for economic growth and social development, as the risks of natural disasters, such as cyclones, earthquakes and tsunamis. Furthermore, since it is becoming apparent that continuing urbanization degrades water resources, development of environmentally-responsible social infrastructure are required.

The Kingdom of Tonga has transitioned to a democratic political system under the constitutional monarchy in 2010, after the series of uprisings originating from the anti-government demonstrations of November 2006. A stable, peaceful, and balanced economic growth is indispensable for making the new democratic political system sustainable and maintaining political stability.

Tonga is the only monarchy in the South Pacific and the Royal family of Tonga has had a very close relationship with the Japanese Imperial family. Both countries are active in various cultural and sports exchanges. Both countries have developed a friendly bilateral relationship, such as cooperation in various international fora. Meanwhile, the rising influence of emerging donors has been weakening Japan's presence. The continuous cooperation is crucial for promotion of autonomous and sustainable development of the Kingdom of Tonga as well as strengthening bilateral relationship.

2. The Main Objective

To achieve sustainable green growth and improvement of social welfare of the People through inclusive growth

Japan promote development cooperation with the Kingdom of Tonga in the field of environmental protection and climate change, improvement of basic social services, and enhancement of infrastructures for sustainable social and economic

development, based on development strategies and basic principles including the Tonga Strategic Development Framework and the outcome documents of triennial Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting held since 1997.

3. Focus Areas

(1) Environment and Climate Change

To reduce risks of natural disasters, Japan utilizes experiences, technologies, and knowledge in the field of disaster management and prevention that it obtained from its lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake. Japan also supports the efforts made by the Kingdom of Tonga under the Tonga Energy Roadmap, which promotes utilization of renewable energy, for the purpose of building an environment-friendly society, through installment and utilization of a photovoltaic system. It also continues its existing efforts in the field of water resource management to secure the access to quality water in the communities.

(2) Reducing Vulnerabilities

(Health Sector) To improve the quality of health sector, Japan prioritizes the assistance to medical and public health services, including the prevention of communicable diseases, such as the abolishment of filarial by 2020.

(Education Sector) To improve the qualities and increase the access to basic education and vocational trainings, Japan assists the education sector in the Kingdom of Tonga through supports, including volunteers and trainings.

(Economic and Social Sectors)

Japan promotes development of infrastructures, maintenance, and human resource development in order to create a sound environment to promote industries, including agriculture and fisheries as well as tourism, which are the core industries of the Kingdom of Tonga.

Note:

1. Japan seeks possible modalities of development cooperation with Tonga for an effective and efficient implementation of projects, which avoids duplication and creates synergies, through active consultations with development partners, including Australia and New Zealand.
2. Japan will continue actively its volunteer and expert programs as well as various training programs, as they are highly valued by Tonga and contribute to the promotion of communication and exchanges of officials between the two countries.

Annex: Rolling Plan

END