

**Embassy of Japan
Tonga**

PRESS RELEASE

*GGP/2026/03
2 April 2026*

**Japan's GGP Handover of Evacuation Centre and Community Hall for
Koulo Village**

The Embassy of Japan and the people of Koulo village, in Ha'apai celebrated the completion of the new Evacuation Centre and Community Hall, funded through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) on Wednesday, 1 April 2026.

His Excellency Mr. INAGAKI Hisao, Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Tonga visited Koulo village and handed over the new hall. He was welcomed by Mr. Tevita Havea Kaufana, Town Officer and the people of Koulo. The ceremony was also attended by Dr. Siale Hausia, Acting Governor for Ha'apai, Mr. Visiesio Sakopo, Ministry of Finance and government officials.

In addressing the occasion, Ambassador INAGAKI noted that Tonga is prone to earthquakes and tsunamis, thereby stressing the heightened need for evacuation centres especially after the Hunga Tonga and Hunga Ha'apai disasters in January 2022.

“Under the GGP project, an evacuation centre that also serves as a community hall has been constructed with the aim of ensuring the safety of residents during disasters and enhancing the country's overall disaster preparedness capacity.”

“We hope the residence of Koulo and its neighbouring communities will use it as a shelter during disasters, and we wish for all residents of the Ha'apai Islands to take full advantage of the various activities and training opportunities if officers,” said Ambassador INAGAKI.

He applauded the commitment and support of involved stakeholders, including Tonga's Ministry of Finance and contractors in the successful completion of the project.

The people of Koulo village expressed heartfelt gratitude for Japan's significant assistance in funding their first evacuation centre and community hall. Dr. Siale Hausia, Acting Governor of Ha'apai acknowledged Japan's willingness to engage directly with communities and to support wellbeing of local communities.

The new hall will also serve as a development infrastructure that gears improvement in lives of the people, holding children and youth activities and as an indoor space for women's tapa making.

END

Attached: Factsheet & Photos

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1) Project Title	The Project for the Construction of Koulo Evacuation Centre and Community Hall
Recipient	Koulo Community Committee
Grant Amount	USD 128,127
Project Outline: - 1x New Community Hall Building (170m ² with a storage room, kitchen, and four restrooms)	

Photos:



The new evacuation centre and community hall unveiled for Koulo village, in Ha'apai funded by Japan's GGP by H.E. Mr. INAGAKI Hisao, Ambassador of Japan to Tonga on Wednesday, 1 April 2026.

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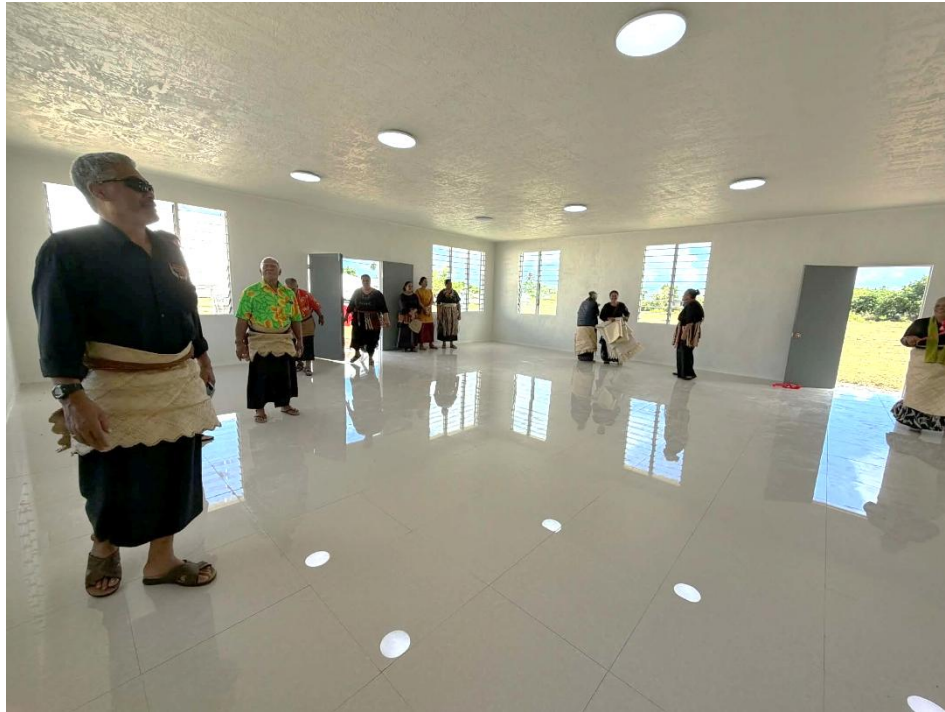


Ambassador INAGAKI with project stakeholders, Ministry of Finance, Town Officer, contractor and Dr. Siale Hausia, Acting Governor of Ha'apai.



The handover ceremony at Koulo village, Ha'apai on Wednesday, 1 April 2026.

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Interior view of the Koulo Evacuation Centre and Community Hall



Japan's GGP for Koulo Village's first evacuation centre and community hall