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Australian aid to Fiji  
Working together for better health, better education,  
better livelihoods



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# Australia's country strategy for Fiji

Australia is strongly committed to supporting the people of Fiji through the aid program. Australian aid, delivered by AusAID, is helping to get more children into schools and more babies safely through their early years. It is also helping to create secure livelihoods for poor families and protecting communities by better preparing them for natural disasters.

The aim of Australia's aid to Fiji is to help people overcome poverty.

Australian assistance is supporting development in three main areas:

1. Promoting opportunities for all by improving access to quality education
2. Saving lives by strengthening primary health services
3. Encouraging sustainable economic development by creating economic opportunities in disadvantaged communities.

In addition, this work is being complemented by:

- > supporting Fiji's transition to democracy
- > improving disaster preparedness and response
- > helping civil society organisations to strengthen the impact of their work
- > analysing poverty and vulnerability to ensure our program is helping those most in need
- > providing scholarships for tertiary study to Fijian students
- > sending Australian volunteers to Fiji to develop local skills.

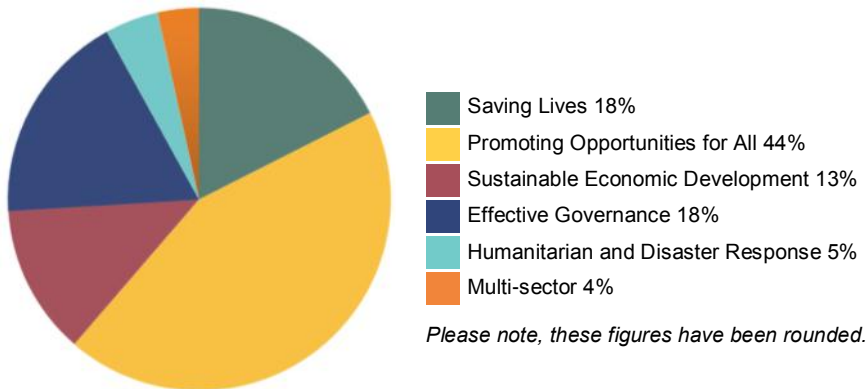
Opposite page: Mobile money technology, with AusAID assistance, is helping to bring basic financial services to the poorest communities.

Photo: Maggie Boyle/AusAID

# Our budget

Total Australian Overseas Development Assistance to Fiji for 2012-13 is FJ\$97.9 million (A\$53.8 million). This includes direct aid to Fiji from Australia, support for Pacific regional organisations and programs based in Fiji, and funds from other Australian Government Departments.

## Total Australian aid to Fiji by sector 2012-13



Australia is Fiji's largest aid donor. We work closely with Fiji-based organisations and other donors—especially the European Union, Japan and New Zealand—to deliver our aid. Australia is increasing its direct aid to Fiji from FJ\$34 million (A\$18.6 million) in 2011-12 to FJ\$66 million (A\$36 million) by 2013-14. Doubling the aid program will enable Australia to expand the reach and impact of development activities.

Australia also supports regional organisations and institutions based in Fiji through Pacific-wide funding. Australia and other donors work closely with Suva-based institutions to support development in Fiji and other Pacific countries in education and training, health, human rights, environment, climate change, market development and natural resource management. Fiji benefits from regional programs more than other countries across the Pacific.

### **Case study: Fiji's vaccination program saving lives**

Fiji's Ministry of Health welcomed the launch of three new vaccines into the immunisation schedule in July 2012: Rotavirus, Pneumococcal and Human Papilloma Virus. AusAID is working with Fiji's Ministry of Health to ensure children across the country have access to these life-saving treatments. Fiji is the first developing country to introduce these three vaccines together.

This initiative will vaccinate more than 21 000 infants, significantly reducing infant and child hospitalisations. More than 8 000 young girls will also have their risk of cervical cancer significantly reduced. Fiji has one of the highest rates of cervical cancer in the world.



A young girl celebrates the launch of Immunisation Week. The annual event is held to promote the importance of child health and immunisations in Fiji.  
Photo: Sarah Gwonyoma/AusAID

“The important outcomes of these vaccines include the protection of our wonderful children, [support for] parents who need to reduce their out-of-pocket expenses in healthcare, a reduction in inpatient time, and an increase in bed availability in hospitals,” said Dr Neil Sharma, Fiji's Minister for Health.

# A snapshot of Australia's assistance to Fiji

## Promoting opportunities for all

Fiji has made great strides in achieving high primary school enrolments. Australia is working with Fiji's Ministry of Education to build on these results and improve the quality of schooling and vocational training.

Australia's Access to Quality Education Program is a five-year program that aims to reduce financial barriers for all children—including those with a disability—to access basic education. The program targets 180 schools and will reach an estimated 43 000 students in some of the most disadvantaged communities.

After two major floods and a cyclone in 2012, Australia provided assistance to 105 affected schools through the program, including subsidising school levies, providing equipment for schools and students and financing building repairs.

Damage to Tagi Tagi Sangam Primary School in Tavua by a tropical cyclone in 2012.

Photo: Timothy Gill/AusAID



## **Saving lives**

Australia's Fiji Health Sector Support Program is a five-year program that works with Fiji's Ministry of Health to improve maternal and child health, address diabetes and hypertension and provide better primary healthcare outreach through village and community healthcare workers. In its first six months, the program trained more than 386 nurses, obstetricians, nurse supervisors and mentors, dietitians, midwives and community health workers in safe motherhood and healthy child concepts. It is also supporting Fiji to introduce three new vaccines: Rotavirus, Pneumococcal and Human Papilloma Virus. This will help reduce infant deaths, hospitalisations and occurrences of cervical cancer.

Australia also provides significant support to the College of Health Sciences to assist with student training and research. Through work with United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Australia supports research, analysis and programs in Fiji on issues such as HIV, child protection, immunisation and non-communicable diseases.

## **Sustainable economic development**

Our work aims to strengthen the ability of civil society organisations to assist the poor and vulnerable, improve livelihoods and increase opportunities to help people overcome poverty.

The Fiji Community Development Program started in 2012 seeking to alleviate social and economic hardship among Fiji's poorest. Under the program, Australia will support at least 70 local civil society organisations to improve their services to disadvantaged communities. The program will provide quality community development services to 70 000 people.

Australian funds are also supporting a six-year Market Development Facility. This program is aimed at increasing employment opportunities and incomes for poor people in Fiji. Activities include supporting fruit and vegetable wholesalers to supply fresh produce to hotels, expanding agricultural exports and promoting local production of agricultural lime to improve soil fertility.

## Transition to democracy

Australia is supporting Fiji's transition to democracy. We have provided FJ\$4.9 million (A\$2.65 million) to assist with national Electronic Voter Registration, the work of the Constitution Commission and civic education across the country.

Australia has a standing commitment to support Fiji's transition to democracy. We continue to call for a credible democratic election process that is inclusive of all parties, transparent and accountable. Australia will work with the Fiji Elections Office, local and international partners and the United Nations in delivering its assistance.

## Pacific regional programs

AusAID coordinates most of its Pacific regional programs from Suva. A number of key regional institutions supported by AusAID—such as the University of the South Pacific, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and various United Nations agencies—are based in Fiji. Fiji benefits greatly from regional programs including those in vocational training, non-communicable diseases, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management.

Australia supports technical and vocational education, tertiary education and efforts to improve literacy and numeracy in Fiji and across the region. This is done through AusAID's Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) and in partnership with the University of the South Pacific, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, World Bank and UNICEF.



The Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) offers a wide range of vocational courses—including painting and decorating training—to students in Fiji and across the Pacific. The College is an Australian Government initiative and helps Pacific island students earn valuable international qualifications. Photo: Tina Seniloli/AusAID

### **Case study: Fiji's first Women's Resource Centre in Savusavu**

Hundreds of women and men from Cakaudrove province attended a ceremony to lay the foundation for the construction of Fiji's first Women's Resource Centre in September 2012. Partnering with Architects Without Frontiers, AusAID has allocated up to FJ\$1.3 million (A\$700 000) to build the Centre, which will be completed in 2013.

The Centre will provide rural women in the province with safe accommodation when travelling to the market in Savusavu to sell their goods. It will become a central meeting point for women to receive training in local handicrafts, assistance to improve their opportunities for income generation, and to access health, nutrition and education services.

"It was very empowering to witness the ground breaking ceremony and to see the smiles and tears on the faces of the hundreds of Cakaudrove women who braved the very heavy rain to see their dreams become a reality," said Iris Low-McKenzie, AusAID's Program Manager for Community Development. "The Cakaudrove Women's Resource Centre will be something that the women of Cakaudrove can be proud of and call their own."



Heavy rain failed to dampen spirits as women and men from Cakaudrove marked a page in Fiji's history with the ground breaking ceremony for the country's first Women's Resource Centre in Savusavu.

Photo: AusAID

## Australia Awards

Australia Awards scholarships are a key component of Australia's aid program in Fiji. Australia will provide 70 new scholarships in 2014 for Fijians to attend tertiary institutions—40 for study in Australia and 30 for disadvantaged students to access vocational training in Fiji.

Australia is committed to supporting the growth of a more skilled, educated and experienced workforce to improve the functions of government, contribute to a vibrant private sector and support economic growth. Scholarships are offered on the basis of merit, transparency and equal access. We strongly encourage applications from women, people with a disability and minority groups.

More information, including application deadlines, can be found at **[www.australiaawards.gov.au](http://www.australiaawards.gov.au)**.

## Volunteers

Australian volunteers make a valuable contribution to Fiji, with over 50 new volunteers arriving in Fiji each year. This program provides an opportunity for Australians to work directly with the people of Fiji, build the skills of Fiji's citizens and make a positive contribution to development.

More information on the volunteer program can be found at **[www.australianvolunteers.com](http://www.australianvolunteers.com)**.

Sue and Terry Metcalfe—a husband and wife volunteer team on assignment at Lautoka Special School. Photo: AusAID





Cover image: Sigatoka Methodist Primary School, Sigatoka.  
Photo: Maggie Boyle/AusAID

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