



Building a sustainable future: Resilient communities



Photo: Rob Maccoll, AusAID

People living in poverty are particularly vulnerable to crisis and adversity. Australia is working with partner governments to build stronger social and economic foundations in local communities so that they can respond more effectively to challenges such as increasing food prices, natural disasters and illness.

Australia is supporting programs designed to create such resilient communities, through improved social protection, community leadership and financial inclusion. This work will help families avoid the need for difficult decisions that can result in declining nutrition and health, children needing to leave school and family assets being sold.



Photo: Rob Maccoll, AusAID

Investing in Civil Society in Fiji

Developing a strong civil society through inclusive political processes can increase the transparency and accountability of local governments, and empower communities to find their own solutions to development challenges.

Australia supports civil society organisations in Fiji to deliver basic services and community development programs focused on health, education, environment, human rights, disabilities, empowering communities and eliminating violence against women.

Together, these organisations have helped more than 600 families bolster their weekly income by up to \$100 by producing food, paintings and making crafts. Shelter and support have been made available for women experiencing violence in three districts. More than 316 prison inmates have successfully re-joined their communities and the rate for those re-offending has declined.



Photo: Josh Estey, AusAID



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Financial Inclusion in the Pacific

In some Pacific countries it is estimated that less than 10 per cent of people have access to the basic financial services needed to start small businesses, build family assets, insure crops and invest in children's education and family health.

Australia is supporting the Pacific Financial Inclusion Program to deliver new or improved financial services to 500,000 people or microenterprises by 2013. This multi-donor program aims to bring new ideas on how to deliver financial services to hard-to-reach populations.

The five-year program is creating the enabling environment to build industry infrastructure, support innovation and increase financial literacy. This will ensure more people, especially low income earners and those who have not previously had access to banking, have access to basic financial services at a reasonable cost.

The program has helped more than 20,000 social welfare recipients in Fiji to establish low-cost bank accounts, and is working with mobile phone companies to provide mobile financial services to more than 400,000 people in Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Strengthening Social Protection in Indonesia

Australia is helping Indonesia develop social protection measures to ease short-term suffering and strengthen economic growth in the medium to long term to avoid families needing to make choices that push them further into poverty.

The Indonesian Government's National Team for Accelerating Poverty Reduction is leading efforts to strengthen existing social assistance programs in Indonesia, including ensuring better coordination between programs and developing new programs where needed.

Australian aid is assisting the Indonesian Government to roll out the 'National Program for Community Empowerment', an innovative community-driven development program that is improving health and education outcomes and supporting a microcredit program to improve access to finance for the poor. The program has reached 3.1 million people in 178 Indonesian sub-districts, and decreased child malnutrition by nearly three per cent in two years.