



From  
the People of Japan



## Japan and UNICEF partnership to support COVID-19 vaccine distribution in Cook Islands

**Avarua, Cook Islands 8 February 2022** – The Government of Japan and UNICEF have handed over two 4x4 vehicles along with motor vehicle accessories to the Ministry of Health in Cook Islands this week to boost COVID-19 vaccination efforts in the country.

“Te Marae Ora Ministry of Health appreciates the ongoing support from the Government of Japan, in partnership with UNICEF. The 15 motorcycles which were received last year have all been distributed to the Pa Enua Health Clinics to support the delivery of health services on each island. The timely arrival of these two vehicles during our COVID-19 readiness preparation is greatly appreciated and we will continue to work closely with Government of Japan and UNICEF,” commented the Secretary of Health, Mr. Bob Williams, in his opening address during the handover of the vehicles.

These vehicles and accessories are in addition to the 15 motorbikes and 30 helmets which arrived earlier on to support the Government of Cook Islands’ drive to vaccinate all the eligible population, through strengthening the cold chain management system. With this support, communities, including children aged between five to eleven years who are now receiving COVID-19 vaccination in the country, will be protected against severe symptomatic illness from the virus.

The transportation will help deliver life-saving vaccines to health facilities and communities in the country as well as conduct other operational activities, providing a significant improvement to the health system.

“Japan is very much committed to assist the Government of the Cook Islands’ preparatory efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said the Honorary Consul-General of Japan, John Webb. “As part of the international concerted efforts, this Emergency Grant Aid of Japan is aimed to support the Government of the Cook Islands, through UNICEF, to provide transportation as ‘last one-mile support’ to ensure further vaccination in the Cook Islands.”

“The Cook Islands is one of the fortunate countries to not have COVID-19 enter its shores. However, we must not let our guard down and must ensure that the eligible population is fully vaccinated and protected,” said UNICEF Pacific Representative, Jonathan Veitch. “We

thank the Government and the People of Japan for the timely support to the Cook Islands in this fight against the global pandemic. UNICEF will continue to work, under the leadership of the Government of Cook Islands, to protect its people from COVID-19 as well as other vaccine preventable diseases.”

UNICEF and the Government of Japan have been working closely with the Government of the Cook Islands and other Pacific Island countries to help prevent the introduction and spread of the virus among communities. This includes providing technical and financial resources for the roll out of vaccination in the country. This Emergency Grant Aid is additional funding to the ongoing assistance from Japan through the Economic and Social Development Programme (ESDP) of Japanese Yen 100 million in 2020 and 150 million in 2021, which will be used for the Cook Islands to procure medical equipment.



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#### **Notes to Editors:**

*This funding is part of the broader Japanese Emergency Grant Aid of approximately USD 41 million to 25 countries in Southeast and Southwest Asia and the Pacific (approximately USD 9 million to 10 Pacific Island Countries). The 25 countries include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.*

#### **About the Government of Japan:**

Japan provides funds (grants, loans, etc.) and technologies that are useful for “development”, including peacebuilding, governance, promotion of basic human rights and humanitarian assistance, in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to eligible countries and regions. ODA includes bilateral aid to directly assist developing countries and regions, and multilateral aid, which consist of contributions to international organizations such as UNICEF, UNDP, and WHO.

**About UNICEF:**

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

For more information about UNICEF Pacific and its work for children, follow [UNICEF Pacific](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

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