



## Japan and UNDP in Asia and the Pacific — investing together in human security and human development

Highlights of collaboration 2021/2022



From  
the People of Japan



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# FOREWORD

The Government of Japan has been a longstanding and key partner of UNDP in Asia and the Pacific region. This report provides a snapshot of results achieved together by Japan and UNDP in the region in 2021 and 2022. It covers a wide range of critical development issues and shared priorities to advance human security and human development. While the region struggled to deal with the heavy socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP and Japan worked closely and collaboratively in over 20 countries to support their recovery and resilience and foster national progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNDP and Japan efforts prioritize people's capabilities, human security and empowerment, to ensure their safety, well-being, and dignity. Our work extends from governments to local communities to safeguard multiple dimensions of human security: to end poverty and exclusion, uphold rights, and protect people from crises. Our ultimate shared goal is to create a strong foundation of human development. In very practical terms, we implement programmes to address the multiple vulnerabilities and protect the rights of marginalized groups such as women,

children, refugees, internally displaced persons, and ethnic minorities. Together, we work to empower these communities, provide access to basic services, improve skills, knowledge and livelihoods and promote social inclusion. We work together to strengthen or build back national and local systems and institutions to strengthen resilience to various shocks, including economic, climate change and conflict. This has been particularly critical over the past two years, as we have witnessed democratic reversals in several countries, such as Afghanistan – where Japan's continuous support has enabled UNDP to stay and deliver essential support directly to the Afghan people.

Given the vulnerability of the region to natural disasters, UNDP has greatly benefitted from the expert partnership with Japan in this field – sharing its know-how, skills and resources - to reduce the impact of disasters on communities and help forecast and plan for the future. Joint efforts include supporting early warning systems, strengthening local infrastructure and preparedness measures, promoting community-based disaster risk management, and assisting in post-disaster recovery and community reconstruction.

UNDP is uniquely positioned in the region to work with people and institutions at national and sub-national level for sustainable development. By combining our expertise, resources, and networks, with Japan, we are able to extend this reach and scale results, while testing and innovating with new development solutions to meet the Agenda 2030 Goals.



*Kanni Wignaraja*

**Kanni Wignaraja**  
Assistant Secretary General  
Assistant Administrator & Regional Director  
Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific  
UNDP



2021

**AGRO-BASED  
INCOME-GENERATING  
OPPORTUNITIES**

for **9,590**  
farming  
households

in **27**  
districts across  
five provinces



2022

**COMMUNITY  
INFRASTRUCTURE**



benefiting almost  
**2,000,000**  
people

**TEMPORARY LABOR-INTENSIVE  
INCOME OPPORTUNITIES**



for more than  
**140,000**  
workers

**SPOTLIGHT:**  
CRISIS RESPONSE  
IN **AFGHANISTAN**



**In 2021**, following the takeover of the de facto authorities in Afghanistan, UNDP pivoted its programme there towards an Area-Based Approach, which focuses on community resilience. The initiative is part of the overall UN effort in the country to contribute to preventing a humanitarian catastrophe and a collapse of the economy. Through their programmes, UNDP, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations provide direct assistance to beneficiaries through the Direct Execution Modality, based on impartial assessments with local community leaders and independent of authorities.

**Japan was the first donor** to provide immediate support to UNDP to address the urgent livelihood needs of poor and vulnerable households in the aftermath of the economic shocks since the de facto authorities have been in power. Through Japan's Emergency Grant Aid scheme, which ran for five months from November 2021, **nearly 9,590 farming households in 27 districts across five provinces received assistance to create agro-based income-generating opportunities.** This support allowed households to sustain their livelihoods without having to sell assets or incur further debt. In-kind emergency support and training included distribution of horticultural, poultry, and beekeeping kits. The majority of beneficiaries were women.

2022

SPOTLIGHT: CRISIS RESPONSE IN AFGHANISTAN



**FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL AID**

to nearly **5,000 MSMEs**  
**50%** led by women



& creation of approximately **6,000 JOB OPPORTUNITIES**



**58 MOBILE HEALTH TEAMS**

benefitting **524,854** individuals,  
**(72%)** are women

**150 HEALTH FACILITIES**

benefitted **1,375,677** individuals,  
**(52%)** are women

**In 2022,** Japan's support to UNDP helped vulnerable communities in Afghanistan to meet their basic needs and build resilience by providing an integrated package of support: providing access to water and energy systems, health clinics, cash for work, climate-resilient livelihoods, and skills and capacities strengthening of local organizations. With Japan's support, community infrastructure such as irrigation canals, water supply schemes, flood protection walls, culverts, and community road networks were rehabilitated, **benefiting almost 2 million people and providing temporary labor-intensive income opportunities for more than 140,000 workers.**



Canal rehabilitation in Nangarhar province, Eastern region

Photo: Danish Refugee Council / Iqbal Noori / 2022

Moreover, the provision of financial and technical aid to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) proved to be a vital source of support for the local economy. **This assistance benefitted nearly 5,000 MSMEs across Afghanistan, with over half of them led by women. It contributed to the creation of approximately 6,000 job opportunities for Afghans.**

Essential medical care services were maintained through the support of 58 mobile health teams, which provided, among others, out-patient care, vaccination, health education, postnatal care and family planning support, directly **benefitting 524,854 individuals, of which 381,305 (72 per cent) are women. In addition, 150 health facilities were provided with medical aid, including medical kits and equipment, which benefitted 1,375,677 individuals, 713,100 (52 per cent) of which are women.** Coordination with the Global Fund Programme was also provided for TB diagnostics equipment and services.

2022

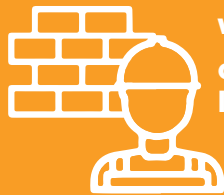
SPOTLIGHT: CRISIS RESPONSE IN AFGHANISTAN

CONNECTIVITY, MARKET ACCESS, AND TRANSPORTATION



in 10 districts within 5 provinces

LABOR-INTENSIVE INCOME OPPORTUNITIES



with a total of 9,277 labor days

COMMUNITY-BASED PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESTORATION



benefitted 433,425 Afghans and connected more than 50 villages



2 STUDIES ON LABOR MARKET AND VALUE CHAIN covering 9 districts of 4 provinces.



Irrigation canal construction in Badakshan province, North-eastern region. Livelihood Promotion in Tajik Afghan Cross - Border Areas (LITACA-III)



Culvert rehabilitation in Takhar province. Livelihood Promotion in Tajik Afghan - Border Areas (LITACA-III)

Photos: UNDP Afghanistan

Livelihood Improvement in Tajik–Afghan Cross-border Areas (LITACA) is a long-term cross-border programme of cooperation that is supported by Japan and UNDP. LITACA phase III has been supporting the improvement of trade, connectivity and livelihoods in cross-border areas between Afghanistan and Tajikistan since April 2021. The project restored and maintained connectivity, market access, and transportation in 10 districts within five provinces through the rehabilitation and construction of culverts, flood protection walls, irrigation canals, community roadways and water networks. Community-based public infrastructure restoration benefitted 433,425 Afghans near the catchment areas and connected more than 50 villages in targeted districts. Local skilled and unskilled workers benefitted from labor-intensive income generation opportunities with a total of 9,277 labor days created. The project also completed two comprehensive studies on labor market and value chain, covering nine districts of four provinces.



## NATURE PROTECTION, CLIMATE ACTION, GREEN ENERGY TRANSITION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

In Asia and the Pacific, the most disaster-prone region in the world, countries face significant environmental obstacles and vulnerability that demand urgent attention. These challenges encompass issues such as deforestation, land degradation, biodiversity loss, inadequate water management, pollution, and the severe impacts of climate change. Throughout 2021 and 2022, UNDP gave priority to Nature, Climate Change, and Energy as a central focus of its comprehensive assistance to countries. An important aim was to foster the integration of environmental and climate concerns into national development plans and strategies, and advance the transition to a greener economy.

Japan has been among the top contributors and strategic partners for UNDP in areas such as responsible management of chemicals and waste, the protection of biodiversity, valuable land, forests, coastal and marine ecosystems, and water resources, as well as the enhancement of disaster resilience. Through these key initiatives, Japan and UNDP have supported countries in overcoming environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development.

### IMPROVING THE TRANSITION TO GREEN ENERGY

In **Cambodia** with support from Japan, UNDP works closely with the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and Electricity Authority of Cambodia (EAC) to provide access to affordable and clean energy to remote off-grid communities. The efforts have **benefited 5,213 people in eight remote villages including indigenous communities.**

The initiatives involve the development of electricity mini grids powered by solar photovoltaic panels and a lithium battery energy storage system that distributes electricity through local distribution lines. The project has also installed streetlights in the villages powered by the mini grid.



#### AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

benefited **5,213** people  
in **8** remote villages  
including indigenous  
communities



In 2022, UNDP launched a new project with Japan to support four Pacific Island Countries (**Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Timor-Leste**) with a 'green transformation' of their economies, aiming to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels, drive sustainable economic growth and help them cope with the impacts of climate change. The collaboration is a testament to Japan's commitment to stepping up its partnership with UNDP in this critical area.

## COMBATING POLLUTION AND IMPROVING WASTE MANAGEMENT

In 2021, UNDP and Japan launched a new collaboration in three South Asian countries to utilize local healthcare waste management practices and technologies to protect human health and minimize the pandemic's environmental and social impacts. Health facilities in 26 sub-districts in **Bangladesh**, 15 districts across four cities in **Bhutan**, and six atolls in the **Maldives** are benefitting from this support.



more than **3,000 tons**  
of **PLASTIC WASTE**  
**REMOVAL**

In **Cambodia**, the Combating Marine Plastic Litter project has developed a regulatory framework to reduce plastic pollution, raise awareness about it, and support prototyping and testing of new business solutions like plastic alternatives and recycling. The

project worked with subnational governments, schools and local businesses to minimize such waste, including through a series of clean-up and outreach campaigns, provision of water filtration systems to 80 schools, and support to pilot activities to collect and recycle plastic trash. These activities contributed to the removal of more than **3,000 tons of plastic waste**.



Cambodia Combating Plastics Pollution project

Photos: UNDP Cambodia

SPOTLIGHT: SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION IN IRAN

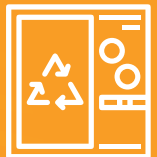


**27% DECREASE  
IN WATER USE**  
on targeted farms

**35% DECREASE  
IN PESTICIDE USE**

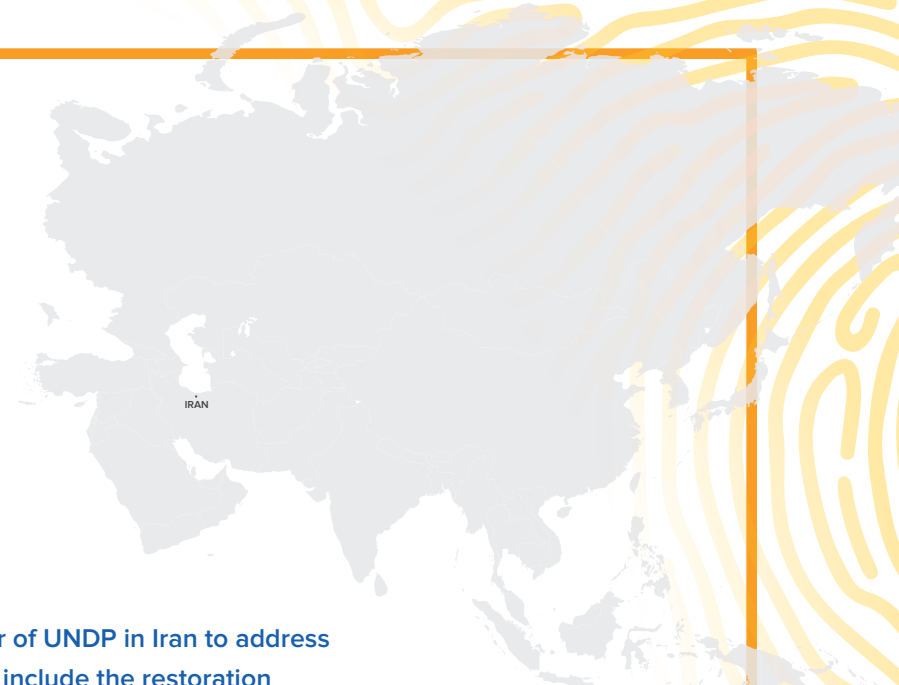


**2,850 people  
(40% women)**  
benefited from  
**LIVELIHOOD  
AND AGRICULTURAL  
INITIATIVES**



**54 REVERSE  
VENDING MACHINES**  
recycling **233,280**  
beverage containers,  
roughly equivalent to  
**10 tons** per month

## SPOTLIGHT: SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION IN IRAN



Japan has been a long-standing partner of UNDP in Iran to address climate and livelihoods issues. Projects include the restoration and conservation of the Lake Urmia basin, the development of renewable energy, and the use of water desalinization. New technologies have introduced innovative water-efficient and climate-smart agricultural practices and improved waste management.

**In 2021/2022,** local community participation in the restoration of Lake Urmia introduced an ecosystem-based management approach in five targeted wetlands. The project boosted local livelihoods while promoting sustainable and climate-smart practices, community involvement, and public awareness.

**The project led to a 27 per cent decrease in water use on targeted farms and a 35 per cent decrease in pesticide use. Additionally, 2,850 people (including on average 40 per cent women) benefited from livelihood and agricultural initiatives.** A payment for ecosystem services was introduced as a long-term financial means to manage degraded ecosystems.

## SPOTLIGHT: SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION IN IRAN

### WASTE MANAGEMENT TRAINING



**3,200** trained on safe waste management and **4,275** trained on solid waste management



### SOCIAL PROTECTION SCHEMES

to **2,500** vulnerable households



### MSME SUPPORT

revival of **115** MSMEs in **3** provinces



### SOCIAL PROTECTION SCHEMES

**50,000** people have improved access to water for drinking and irrigation

To improve waste management in the country, in 2021, the installation of **54 customized reverse vending machines** in the capital Tehran served to recycle waste through a daily capacity of **recycling 233,280 beverage containers, roughly equivalent to 10 tons per month**. Additionally, **3,200 individuals were trained on safe waste management and 4,275 individuals benefited from vocational training on solid waste management**.

Under the project “Supporting an Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Response to COVID-19 and Addressing its Socio-Economic Impact” in 2021, **UNDP provided social protection schemes to 2,500 vulnerable households and supported the revival of 115 MSMEs in three provinces**.

In 2022, UNDP and Japan initiated a project to support the resilience of vulnerable local communities against water shortage in Chabahar Area, building on successes jointly achieved by UNDP and Japan in Iran since 2014. Under this initiative, **more than 50,000 people living in the most deprived and poorest province will have improved access to water for drinking and irrigation**.

## DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Realizing the targets of the Sendai Framework by 2030 requires cooperation with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders to reduce disasters, and enhance the convergence of efforts in food and energy systems, water, security, poverty, climate change, and conflict.

Over the years, Japan has been a critical and steadfast supporter of UNDP's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) efforts, providing funding, sharing its experiences and technologies towards resilience building and strengthening government capacity at national and county levels for disaster preparedness and response.

The Japanese-supported UNDP regional project -- DX4Resilience -- has helped to identify digital solutions to build resilience against disasters and has included partnership with the Japan Bosai Platform. In **Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka**, the initiative has assisted governments through the creation of a Digital Disaster Risk Reduction Maturity Model to enhance the use of digitalization for disaster risk reduction. The regional effort also helped to design a methodology for local governments to prioritize public investment in disaster and climate resilient infrastructure. Under this project, a hackathon competition in Indonesia identified local innovations to strengthen national disaster information management.


**The regional project to strengthen school preparedness for tsunamis in Asia-Pacific has been undertaken in 24 countries.**



Photos: UNDRR

Strengthening School Preparedness for Tsunami in Asia-Pacific (TSUNAMI PROJECT). Photo taken during a Tsunami Preparedness Activity in Tanjung Benoa Village, Bali Province, in the occasion of the Global Platform for DRR

**The project has engaged over 440 schools and trained 200,000 students, teachers, and administrators in tsunami readiness.** The project has expanded to include pandemic and multi-hazard preparedness in communities. The success of this initiative was showcased at the World Bosai Forum in early 2023.

  
**SCHOOL  
PREPAREDNESS  
FOR TSUNAMIS**  
undertaken in  
**24 countries**



DX4Resilience project

Photos: UNDP

Country examples:

- **Cambodia:** Following tsunami evacuation drills, a Training of Trainer module was developed which was adapted and scaled up by Save the Children in Cambodia.
- **Fiji:** The National Disaster Management Organisation used a mobile application, the geoBing App, to coordinate and monitor the conduct of multiple drills.
- **Indonesia:** The Bali Provincial Government’s decree on Disaster Resilience Education calls for high school and universities to mainstream disaster education into curriculum.

- **Papua New Guinea:** Following tsunami evacuation drills, the Provincial Administrator in Milne Bay Province directed the Provincial Education Office to ensure all schools in Milne Bay Province observe World Tsunami Day.

Japan’s support has strengthened tsunami and earthquake preparedness in Pakistan’s coastal areas. This assistance has included developing national **school safety guidelines and installing five early warning systems for coastal hazards. In total, 1,366 people received instruction on coastal hazards management, and 120 community-level drills were conducted. Mangrove seeds were planted on 100 coastal hectares to create natural resilience to disasters, 13 schools and six health facilities were retrofitted to withstand environmental shocks, and 14 multipurpose shelters were built.**



**MANGROVE SEEDS PLANTED on 100 coastal hectares to create natural resilience to disasters**

## SPOTLIGHT: THE CLIMATE PROMISE



**19** electric vehicles  
for **BHUTAN**



Nearly **120** people  
trained in solar  
PV systems in **INDIA**



**Guidelines and  
regulation  
for carbon trading  
in INDONESIA**



**Resource-efficient  
farming practices and  
electric minibus  
system in MALDIVES**

## SPOTLIGHT: THE CLIMATE PROMISE

Tackling the climate crisis requires countries to make bold pledges under the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. The Climate Promise is UNDP's flagship initiative to help countries reach their climate goals. In Asia and the Pacific UNDP is working with 27 countries and territories to meet their own commitments. Japan is a key partner in the Climate Promise, providing significant financial and technical assistance to countries to support their commitments.

For example, UNDP in **Bhutan** is supporting initiatives to promote the adoption of electric vehicles by procuring a demonstration fleet of **19 Nissan electric vehicles**.

Specifications for solar electric vehicle charging stations were approved in **India**, creating vocational opportunities and green jobs growth. **Nearly 120 people were trained in solar PV systems**. Skill-gap assessments were conducted in four coal mining districts, to be followed by re-skilling trainings.

Support in **Indonesia** helped the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources develop **guidelines and an official regulation for carbon trading in the power sector**. This regulation enables the cap-and-trade system for coal power plants. Additionally, through



## SPOTLIGHT: THE CLIMATE PROMISE



**1,040** people trained to transition to a circular economy in the **PHILIPPINES**



**CAMBODIA** adopts a life-cycle approach national goal



Rehabilitation of **9** micro hydropower plants and upgrading of waste management systems in **NEPAL**

collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, a **carbon registry** was created under the National Registry System.

In **Maldives**, renewable energy electric vehicles for public transport are being piloted in Male', the capital city. The electric vehicle minibus system will be the first of its kind in the country. Within the agricultural sector, renewable energy-powered cold storage facilities are boosting environmentally sustainable and resource-efficient farming practices.

In **Nepal**, rehabilitation of nine micro hydropower plants is underway, paired with the upgrading of municipal waste management systems, and the improvement of 70 hectares of degraded agroforestry land.

The Climate Promise initiative in the **Philippines** trained nearly **1,040 people to increase their participation in the transition to a circular economy**. The circular economy is an economic model to minimize waste and maximize resource use through approaches like recycling and reuse. Five local government units received support to identify and procure equipment for waste recovery. Technical assistance was provided to implement the Extended Producer Responsibility Act of 2022, which requires companies to reduce environmentally damaging products while recovering waste.

Support in **Cambodia** included preparation of the National Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2035). Launched in 2021, the **Circular Economy Strategy adopts a life-cycle approach and sets as a national goal to close the loop of production, distribution, consumption, waste generation, and waste treatment**.

Japan has been a leading partner for UNDP's Climate Promise initiative Phase I and II, bringing about significant results to be reinforced through a third phase of the initiative in 2024.

## ADVANCING INCLUSIVE POLITICAL PROCESSES, GOVERNANCE, THE RULE OF LAW AND PEACEBUILDING

UNDP plays an important role in promoting inclusive and effective democratic governance. Focus includes advocating for democratic principles, providing advisory support, fostering impartial spaces for dialogue, facilitating consensus-building, and helping build robust institutions. Our aim is to assist governance institutions in countries to implement constitutional reforms, conduct credible elections, enhance parliamentary strength, and address policy and institutional options for peace, risk reduction, and development. UNDP initiatives are centered around reconciliation, empowerment, and inclusion.

In Asia and the Pacific, a key objective is to create an environment where governance is efficient, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all citizens. Activities extend particularly to marginalized groups such as women, the poor, and indigenous communities.

UNDP strives to strengthen the rule of law and citizen security by designing appropriate policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks, as well as enhancing local governance institutions. Adopting a people-centered approach to transform justice systems, UNDP concentrates on marginalized and excluded populations to find remedies for injustice, ending impunity and protecting rights. Upholding rule of law, combatting corruption, and strengthening inclusive governance are essential for progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



### RULE OF LAW

Japan's support for governance and the rule of law in Asia and the Pacific has fostered peacebuilding and inclusive governance in a number of countries, while also strengthening national capacities to combat corruption. It has boosted human security through early inroads into the management and reduction in availability of private small arms and light weapons.

In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in **Pakistan**, Japan's support has fostered police reforms. **Specialized training for 153 police officers has established a pool of 22 master trainers to deliver instruction on people-centered policing. As a result, more than 22,000 former tribal law enforcement officers who have integrated into the KP police force have received the training. The construction of five police stations benefits over 60 police officers and approximately 2.9 million people through community-based police services for the first time in their localities.**



**PEOPLE-CENTERED POLICING TRAINING** to **22,000** former tribal law enforcement officers



**CONSTRUCTION OF 5 POLICE STATIONS** benefits about **2.9 million** people



A project to build capacities for civic engagement, peacebuilding and participatory governance in **Cambodia** promotes public dialogue and joint design of solutions to local issues. The project facilitated a co-design session between provincial administrations and Civil Society Organization (CSO) representatives from four provinces, resulting in the development and implementation of eight prototypes for provincial partnership dialogues, including a code of conduct for civic engagement. **This resulted in improved relationship between**



**81% of CSO representatives expressing CONFIDENCE AND TRUST in working with public authorities**

**the local administrations and CSOs, with 81 per cent of CSO representatives expressing confidence and trust in working with public authorities.** A pilot curriculum on Innovation for Local Administration was launched in partnership with the National School of Local Administrations (NASLA). **A total of 19 NASLA core trainers and 174 civil servants (26 per cent women) benefitted from the training.**

A peace-building initiative included a workshop with religious leaders in the **Philippines** that encouraged them to speak out in the

community about the dangers of possessing small arms and light weapons, a sensitive issue at BARM and Bangsamoro at large. The community conversations succeeded in breaking an impasse and enabled the parties to the Peace Agreement to finally discuss a way forward on small arms and light weapons, and furthered dialogue on the peace process. As a consequence, joint assessment missions are now being rolled out in selected communities, agreed by the parties to the peace agreement, to initiate interventions at the local level. A road map for a graduated small arms control has been agreed by all parties.



Polling official operating the COVID-safe election.  
The COVID-Resilient Elections in Timor-Leste (CORE-TL) Project

Photo: UNDP

## PROVIDING ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

Japan offers technical support to assist countries in improving their electoral systems and processes. Logistics, capacity-building, and training are some of the areas of assistance that are necessary for conducting credible and inclusive elections. **Timor-Leste** held its first presidential elections since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022. With Japan's support, UNDP provided medical safety supplies to ensure that the electoral process did not become a super-spreader event. **Supplies included 1.2 million disposable masks, 120 gallons of disinfectant, 1,200 bottles of sanitizer, 3,200 units of thermometers, and 2,900 sets of gloves.** UNDP also presented COVID-19 safety



### COVID-19 SUPPLIES

**1.2 million** disposable masks,  
**120 gallons** of disinfectant,  
**1,200 bottles** of sanitizer,  
**3,200** thermometers,  
and **2,900** sets of gloves.

from **Papua New Guinea** in 2019, UNDP has rolled out a post-referendum project with assistance from Japan, among others, to enhance political dialogue and support the Bougainville Peace Agreement. The effort has increased the participation of youth and women in public consultations and provided equipment and logistical support to the National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs for ongoing negotiations. A new printing press for public awareness material and ballot papers were also provided by Japan.

recommendations during the elections that became part of an amendment to the presidential election law. Based on the law, UNDP developed manuals to support the administration for credible elections and inform polling station staff of health safety procedures.

Following the Bougainville referendum on independence

## PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Japan has supported community-based initiatives to promote social cohesion and resilience, and boost human security, particularly in areas where violent extremism has taken root. These initiatives aim to address the root causes of violent extremism, such as poverty, social exclusion, and political marginalization. Japan has backed efforts to counter extremist messaging and propaganda, particularly online. This includes support for programmes that foster alternative narratives and messages of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Japan's contributions in the **Maldives** helped to promote social cohesion and tolerance through an integrated governance programme. **A short film series trained young people in filmmaking and explored stories of diverse populations and social issues. A training module for the public was also created about preventing and countering violent extremism.** Representatives from government institutions and civil society organizations were trained in ways to reduce fragmentation within communities. Additionally, UNDP partnered with the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment to develop a civic education program to encourage youth participation in policymaking. The program included a training manual on governance, human rights, and the Maldivian Constitution.

In **Indonesia**, support from Japan enabled promoting religious moderation and strengthening social cohesion during the pandemic. Two research studies were conducted on the impact of COVID-19 on youth, educational institutions and religious harmony. The findings resulted in policy recommendations to increase collaboration among youth from different backgrounds and strengthen their digital literacy skills to counter online disinformation. Through the project, 50 policy engagement meetings were organized to discuss religious moderation issues. As a follow-up, UNDP is supporting the Ministry of National Development Planning to ensure religious moderation in future policies. **The project supported online campaigns to raise awareness and resilience against violent extremism among youth, reaching over 150,000 people.**



**Equip governments and companies to understand and act upon UN GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**



**B+HR Academy has trained more than 720 companies, including Japanese enterprises, on HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PRACTICES**

# SPOTLIGHT:

## BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS



**Japan and UNDP are working together to equip governments and companies to understand and act upon their duties and responsibilities to prevent human rights abuses such as forced labor, land grabbing and discrimination, and to promote the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in 17 countries globally in 2022.**

In Asia and the Pacific, the project supports business enterprises to respect human rights in their operations and supply chains, especially Japanese companies in Japan, **Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam** through the global initiative B+HR Academy. The Academy has trained more than 720 companies, including Japanese enterprises, on human rights due diligence and responsible business practices. The project also provides technical support to national governments in **Lao PDR, Nepal, and Pakistan** to implement the Guiding Principles through national action plans.

Japan further supported the 2022 UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum in Asia and the Pacific, which included the involvement of Mr. Gen Nakatani, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan for international human rights issues.

## BOOSTING MEDICAL SERVICES AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a defining global health crisis, exposing and exacerbating pre-existing weaknesses and disparities in the region. It highlighted issues such as growing inequality, inadequate healthcare and social service delivery systems, limited social safety nets, and the vulnerability of informal workers.

Recognizing that a uniform approach would not suffice for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP tailored and customized responses in each country, adapting to evolving needs.

UNDP conducted comprehensive assessments of the multi-dimensional impact of COVID-19, provided policy advice on institutional and fiscal capacities, and supported national efforts in developing response and mitigation strategies.

UNDP's support encompassed various critical areas in the fight against COVID-19. This included facilitating health procurement, introducing and expanding digital vaccine management systems, improving access to personal protective equipment (PPE), vaccinations, and healthcare services. Additionally, efforts were made to enhance telemedicine services, strengthen and expand social protection schemes, livelihood support, and implement broad information campaigns to raise awareness and promote safer behaviors.

Japan's timely support through the global project Supporting an Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Response to COVID-19 and Addressing its Socio-economic Impact enabled UNDP to support well over a dozen countries in the region by helping them to manage the pandemic,



providing access to health care, socio-economic recovery and protection and empowerment of the most vulnerable population.

The support from Japan enabled UNDP to provide critical medical equipment such as ventilators and oxygen regulators to **Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Myanmar**. Additionally, **Viet Nam** received test kits, PPE and equipment for patient case management and monitoring. Health workers were trained in the use of this equipment and other infectious disease control measures, including administering vaccinations.

Closing the digital divide and harnessing the power of digital technologies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was an important focus for UNDP. In Asia and the Pacific, digital solutions for health services were used in many countries. For instance, in **Bhutan, 46 mobile cardiography devices (iCTGs) from a Japanese company connected pregnant women to remote medical services. The iCTGs helped track high-risk pregnancies and enabled**



**46 mobile  
CARDIOTOGRAPHY  
DEVICES  
(iCTGs)**

timely care while reducing transportation and associated medical service costs. In **Mongolia**, digital access enabled social workers to provide online services during restricted pandemic lockdowns.

Border control agencies in the **Pacific** provided officials with medical equipment and PPE to strengthen their capacities to reduce health risks in **Fiji, Palau, and Vanuatu**. In addition, the Fiji Immigration Department was able to accelerate the use of **digitization for border control processes**.

Japan's support contributed to the economic recovery of countries affected by COVID-19. Medium and long-term socio-economic recovery assessments were conducted in **India, Indonesia, Philippines, and Myanmar**. In **Palau**, Japan and UNDP provided technical support to the **disaster management authority to help mitigate both health and climate disaster risks**.

In **Samoa**, the **UNDP partnership with Japan supported the construction of the Toloa Multispecies Hatchery Extension facility**. This increased and diversified aquaculture and mariculture stocks for distribution to local communities, thereby enhancing food security and livelihood opportunities.



**CONTRACT FARMING**  
helping **256** farmers  
to reduce crop loss,  
improve food security,  
and adopt sustainable  
agriculture practices

In the **Maldives**, Japan supported the Sustainable EconJapan supported the Sustainable Economic Empowerment and Development for SMEs (SEEDS) project, which introduced the concept of contract farming. This helped **256** farmers to reduce crop loss, improve food security, and adopt sustainable agriculture practices. In addition,



**SUPPORTED THE  
CONSTRUCTION  
of the Toloa Multispecies  
Hatchery Extension facility**

**48** entrepreneurs participated in an agri-business incubation pilot initiative in partnership with the Housing Development Corporation.

Cases of sexual and gender-based violence, and psychological trauma increased during the pandemic. To address this trend, policy advisory services were provided to human rights commissions, councils and ministries responsible for law, justice, and social protection, along with civil society and community organizations. With support from Japan, such technical assistance helped to **strengthen the protection and counseling services, referral systems, legal provisions, standard operating procedures, and community outreach in Indonesia, Thailand, and Myanmar**.



JSB-funded COVID-19 Preparedness and Recovery: Revitalization, Expansion and Diversification of Samoa's Agriculture and Fisheries Sector (REDSAF) Project

Photo: UNDP Samoa

## Future vulnerabilities require strong partnerships

Recent disruptions have revealed new challenges and highlighted existing vulnerabilities of many countries in our region. Recent democratic setbacks are concerning as is the backsliding on gender equality and the curtailing of women’s rights. Overlaying all of this are planetary pressures that are raising the intensity and frequency of shocks, and relates issues of climate security. The region is not on track to deliver any of the SDGs, with current projections pushing their completion beyond 2065. Partners

like Japan are committed to multilateralism and to our collective future to help us chart a way forward for People and Planet. UNDP expresses its highest appreciation to the Government of Japan for its partnership in promoting economic and human development in Asia and the Pacific. We will continue to collaborate closely in the region, co-creating innovative responses to evolving challenges to ensure human security, and leave no one behind.

### OUR PROJECTS

Japan-funded projects implemented by UNDP Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in 2021/2022.

COUNTRY	PROJECT	AMOUNT (USD) (ROUNDED)	SOURCE
Afghanistan	Emergency Grant Aid for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan and neighboring countries	\$ 3,000,000	Emergency Grant Aid
	Support the local socio-economic resilience and community recovery in Afghanistan	\$ 64,120,370	JSB 2021
	Support Community Livelihoods, Climate Proofing of Critical Infrastructure for Human Security in Afghanistan	\$ 37,962,962	JSB 2022*
	Strengthening Community Safety, Well-being and Human Security in Afghanistan	\$ 53,247,792	JSB 2020
Afghanistan/ Tajikistan	Livelihood Improvement Promotion in Tajik-Afghan Cross-Border Areas	\$ 9,127,752	Grant Aid

<b>Cambodia</b>	Building Capacities for Civic Engagement, Peacebuilding and Inclusive Dialogue Towards Inclusive and Participatory Governance	\$ 1,644,704	Grant Aid
	Combating Marine Plastic Litter	\$ 3,041,090	Grant Aid
	Stabilizing Power Supply Using Renewable Energy	\$ 1,711,010	Grant Aid
	Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Local Governance through Civic Engagement	\$ 2,566,516	Grant Aid
<b>Fiji/Tonga</b>	Supporting Integrated Government System of Service Delivery (REACH) for COVID-19 Prevention and Response in Fiji and Tonga	\$ 909,090	JSB 2020
<b>Indonesia</b>	Promoting Religious Moderation, Focusing on Education to Strengthen Social Stability in Indonesia in the context of COVID-19	\$ 454,545	JSB 2020
	Recovery Support Initiative for MSMEs from COVID-19 Pandemic	\$ 1,954,545	JSB 2020
	Strengthening Health System Digitalization in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia	\$ 1,345,454	JSB 2020
	Enhancing Supply Chain Management System for Vaccination in Responding to the Pandemic in Indonesia	\$ 925,925	JSB 2021
<b>Iran</b>	Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and Other Wetlands	\$ 2,950,325	Grant Aid
	Strengthening the Resilience of Vulnerable Local Communities against Water Shortage through Provision of Desalination System and Effective Use of Water in Agriculture in Chabahar Area	\$ 2,651,489	Grant Aid
<b>Maldives</b>	Developing Sustainable Agricultural Economy	\$ 2,613,135	Grant Aid
	Building Social Cohesion and Post-COVID Resilience in Maldives	\$ 181,818	JSB 2020
<b>Pakistan</b>	Strengthening Rule of Law for Peace Building in the Newly Merged District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	\$ 3,645,933	Grant Aid
	Stabilization and Economic Recovery through Social Cohesion, Local Governance and Livelihood Opportunities	\$ 4,166,976	Grant Aid
	Community-led Flood Rehabilitation and Restoration in Sindi, Baluchistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provinces of Pakistan	\$ 4,629,629	JSB 2022*
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Project for Bougainville Post-Referendum Support	\$ 2,970,458	Grant Aid

<b>Philippines</b>	the Project for Supporting Management and Reduction of Private Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	\$ 4,005,812	Grant Aid
	Enhancing Food Security and Livelihoods in Bangsamoro	\$ 2,314,814	JSB 2022*
<b>Samoa</b>	COVID-19 Preparedness and Recovery: Revitalization, Expansion and Diversification of Agriculture and Fisheries in Samoa	\$ 963,636	JSB 2020
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Strengthening the Capacities to Combat Corruption	\$ 1,801,089	Grant Aid
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Strengthening Smallholder Farmers and Micro/Home-Based Agriculture industries for Enhanced Food and Livelihood Security in Sri Lanka	\$ 2,777,777	JSB 2022*
<b>Timor Leste</b>	COVID-Resilient Elections in Timor-Leste	\$ 4,000,000	JSB 2020
<b>Viet Nam</b>	Support to strengthening national vaccine production capacity and health system capacity for Viet Nam's response to Covid-19	\$ 925,925	JSB 2021
<b>REGIONAL AND MULTI COUNTRY</b>			
<b>Pacific</b>	Strengthening Capacity of Border Control for COVID-19 Crisis	\$ 4,188,228	Grant Aid
<b>Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives</b>	Improvement of Infectious Waste Management in Southwest Asia	\$ 10,114,311	Grant Aid
<b>Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka</b>	Accelerating Disaster Risk Reduction and Enhancing Crisis Response through Digital Solutions	\$ 800,000	JSB 2020
<b>India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Mongolia, Bhutan, Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Maldives, Fiji/Palau</b>	Supporting an Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Response to COVID-19 and Addressing its Socio-economic Impact project – implementation in Asia Pacific	\$ 25,328,160**	JSB 2020 / C19
<b>Indonesia, Philippines Vietnam, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives</b>	Climate Promise in Asia Pacific / Net Zero Emissions	\$ 16,324,584**	JSB 2021



<b>Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka</b>	Climate Promise in Asia Pacific Japan-UNDP Support for Transition Effort to Decarbonization/JUSTED Asia):	\$ 13,182,128**	JSB 2022*
<b>Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, Nepal, Mongolia, Lao PDR</b>	Business and Human Rights in Asia Pacific, Phase I	\$ 1,550,000**	JSB 2021
<b>Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, Nepal, Mongolia</b>	Business and Human Rights in Asia Pacific, Phase II	\$ 650,000**	JSB 2022*

\*JSB2022 results are not captured in the narrative. Projects only listed for informative purposes.

\*\* Figures are for Asia-Pacific countries, as part of a global project.

**Cover Page Photos:**

Water supply ensured through water reservoir rehabilitation in Kung\_Jaghatu Village, Chak district, Wardak province, Central region  
Photo: UNDP Afghanistan

COVID-19 Preparedness and Recovery: Revitalization, Expansion and Diversification of Samoa's Agriculture and Fisheries Sector (REDSAF) Project, Samoa  
Photo: UNDP Samoa/Laufaleaina Lesa

**Content Page Photo:**

Members of the Women's Union participated in a march on electric bicycles and motorbikes, calling on people to use EVs.  
Photo: Phan Huong Giang/ UNDP Viet Nam

**Back Cover Photo:**

JSB-funded COVID-19 Preparedness and Recovery: Revitalization, Expansion and Diversification of Samoa's Agriculture and Fisheries Sector (REDSAF) Project  
Photo: UNDP Samoa/Laufaleaina Lesa

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UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

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