

# World Bank Launches Six Year Partnership to Support Pacific Island Economies

May 8, 2026



**The World Bank Group has unveiled a new six year partnership with nine Pacific Island nations aimed at strengthening economic resilience, improving public services and creating more employment opportunities across the region through a series of projects.**

The new Regional Partnership Framework will guide World Bank support between 2026 and 2031 for Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Developed in collaboration with governments across the Pacific, the framework is designed to support national priorities around jobs, economic growth and resilience at a time when global volatility and pressure on energy markets continue to affect small island economies.

Stephen N. Ndegwa, World Bank Director for the North and South Pacific, said the partnership is focused on delivering practical outcomes for communities across the region.

“This partnership is about delivering real impacts for people across the Pacific,” he said.

“By focusing on jobs, skills and resilience, and by using regional solutions where they add scale, we are supporting practical reforms and investments that help communities thrive, enable businesses to grow and strengthen the foundations for long term growth.”

## Focus on jobs and resilience

The World Bank said job creation remains one of the region's biggest challenges, particularly given the combination of small populations, geographic isolation and exposure to climate related risks.

Several countries in the region also have rapidly growing youth populations, increasing the urgency of creating sustainable employment opportunities.

The framework will focus on strengthening economic and fiscal management, improving transport and digital connectivity, investing in healthcare and education and increasing resilience to climate change, natural disasters and external economic shocks.

According to the World Bank, these measures are intended to support long term private sector led growth while improving economic stability.

## Infrastructure and skills investment central to strategy

Planned investments in transport, energy and digital infrastructure are expected to improve market access for businesses while supporting employment and regional connectivity.

The framework also prioritises stronger education and health systems to help develop the skills needed for productive employment both domestically and internationally.

Alongside infrastructure and workforce development, the programme includes support for macroeconomic management to help governments manage future shocks and create more stable investment conditions.

The World Bank said the partnership will rely heavily on regional collaboration and shared delivery models to overcome the challenges created by geographic distance and small scale economies.

The framework aligns with the organisation's Small States Strategy, which is designed specifically to address the economic and structural constraints faced by remote island nations.

It also includes crisis preparedness and rapid response tools intended to help governments respond more effectively to future disruptions while protecting long term development progress.