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# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Japan Formalizes Assistance to the Ministry for Health and Medical Services in the Republic of Kiribati**

The Government of Japan will provide assistance worth AU\$127,602 to the Ministry for Health and Medical Services for the construction of a dental ward in Kiritimati Island and the provision of 17 motorcycles for the Tuberculosis and Leprosy Treatment Program on Tarawa through its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Programme. Mr. Tomoaki Miyamoto, First Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, will sign the grant contracts with Mr. Teatao Tiira, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry for Health and Medical Services, to formalize Japan's assistance at a Grant Contract Signing Ceremony at 2.00p.m. on Tuesday, 28 February, at the Ministry for Health and Medical Services, Tarawa.

For further queries please contact Mr. Peni Saurara on email address: [peni.saurara@fj.mofa.go.jp](mailto:peni.saurara@fj.mofa.go.jp) or [eojeconomics@fj.mofa.go.jp](mailto:eojeconomics@fj.mofa.go.jp) and phone number: 3304633.

### **Details for the Two Projects**

1. The Project for Construction of Dental Ward to Kiritimati Health Centre
  - (a) Recipient: Ministry for Health and Medical Services
  - (b) Grant Contract Signatory: Mr. Teatao Tiira, Permanent Secretary
  - (c) Details: The Ministry for Health and Medical Services will receive AU\$81,702 for the construction of a new dental ward with equipment that can make inlay for patients on the island. Currently, there is a large trailer house that is used as a dental ward on the island. However, due to lack of space and equipment, patients who require inlay have to travel to Tarawa or Hawaii. Financial burdens prompt most patients to have their teeth extracted. By not having proper inlay, people can also suffer from nutritional problems and poor oral health. With the availability of a proper dental ward and medical equipment, patients on Kiritimati Island and on the outer islands will receive proper dental services including the provision of inlay and thus in the long run ensures proper oral health care.
2. The Project for Provision of Motorcycles for Improving Tuberculosis and Leprosy Treatment Program
  - (a) Recipient: Ministry for Health and Medical Services
  - (b) Grant Contract Signatory: Mr. Teatao Tiira, Permanent Secretary
  - (c) Details: The Ministry for Health and Medical Services will receive AU\$45,900 for the provision of 17 motorcycles which will be used for the Tuberculosis and Leprosy Treatment Program. In 2015, the Ministry reported that there were approximately 400 cases of tuberculosis and around 190 cases of leprosy in the country. Majority of these cases are found in the urban settlement in South Tarawa. Currently, health aides have been using the bus every day for visiting patients who suffer from tuberculosis under its Direct Observed Treatment Program, and the Leprosy patients, once a month. However, as the medication delivery by bus does not have high mobility, it is often quite difficult for the health aides to deliver medication and check the patients' dosage if a patient is away from his/her house. With the availability of motorcycles, distribution of medication and visits will be more efficient especially in the high housing density areas. This will enable the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to improve and strengthen the ongoing medication delivery and sustainability of its Tuberculosis and Leprosy Treatment Programme, thus contributing to the achievement of the program's objectives to reduce the prevalence of tuberculosis and leprosy in Kiribati.

The GGP Programme is part of the overall Japanese ODA implemented by the Embassy of Japan in order to empower the people and the communities from the grassroots level. The GGP Programme in Kiribati has been widely implemented in areas such as education, water supply, health and education, transportation and IT, agriculture and fishery since 1995. To date, about 55 projects have been implemented under the GGP Programme which amount to an approximate value of USD 3.7 million.

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