Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific

FACT SHEET

Improving digital connectivity in the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Nauru via submarine cable

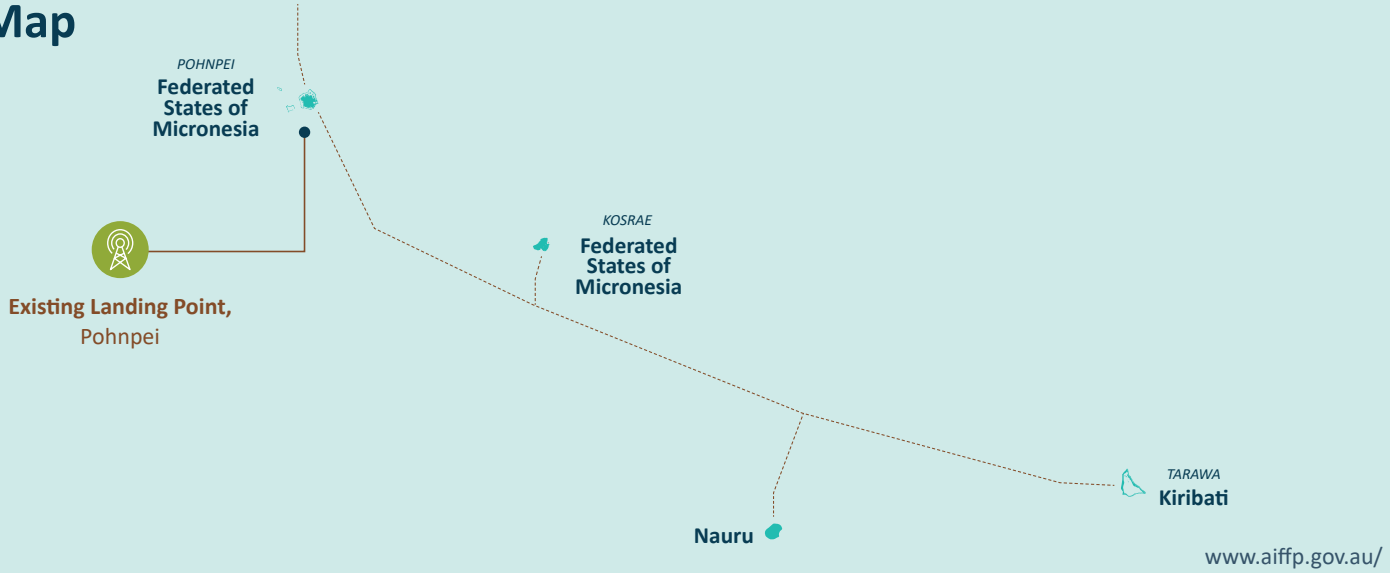
Project Name: East Micronesia Cable System

AIFFP INVESTMENT	PARTNERS	CONSTRUCTION	COMPLETION
GRANT: AUD60 million	Governments of Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Nauru, Republic of Kiribati, Japan and United States FSM Telecommunications Cable Corporation BwebwerikiNET Limited of Kiribati Nauru Fibre Cable Corporation	2023 onwards	2025

About the project

Australia, through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP), has provided a grant package to the Governments of Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Nauru and Republic of Kiribati, alongside funding from the Japan and United States Governments, for a new submarine cable and supporting infrastructure. The project will provide faster, higher quality and more reliable internet to more than 100,000 people, helping to increase the availability of digital government services and enable increased trade and employment opportunities. The improved connectivity will support increased economic growth and development through better access to services, information and worldwide markets. While internet access is currently available through satellite connectivity, the capacity, speed, cost and reliability fall short of countries' needs. The cable will connect the state of Kosrae in the Federated State of Micronesia, Tarawa in Kiribati, and Nauru to the existing HANTRU-1 cable located in Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Map



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Infrastructure highlights

In partnership with governments and private sector firms in the Pacific, the AIFFP facilitates the delivery of high quality, resilient infrastructure. This project's anticipated infrastructure footprint will include:

2,250 KILOMETRES
OF UNDERSEA CABLE

CONNECTIONS
TO 4 NEW CABLE LANDING STATIONS IN 3 COUNTRIES

ACCESS
MORE THAN 100,000 PEOPLE TO ACCESS MORE RELIABLE INTERNET

Impact at a glance

Across all its projects, the AIFFP prioritises lasting development and economic outcomes for people and communities. Its approach is guided by five impact areas: local content; climate resilience; social and environmental safeguards; gender equality, disability and social inclusion; and quality and integrity.

The project aims to promote secure, sustainable, and transparent telecommunications infrastructure that supports increased economic growth, development opportunities and living standards. Its impact to date includes:

GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

With a **gender action plan in place**, contractors are required to take steps to mitigate potential sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, gender-based violence and sexual health risks associated with the project's construction, as well as ensure **inclusive hiring practices.**

Recognising that increased connectivity can also pose threats to online safety for women and girls and people living with a disability, a regional AIFFP study is underway regarding digital resilience risks and opportunities. The findings will be used to address harmful digital communication, social protection and cyber safety.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The telecommunications cable will provide more **robust connectivity** to communities, **reducing the chances of an outage** in the event of adverse weather events caused by climate change. Current satellite services can experience latency issues and are susceptible to compromised service during inclement weather.

Once in operation, the cable will assist governments with **disaster and climate change preparedness.** It will facilitate the use of early warning systems, disaster risk monitoring tools and post-disaster communications that require large volumes of data transmission and can be costly and slow via satellite.

LOCAL CONTENT

Procurement is underway for the civil works and cable landing stations in each country, with some **construction in its early stages.** Civil works are expected to **create job opportunities** for local workers and companies. This includes work on the seawall near Kiribati which will protect the cable landing station, which is due to commence in 2025.

Enhanced connectivity will also support **flow-on local labour and employment benefits,** including through improved access to information about markets, prices, and consumers; new market and cross-border trade opportunities; and digital entrepreneurship.

Information as of December 2024

To learn more about the AIFFP, visit our website