Niue is one of the world’s smallest countries, with a land area of 259 square kilometers and an estimated population of 1,862 in 2019. Tourism development has been the country’s main driver of economic growth, with improved flight connectivity, accommodation facilities, and destination marketing contributing to an increase in visitor arrivals from about 2,000 in 2005 to 11,000 in 2019. At more than six visitors for every resident, Niue has one of the highest tourist-to-population ratios globally. Meanwhile, fiscal discipline, paired with large and predictable inflows of overseas development assistance, have helped provide macroeconomic stability for the Government of Niue.

The country does, however, face significant challenges in achieving sustained socioeconomic development. In proportionate terms, Niue has experienced the largest population decline of any country in recent history—the resident population was 5,194 people in 1966—and travel restrictions associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic are having profound impacts on the country’s tourism-dependent economy.

In March 2019, Niue became the 68th and most recent member of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Since then, ADB has committed a total of $0.5 million in grants and $0.225 million in country-specific technical assistance for Niue. Furthermore, Niue benefits from regional technical assistance projects. Cumulative grant disbursements to Niue amount to $0.5 million. These were financed by other special funds.

ADB’s operations will be guided by the Pacific Approach, 2021–2025, which will serve as the country partnership strategy for its 12 small Pacific island countries.
Just one month after Niue joined the bank, ADB committed a technical assistance project to support improved public financial management in the country. Using the 2016 Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability framework, ADB is providing the necessary expertise to assess the government’s financial management systems, prepare a road map for strengthening those systems, and develop measures to improve accounting and financial reporting of public expenditure.

ADB supported a pre-feasibility study to address operational and safety issues at the Alofi wharf, Niue’s main port, and at the boat ramps of Avaleti and Namukulu. The study provided the groundwork for improvements to the wharf and boat ramps, which will enhance the country’s regional connectivity and climate resilience of its maritime assets.

Niue participates in ADB’s regional conferences and training programs to access regional best practices and improve the capabilities of its development practitioners. The country will also benefit from regional technical assistance projects covering areas such as public sector management, private sector development, and infrastructure development.

NONSOVEREIGN OPERATIONS

As a catalyst for private investments, ADB provides financial assistance to nonsovereign projects and financial intermediaries. Total commitments in loans and equity investments from ADB’s own funds in 2020 amounted to $1.4 billion for 38 transactions in economic and social infrastructure, finance sector, and agribusiness. ADB also actively mobilizes cofinancing from commercial and concessional sources. In 2020, ADB mobilized $1.9 billion of long-term project cofinancing and $3.3 billion of cofinancing through its Trade and Supply Chain Finance Program and Microfinance Program. Total outstanding balances and commitments of nonsovereign transactions funded by ADB’s own resources stood at $14.3 billion as of 31 December 2020.

FINANCING PARTNERSHIPS

Financing partnerships enable ADB’s financing partners, governments or their agencies, multilateral financing institutions, and commercial organizations to participate in financing ADB projects. The additional funds are provided in the form of loans and grants, technical assistance, and other nonsovereign cofinancing such as B loans, risk transfer arrangements, parallel loans and equity, guarantee cofinancing, and cofinancing for transactions under ADB’s Trade and Supply Chain Finance Program and Microfinance Program.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

ADB will continue to support Niue as the country emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The bank’s operations will be aligned with the government’s National Strategic Plan, 2016–2026.

ABOUT THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

ADB is a multilateral development bank owned by 68 members, 49 from Asia and the Pacific and 19 from other parts of the world. ADB’s main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance. In 2020, lending volume was $26.9 billion (149 projects), with technical assistance at $293.56 million (275 projects) and grant–funded projects at $1.08 billion (62 projects). In addition, $1.64 billion was generated for sovereign and nonsovereign cofinancing in the form of loans and grants, B loans, risk transfer arrangements, guarantee cofinancing, parallel loans, parallel equity, and cofinancing for transactions under ADB’s Trade and Supply Chain Finance Program and Microfinance Program. From 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2020, ADB’s annual lending volume averaged $19.69 billion. In addition, investment grants and technical assistance funded by ADB and Special Funds resources averaged $805.5 million and $230.81 million respectively over the same period. As of 31 December 2020, the cumulative commitments excluding cofinancing were $323.17 billion in loans for 2,369 projects in 44 countries, $11.3 billion in 495 grants, and $5.01 billion in technical assistance grants, including regional technical assistance grants.

Notes:
Figures are estimated by ADB unless otherwise stated. “$” refers to United States dollars.
Data are updated as of 31 December 2020 unless otherwise indicated.