



**Pacific Immigration Development Community**  
**2023/24 Board Meeting 2**  
**14-15 March 2024: Apia, Samoa**

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**Agenda Item 8: Strategic Focus Area 1 – Partnership and Coordination**

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**Proposed Recommendations**

The Board is invited to consider recommendations proposed under each of the agenda sub-items discussed below.

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**Purpose**

2. This paper seeks to provide the Board with an update regarding key activities undertaken by the Secretariat during the reporting period to advance its advocacy, partnership and coordination programme in the region and internationally. This output aims to establish and maintain PIDC as a regional coordination point for immigration, liaison, advocacy & representation and agenda setting. Key activities to be discussed include:

- a) Partnership Initiatives: Declaration of Partnership Update (OCO, PICP & PIDC)
- b) PIFS Regional Initiatives and Programme Update
- c) PIDC Partnership Project Proposals

**(a) Partnership Initiatives: Declaration of Partnership Update (FFA, OCO, PIDC & PICP)**

**Background**

3. The Declaration of Partnership between OCO, PIDC & PICP continues to be upheld by the three regional Secretariats with ongoing collaborative activities being progressed under the partnership declaration. The Heads of Secretariat for PIDC, PICP and OCO continue to hold monthly coordination meetings to advance the Declaration of Partnership (DOP). These monthly meetings have been very effective in promoting the sharing of information amongst the Secretariats especially in regards to regional activities undertaken by other organisations such as PIFS, UNODC, IOM, UNODP, JHOPS, PFC and the Pacific Security College amongst others.

4. As part of current DOP discussions, the group agreed to a number of activities including: (a) holding our first ever joint vessel search boarding course for customs, immigration and fisheries officials; (b) supporting our annual conferences; (c) supporting our respective regional workshops with the provision of expert speakers if required; (d) agreeing to a 2024 Talanoa Group Visit to Washington D and the first Talanoa conference for 2024 to be hosted at the Pacific Fusion Centre in Port Vila in April 2024.

**(i) Pacific Heads of Regional Law Enforcement Agency Talanoa Update**

5. The Pacific Heads of Regional Law Enforcement agency in its previous Talanoa meeting was aware of the United States growing interest in the region and moves to engage bilaterally with respective members. Consequently, the Talanoa forum agreed that while the regional Secretariats had no control over bilateral engagements the United States intended to undertake in the region, it had the opportunity to advise the United States of the collective regional approaches in the Pacific and existing regional bodies in the specialist law enforcement sector that provided regional leadership and frameworks on how law enforcement addressed increasing transnational crime and

security threats in the region. This would also intend to avoid duplication of efforts and wastage of resources in the Pacific.

**ii. FFA Signing of the Law Enforcement Declaration of Partnership**

6. The Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) and the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) welcomed the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) into their Declaration of Partnership on Regional Security in December 2023 following its final Joint Heads of Secretariat meeting.

7. The inclusion of FFA is a huge achievement that has taken 2 years of governance process seeking approval through the FFA membership. FFA has been recognised for the work they do in the maritime law enforcement space and the resources available through FFA to monitor the movement of vessels of interest in EEZ's across the Pacific.

8. The inclusion of FFA in the Partnership will act as a force multiplier and strengthen regional cooperation across law enforcement agencies. In practice, FFA members will be an additional set of eyes and ears collecting valuable information and intelligence for the Pacific Transnational Crime Network, as well as being able to access important criminal intelligence, to assist their IUU operations. The collaboration between the partners includes enhanced surveillance and enforcement measures, intelligence sharing, capacity building, and joint operations. The commitment is to make a tangible difference in combating transnational organized crimes, illegal fishing, and cross border security challenges.

**(iii) Regional Activity Calendar**

9. The regional security calendar, has been designed to assist law enforcement and regional organisations in coordinating support to our respective Members. Please find below an updated calendar, based on regional/international stakeholder feedback over the past two months (January – February 2024). Members are to note that many of these proposed dates are tentative only, and they should not be used for planning purposes. However, they should be used as a basis and guide for conversation, to enhance streamlining and coordination wherever possible. Where there are clashes, or opportunities for streamlining, regional secretariats normally reach out to each other to see what practical adjustments to locations, scheduling etc. might be possible.

| Month | Date  | Event   | Status    |            |
|-------|-------|---|-----------|------------|
| March | 4-6   | PILON SGBV Advisory Panel workshop                              | TBC       |            |
| March | TBC   | UNDP, Border Security Workshop                                  | TBC       | Nadi, Fiji |
| March | 11    | Teieniwa Vision Taskforce Meeting                               | Confirmed | Online     |
| March | 13    | FSRS IWG #2   | Confirmed | Online     |
| March | 13    | PIDC Information Sharing working Group Meeting                  | Confirmed | Samoa      |
|       | 14-15 | PIDC Board Meeting  | Confirmed | Samoa      |
| March | 18-22 | PIDC NCP/Profiling and Maritime Contact Group regional workshop | Confirmed | Samoa      |
| March | 18-21 | UNODC - PFC MDA Conference for Pacific Island Countries         | TBC       | Port Vila  |
| March | TBC   | UNODC – Meeting of Heads of Police Maritime Units               | TBC       |            |
| April | TBC   | FFA Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Workshop         | Confirmed |            |
| April | 8     | FSRS (1) FOC Subcommittee on Regional Security                  | Confirmed | Online     |

| Month     | Date        | Event   | Status    |                  |
|-----------|-------------|---|-----------|------------------|
| April     | 8-12        | PIEMA annual meeting;<br>Building Safety & Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP II) project annual meeting;<br>Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Program (PHWP) meeting;<br>Regional Disaster Managers Meeting (RDMM);<br>Pacific Islands Fire & Emergency Services Association (PIFESA) meeting. | Confirmed | TBC              |
| April     | 8-12        | UNODC - Maritime Crime Investigation Training   | TBC       | Vanuatu          |
| April     | 8-19        | UNODC - VBSS Training with OCO:<br>KI/FM/MH/SB/TV/NR/PW/VU/FJ   | TBC       |                  |
| April     | 15-19       | UNODC - Maritime Crime Investigation Training: SB   | TBC       | Solomon Islands  |
| April     | 22-26       | UNODC - MDA Foundation Training: VU & SB  | TBC       | Vanuatu/Sol      |
| May       |             |   |           |                  |
| June      | 3-5         | UNODC - Maritime Crime Investigation Training: MH   | TBC       | RMI              |
| June      | 10-12       | UNODC - Maritime Crime Investigation Training: FJ   | TBC       | Fiji             |
| June      | 17-21       | UNODC - MDA Foundation Training: WS & TO  | TBC       | Samoa/Tonga      |
| June      | 17-28       | UNODC - VBSS Training for PG  | TBC       | PNG              |
| June      | 24-26       | Pacific Regional and National Security Conference (PSC)   | Confirmed | Suva             |
| June      | 27-28       | FSRS (2)  | TBC       | Suva             |
| June      | 24-28       | Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) Regular Annual Meeting   | Confirmed | Solomon Islands  |
| July      | 1-4         | Forum Economic Ministers Meeting  | TBC       | Suva             |
| July      | 1-5         | UNODC TNOG Training   | TBC       | Suva             |
| July      | 10          | Forum Trade Ministers Meeting   | TBC       | Suva             |
| July      | 29- 02 Aug  | 26th OCO Annual Conference  | TBC       | Cook Islands     |
| July      | 30-31       | Pacific Islands Forum Officials Committee (FOC) meeting   | TBC       |                  |
| August    | 2           | Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting   | TBC       |                  |
| August    | 5-7         | Southwest Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces meeting  | TBC       | Tonga            |
| August    | TBC         | Joint Heads of Pacific Security Meeting (Online)  | TBC       | Online           |
| August    | 26-30 (TBC) | Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting 53  | TBC       | Tonga            |
| August    | 30-6Sep     | Asia Pacific Network Information Centre Conference  | Confirmed | Wellington       |
| September | 2 to 6      | Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Annual Conference  | TBC       | Tonga            |
| September | 16          | FSRS (3)  | TBC       | Online           |
| September | TBC         | Pacific Cybersecurity Week (PaCSON AGM, P4C, FIRST Symposium)   | TBC       | Cook Islands     |
| October   | 12-14       | Maritime Security Regional Workshop   | TBC       | French Polynesia |
| November  | 2 to 6      | PILON AGM   | TBC       | Suva             |
| November  | 18-20       | APCSS National Security Workshop  | TBC       | Suva             |
| November  | 21-22       | FSRS (4)  | TBC       | Suva             |
| December  | TBC         | Pacific Islands Forum Officials Committee (FOC) Budget Meeting  | TBC       | Suva             |

### Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **welcome** the Partnership initiatives progressed through the Declaration of Partnership (DoP);
- (ii) **task** the Secretariat to continue managing and monitoring PIDC's engagements with OCO, PICP, FFA, PIFS and the Pacific Fusion Centre through any DoP initiatives.

### (b) PIFS Regional Initiatives and Programme Update

10. The PIFS at its most recent update highlighted the busy regional schedule ahead for this year and emphasised the important opportunity for focussed conversations on security issues for the Blue Pacific Continent, including to review the ongoing development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy).

11. PIFS emphasised the importance of collective actions, aligned to the vision that Leaders have set under the 2050 Strategy. In sum some major regional initiatives impacting the security sectors that are currently being driven through PIFS include the following:

- (i) 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan, Peace & Security Thematic Area
- (ii) Regional Climate Mobility Framework Action Plan
- (iii) Regional Transnational Organised Crime Disruption Strategy
- (iv) Development of the Regional Security Architecture

12. PIFS will be presenting further detailed updates to these regional initiatives at the June FRSC and quite important for law enforcement agencies will be the discussion around the regional security architecture with recommendations that might impact all law enforcement agencies. PIDC will be monitoring the discussions around the implementation plans around these regional frameworks.

### Proposed Recommendations

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) **note** the ongoing PIFS led initiatives and developments of regional frameworks impacting law enforcement and immigration agencies; and
- (ii) **task** the Secretariat to continue monitoring and supporting the PIFS regional approaches to law enforcement and security in the Pacific.

### (c) Bali Process Partnership Engagements

13. PIDC has been working to strengthen relationships with the Bali Process forum especially targeting immigration agencies in the Asian region to further strengthen our efficiency and effectiveness in regional cooperation outside of the Pacific.

14. Consequently, in recognition of PIDC's growing regional reputation, PIDC was invited as a specialist speaker to the 2023 Bali Process Border Forum, gathering more than 60 immigration officers from across the Asian and Pacific region which was held in Thailand from 6th to 8th December, 2023. The Head of Secretariat participated with Immigration officers from Tonga, Solomon Islands and Samoa. PIDC was invited to hold a session on information sharing sharing its initiatives in the Pacific where the Bali Process participants were given a virtual tour through of the information sharing network and process of the Pacific Islands and the valuable coordinating and

facilitating role of PIDC. In addition, PIDC used this regional platform to advocate the validity of the Pacific and its huge contribution to addressing transnational crime issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

#### **Proposed Recommendations**

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) **welcome** PIDC's collaborative work with Bali Process RSO to participate in their regional border forum in recognition of PIDC's value in the Pacific; and
- (ii) **encourage** the Secretariat to continue working closely with the Bali Process RSO in delivering activities for members into the future.

#### **(d) Biometric Institute Update**

15. PIDC has obtained voluntary non-subscription membership for a year with the Biometric Institute. Our membership of the Biometric Institute Community provides us the opportunity to have direct access to their resources and expertise on biometrics issues but more importantly to assess independently its benefits and usefulness for PIDC in the long term before committing to become a paid member of the community.

16. The Biometrics Institute is an independent and impartial international membership organisation for biometric users and other interested parties. It has more than a thousand members from 200 membership organisations spread across 30 countries – representing a global and diverse multi-stakeholder community. At a time when legislation, policies and standards are struggling to keep up with developments and new applications in biometric technology, the work of the Biometrics Institute has become extremely important especially for the Pacific, a region that has only just begun exploring and adopting biometric technology.

17. The mission of the Biometrics Institute is to promote the responsible and ethical use of biometric analytics in an independent and impartial international forum for biometric users and other interested parties. The goals of the Biometrics Institute are:

- To develop thought leadership and guidance for the responsible use of biometrics, using the input of experts
- To facilitate knowledge transfer to members, prospects, key stakeholders and the public
- To act as a connector for the global Biometrics industry including users, suppliers, academics, regulators and privacy advocates

18. The Biometric Institute provides an unbiased and independent platform for discussion bringing together different perspectives to provide a balanced viewpoint on biometrics.

#### **Proposed Recommendations**

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) **note** voluntary membership of the Biometric Institute Community acknowledging the opportunities offered through its membership of the Biometric Institute; and to
- (ii) **task** the Secretariat to make an assessment on its benefits for Board consideration at the end of the voluntary membership period with the view to determine PIDC's future commitment to becoming a fully paid membership of the community.

## **(e) PIDC Partnership Projects**

### **(i) IOM & PIDC Labour Mobility Research Proposal**

19. PIDC's Strategic Plan 2022-25 Strategic Focus Area 3 – Border Enforcement and Traveller Facilitation outlines PIDC support to regional mobility activities where SFA 3 instructs “*support the effective management of labour mobility policies and processes to support sustainable economic growth*”. While this has been a consistent standing key activity area in past Strategic plans since 2016, PIDC hasn't been able to actively support members in this specific area of work.

20. In light of the aforementioned lack of PIDC activity in this area of work and in addition to the absence of any specific PIDC initiated or supported labour mobility activity for this year's annual work plan, the Secretariat in its assessment determined to explore research opportunities with partner organisations to support our members in the labour mobility space under SFA 3. Following a review of the 2023 Regular Annual Meeting outcomes and past areas of labour mobility activity PIDC had engaged in, it was determined that a research product would be the most suitable activity that would provide guidance on how PIDC would begin to support its membership going into the future.

**21. Consequently, in partnership with the IOM; PIDC and IOM are proposing a study into how the Pacific immigration and border management policies practices are facilitating and limiting access to Pacific regular labour pathways.** The study will propose recommendations on how to streamline the entire identity management chain, including travel documents, related issuance, and management systems.

22. This will include providing recommendations to ensure effective, robust, and internationally compliant immigration and border management processes. Access to legal identity is also crucial for women's equal participation in the economy and society. The study will also provide special consideration to gender specific barriers to access legal identity and other immigration formalities.

23. The **proposed study is directly aligned to the 2023 PIDC Regular Annual Meeting (RAM) theme "Labour Mobility and Migration to Stimulate Economic Growth"**, reflecting the focus on harnessing the potential of labour mobility and migration to drive economic development in the region. The RAM facilitated discussions between members on topics such as labour migration trends, best practices, and emerging issues for immigration agencies; understanding immigration's role in managing foreign workers and exploitation; and creating an enabling foreign investment environment through migration pathways, facilitating investment through visa arrangements.

24. This proposed PIDC-IOM study will build upon a previous PIDC study from **2017, Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region: Literature Review and Workshop Summary with Recommendations**. The 2017 study provided recommendations to support Pacific countries to support offshore labour mobility.

25. The new PIDC-IOM study will provide an opportunity to analyse immigration processes to facilitate **both inbound and outbound labour migrants**. The study will also provide a timely opportunity to update some of the analysis and recommendations in 2024. It is particularly important to update analysis given the increasing numbers of Pacific Islands workers participating in labour mobility across the region.

#### **Objective:**

26. The objective of the study is to facilitate effective immigration and border management practices to enable safe, orderly, and regular migration in the Pacific region.

## Research Scope:

- (i) **Research the baseline of Pacific immigration policies and practices** to see how they facilitate and limit access to regular labour migration pathways in the Pacific. This can include access to proof of legal identity, travel documents issuance, identity management, verification processes and/or other immigration practices.
- (ii) **Provide recommendations to Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) and Pacific Island governments on how to streamline immigration policies and practices to facilitate regular labour migration pathways in the Pacific.** This can include recommendations on how PIDC can best support its members to achieve this goal.

27. Details to the concept note of this Joint research proposal is attached in Annex 1.

### (ii) PIDC & IOM Intelligence Reporting Platform/System Proposal

28. The importance of timely and disaggregated immigration data has never been clearer than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such data are critical in understanding mobility dynamics and characteristics and identifying priority responses and interventions, including traveller tracing. The Pandemic has also revealed how the increasing inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of countries has made the world vulnerable to global threats and highlighted the importance of information sharing and international collaboration to tackle common problems across borders especially transnational organised crimes.

29. One of the major challenges the Pacific region is highly prone to is our capacity to manage mobility data and timely information sharing to contribute to the regions' capacity to effectively respond to crisis and make evidence-based decisions.

30. Over the years, the Pacific region has experienced an increasing rate of cross border movement of people and goods as a result of steadily expanding trade and investment, education opportunities, labour mobility and tourism. The region has also encountered numerous challenges relating to irregular migration and immigration of repatriated residents and diaspora. Improved understanding of regional migration trends will greatly contribute to facilitating access to regular pathways such as labour migration, return and family reunification, via well informed visa and admission policies, systems and practices.

31. While cross border movements create new opportunities, the region has seen an increase in irregular migration and transnational crime, which poses a threat to development, security, and regional governance.

32. While PIDC through its intelligence network (NCP/Profiling Group & Maritime Group) are required to send in monthly reports on email communication, PIDC has always faced challenges in the provision of these reports in addition to manually analysing all receipted data to provide real time responses. IN this regard, PIDC had identified that a regional platform to share data and information timely is key to effectively tackling irregular migration and protect migrants.

### PIDC Enforcement Data Collection Tool (PEDCT)

33. As members are aware, PIDC had ventured into developing an excel spread sheet-based platform for members to strengthen their data collection and reporting capacity to the PIDC membership. While two member countries had adopted these excel based spreadsheet system in 2017, PIDC was unable to continue the programme for a number of underlying reasons including

Secretariat expertise to manage the database and NZ Bureau of Statistics inability to continue supporting the programme.

### **PIDC's Response**

34. In recognizing the importance of evidence-based policy making for border control and law enforcement interventions, the PIDC has placed improved data collection and analysis and information sharing as one of the major areas of focus over the years. Some notable achievements include:

- Establishment of the Information Sharing Working Group (ISWG), to strengthen information sharing among member states;
- Signing of the Memorandum of Arrangement for Information Sharing which provides a framework to formalise processes and legalise information sharing between PIDC Members and the establishment of National Contact Points, Profiling Group Contact Points and Maritime Group Contact Points;
- Development and dissemination of intelligence bulletins, alerts and reports that provide members with information on trends of irregular movement throughout the Pacific, as well as PIDC Migration Trend Analysis in the Pacific Islands Region;
- Development of a PIDC Border Enforcement Data Collection Tool to support national data collection and analysis of key immigration data fields;
- Introduction of the APAN (All Partners Access Network System) system for document and information sharing; and
- Capacity building in the areas of data collection, data storage, data analysis, and information sharing.

35. In order to support in further strengthening information sharing and reinforcing cross border collaboration, as part of the *Project for Strengthening Capacity of Border Control for Responding to Infectious Diseases in Pacific Island Countries*, IOM proposes to develop a web-based information reporting and sharing platform where information on regular and irregular migration flows are periodically shared and accessible to all participating countries under PIDC's coordination.

36. Such platform, which would be based on voluntary collaboration of streamlined non sensitive migration data, would also offer visual data and analytical tools to support understanding and reporting of the dynamic and complex cross-border movements, and implementing targeted and timely border control measures.

37. The initiative would be based on existing platforms such as the aforementioned tools developed by PIDC as well as the Document Examination Support Center (DESC), which have already developed an information sharing platform to exchange non sensitive data, on document and identity fraud detected in Asia and parts of the Pacific.

38. A reporting and information sharing platform is crucial for addressing various challenges in migration management. By leveraging regular migration data, policymakers can make informed decisions across different policy domains, including tourism, business, and talent attraction. Additionally, establishing an evidence-based visualization of migration patterns enables stakeholders to gain deeper insights into migration dynamics, facilitating strategic planning and resource allocation.

39. In the absence of a robust Border Management Information Systems (BMIS) in many countries in the Pacific, a centralized platform for data sharing is essential for obtaining a comprehensive picture of entry and exit migration flows and statistics.



40. The proposed initiative will contribute to the strategic framework approaches of the PIDC's strategic Plan (2022-2025) towards strengthening border enforcement and information sharing and strengthening data collection and analysis. It also aligns with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as well as the Boe Declaration on Regional Security.

#### **Objective**

- Enhanced information sharing and regional collaborations for regional border and health security;
- Enhanced evidence-based decision making and strengthening targeted border control operational responses;
- Improved shared understanding of cross-border regional mobility and regional trends;
- Inform evidence - based policy advises and formalise recommendations for national and regional border security efforts;
- Used for developing contextualised capacity building initiatives by PIDC and other Development Partners and informing policy development.

#### **Proposed Recommendations**

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **welcome** IOM's support to partner with PIDC on the research proposal and development of an online intelligence reporting platform;
- (ii) **endorse** the joint PIDC-IOM research on Pacific immigration policies and practices to facilitate regular labour migration pathways in the Pacific;
- (iii) **endorse** the development of a regional immigration information reporting platform; and
- (iv) **task** the Secretariat to work with IOM in progressing these two regional joint initiatives.

## Annex One: PIDC-IOM Research Proposal Concept Note

### Concept Note:

#### Ensuring Access to Regular Labour Pathways through Effective Immigration and Border Management Practices in the Pacific

##### Background:

**Effective immigration and border management practices are critical to facilitating migrants access to safe, orderly, and regular migration.** Migration provides a positive contribution for inclusive growth and sustainable development for individuals, families, communities, and countries. The benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly, and regular migration are substantial and are often underestimated.

Effective immigration and border management practices are necessary to facilitate safe, orderly, and regular migration. This includes immigration policies such as proof of legal identity, travel document issuance, identity management and verification processes.

The **2023 Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) Regular Annual Meeting (RAM) Outcomes Document** notes the **increasing numbers of Pacific Islands workers participating in labour mobility across the Pacific**. Labour migration makes a substantial contribution to the economies of several Pacific Island countries, and international labour migration remains a key strategy to improve livelihoods for Pacific Islanders.

Historically, labour migration flows in the Pacific have mostly consisted of migration to the Pacific Rim, including New Zealand, the United States and Australia. Labour migration flows from the Pacific have become more diverse in recent years with small but consistent flows of Fijians, Tongans, and other Pacific Islanders to Japan. Intra Pacific labour migration is also on the rise, with Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Palau, and the Cook Islands receiving a number of Pacific Islander labour migrants every year.

In the North Pacific, the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Republic of Palau allows citizens of the freely associated states to live and work in the United States, contributing to high rates of emigration.

Access to regular pathways is often dependent upon immigration and border management practices. **In partnership with the PIDC, IOM proposes a study into how the Pacific immigration and border management policies practices are facilitating and limiting access to Pacific regular labour pathways.** The study will propose recommendations on how to streamline the entire identity management chain, including travel documents, related issuance, and management systems.

This will include providing recommendations to ensure effective, robust, and internationally compliant immigration and border management processes. Access to legal identity is also crucial for women's equal participation in the economy and society. The study will also provide special consideration to gender specific barriers to access legal identity and other immigration formalities.

The **proposed study is directly in alignment with the topic of 2023 Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) Regular Annual Meeting (RAM)**. The 2023 focus was "**Labour Mobility and Migration to Stimulate Economic Growth**", reflecting the focus on harnessing the potential of labour mobility and migration to drive economic development in the region. The RAM facilitated discussions between Pacific countries on topics such as labour migration trends, best practices, and emerging issues for immigration agencies; understanding immigration's role in managing foreign workers and

exploitation; and creating an enabling foreign investment environment through migration pathways, facilitating investment through visa arrangements.

This proposed PIDC-IOM study will build upon a previous PIDC study from **2017, Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region: Literature Review and Workshop Summary with Recommendations**. The 2017 study provided recommendations to support Pacific countries to support offshore labour mobility.

The new PIDC-IOM study will provide opportunity to analyse immigration processes to facilitate **both inbound and outbound labour migrants**. The study will also provide a timely opportunity to update some of the analysis and recommendations in 2024. It is particularly important to update analysis given the increasing numbers of Pacific Islands workers participating in labour mobility across the region.

#### **Objective:**

The objective of the study is to facilitate effective immigration and border management practices to enable safe, orderly, and regular migration in the Pacific region.

#### **Research Scope:**

1. **Research the baseline of Pacific immigration policies and practices** to see how they facilitate and limit access to regular labour migration pathways in the Pacific. This can include access to proof of legal identity, travel documents issuance, identity management, verification processes and/or other immigration practices.
2. **Provide recommendations to Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) and Pacific Island governments on how to streamline immigration policies and practices to facilitate regular labour migration pathways in the Pacific**. This can include recommendations on how PIDC can best support its members to achieve this goal.

#### **Case Study countries:**

Many Pacific countries are both sending and receiving labour migrants. The research will focus on how Pacific immigration practices facilitate and limit labour migration pathways as both sending and receiving countries. Case study countries have been selected with equal distribution between Pacific sub-regions and with a focus on countries that are both sending and receiving countries. This is to allow for more balanced findings for all member states. Proposed case study countries include:

- **Samoa (Polynesia):** Both sending (NZ and Australia) and receiving country. Samoa has recently started receiving migrant workers in the country.
- **Solomon Islands (Melanesia):** Both sending (to NZ and Australia) and receiving country. There are many foreign workers including for the fishing industry.
- **Palau (Micronesia):** Both sending (to US) and receiving country. As compared to other Micronesian countries, Palau sends and receives more migrants because of the tourism sector. For example, Palau receives many migrants from the Philippines and Bangladesh.

#### **Project Duration:**

September/October 2024 – September/October 2026 (24 months). In addition, there will be a preparatory period from June 2024 – September 2024. Noting that activities for Samoa will not start until after November 2024 due to Samoa hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

#### **Suggested Activities and Timelines (TBD):**

- **June 2024:** Presentation on the project at PIDC Annual meeting and receive endorsement from MS and case study countries before we kick off.

- **July – September 2024:** Procurement of consultants; Preparations for national consultations and field studies
- **September/October 2024:** National consultations and field visits (by consultants); For Samoa it will be in either November 2024 or January 2025.
- **June 2025:** Presentation on progress at PIDC Annual meeting
- **June 2026:** Presentation on the final outcomes at PIDC Annual meeting and receive endorsement
- **July – September 2026:** National Dissemination and closing of project

**Policy relevance:**

- Sustainable Development Goals
- Global Compact for Migration
- Blue Pacific Strategy 2025
- PIDC Strategy

## **Annex 2: PIDC & IOM Regional Immigration Reporting & Information Sharing Platform Development Project**

### **Development of a Regional Immigration Reporting & Information Sharing Platform for Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC)**

#### **Background**

The importance of timely and disaggregated immigration data has never been clearer than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such data are critical in understanding mobility dynamics and characteristics and identifying priority responses and interventions, including traveller tracing. The Pandemic has also revealed how the increasing inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of countries has made the world vulnerable to global threats and highlighted the importance of information sharing and international collaboration to tackle common problems across borders.

In addition to crisis response and planning for health emergencies, immigration and border agencies across the region are increasingly called upon to prepare for emergency operations and address disaster induced population movements and displacements. The Pacific region is highly prone to natural disasters, and having capacity to manage mobility data and timely information sharing would greatly contribute to the regions' capacity to effectively respond to crisis and make evidence-based decisions.

Over the years, the Pacific region has experienced an increasing rate of cross border movement of people and goods as a result of steadily expanding trade and investment, education opportunities, labour mobility and tourism. The region has also encountered numerous challenges relating to irregular migration and immigration of repatriated residents and diaspora. Improved understanding of regional migration trends will greatly contribute to facilitating access to regular pathways such as labour migration, return and family reunification, via well informed visa and admission policies, systems and practices.

While cross border movements create new opportunities, the region has seen an increase in irregular migration and transnational crime, which poses a threat to development, security, and regional governance. A regional platform to share data and information timely is key to effectively tackle irregular migration and protect migrants.

#### **PIDC's Response**

Recognizing the importance of evidence-based policy making for border control and law enforcement interventions, the PIDC has placed improved data collection and analysis and information sharing as one of the major areas of focus over the years. Some notable achievements include:

- Establishment of the Information Sharing Working Group (ISWG), to strengthen information sharing among member states;
- Signing of the Memorandum of Arrangement for Information Sharing which provides a framework to formalise processes and legalise information sharing between PIDC Members and the establishment of National Contact Points, Profiling Group Contact Points and Maritime Group Contact Points;
- Development and dissemination of intelligence bulletins, alerts and reports that provide members with information on trends of irregular movement throughout the Pacific, as well as PIDC Migration Trend Analysis in the Pacific Islands Region;
- Development of a PIDC Border Enforcement Data Collection Tool to support national data collection and analysis of key immigration data fields;

- Introduction of the APAN (All Partners Access Network System) system for document and information sharing; and
- Capacity building in the areas of data collection, data storage, data analysis, and information sharing.

In order to support in further strengthening information sharing and reinforcing cross border collaboration, as part of the *Project for Strengthening Capacity of Border Control for Responding to Infectious Diseases in Pacific Island Countries*, IOM proposes to develop a web-based information reporting and sharing platform where information on regular and irregular migration flows are periodically shared and accessible to all participating countries under PIDC's coordination.

Such platform, which would be based on voluntary collaboration of streamlined non sensitive migration data, would also offer visual data and analytical tools to support understanding and reporting of the dynamic and complex cross-border movements, and implementing targeted and timely border control measures.

The initiative would be based on existing platforms such as the aforementioned tools developed by PIDC as well as the Document Examination Support Center (DESC), which have already developed an information sharing platform to exchange non sensitive data, on document and identity fraud detected in Asia and parts of the Pacific.

A reporting and information sharing platform is crucial for addressing various challenges in migration management. By leveraging regular migration data, policymakers can make informed decisions across different policy domains, including tourism, business, and talent attraction. Additionally, establishing an evidence-based visualization of migration patterns enables stakeholders to gain deeper insights into migration dynamics, facilitating strategic planning and resource allocation.

In the absence of a robust Border Management Information Systems (BMIS) in many countries in the Pacific, a centralized platform for data sharing is essential for obtaining a comprehensive picture of entry and exit migration flows and statistics.

The proposed initiative will contribute to the strategic framework approaches of the PIDC's strategic Plan (2022-2025) towards strengthening border enforcement and information sharing and strengthening data collection and analysis. It also aligns with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as well as the Boe Declaration on Regional Security.

### **Objective**

- Enhanced information sharing and regional collaborations for regional border and health security;
- Enhanced evidence-based decision making and strengthening targeted border control operational responses;
- Improved shared understanding of cross-border regional mobility and regional trends;
- Inform evidence - based policy advises and formalise recommendations for national and regional border security efforts;
- Used for developing contextualised capacity building initiatives by PIDC and other Development Partners and informing policy development.

### **Deliverable**

- A web-based information-sharing platform on non-sensitive immigration data collected in each target Member State;

- A secure e-Dashboard to present mobility patterns visually, facilitate timely information exchange and monitoring using IOM's Document Examination Support Center (DESC) footprint, expanded to include regular migration data set;
- SOP on data collection, entry and reporting; and
- Training on SOP, data analysis, interpretation and presentation to designated focal points.

The proposed platform aims to improve current data collection mechanisms in user-friendliness. It is designed to minimize the need for manual inputs by officers, thereby mitigating the risk of human errors. It will also feature a data visualization tool similar to existing VerifierTD&B eDashboards already developed.

Data extraction will be automated where feasible drawing from existing databases such as the Border Management Information Systems (BMIS) utilized in current PIDC member countries. In the case for MIDAS user countries, IOM will facilitate seamless data transfer from MIDAS to the visualization platform for an automated process with no human intervention, offering a distinct advance for MIDAS users.

#### **Current Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA)**

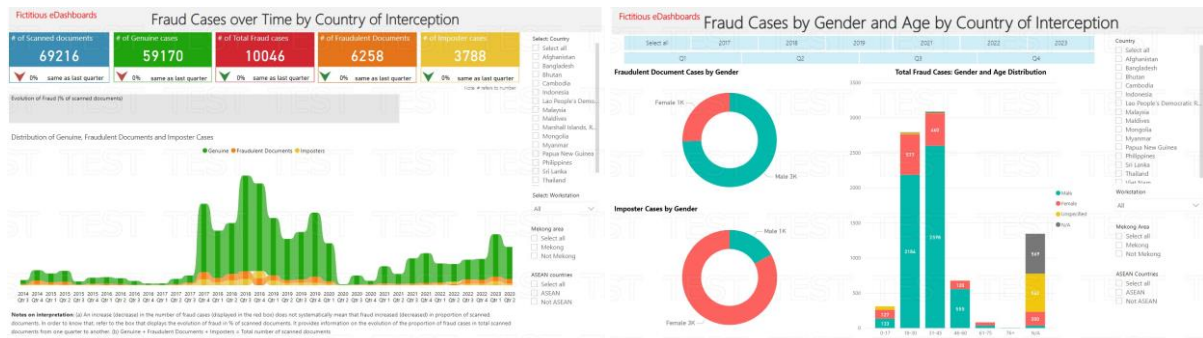
The proposed list of information to be shared within the platform will be based on the existing list as noted in the PIDC Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) for information Sharing. The list will be discussed for agreement among PIDC members as part of the final list of data to be collected on the platform. The following list includes data and information that can be shared under the current PIDC MoA for information sharing (subject to domestic law):

- a. Airline passenger and crew lists;
- b. Craft movements (which may include passenger and crew lists);
- c. Past travel movements of specified people;
- d. Previous convictions of specified people;
- e. General history of specified people (which may include associates and networks);
- f. Modus operandi of specified people;
- g. Known currency and other financial transactions of relevant interest, including involvement in money laundering;
- h. Personal identification details (which may include photographs, biometric information, distinguishing features, and details of identity or travel documents);
- i. Names and details of immigration personnel and transport personnel;
- j. Details of known or suspected involvement of people in illicit activities;
- k. Details of any visa held by a person; and
- l. General non-personal information; including
  - The disclosure of technical, operational, and other information;
  - The sharing of best practices regarding technical and operational matters;
  - The disclosure of knowledge and expertise, legislative and regulatory documents and relevant scientific and technical information;
  - The coordination of joint operations within their respective territories, in the frame of national joint operations or international joint operations; and
  - Working cooperatively through the PIDC and the Secretariat on matters of common interest.

As stipulated in the MoA, sensitive information shall only be used for law enforcement purposes and to strengthen border security practices to support activities related to managing:

- a) Gangs
- b) Arriving Criminal Deportees
- c) Departing Criminal Deportees

- d) Blue boats
- e) People trafficking and people smuggling
- f) Involvement in illegal fishing
- g) Irregular migration patterns
- h) Identity Integrity
- i) Counter-terrorism
- j) Other Transnational Crime
- k) Vetting for foreign labour and major investors.



Sample e-Dashboard images (data are fictitious)

### Target Countries (TBC)

- 17 PIDC member states (exclusive of Australia, French Polynesia, New Zealand and Wallis and Futuna) including: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

### Activity

#### Inception Phase (January 2023 – February 2024)

- Introduction of DESC to ISWG members (online live demonstration);
- Appoint a focal point from each participating country;
- Conduct an assessment on the current data collection instruments, types of data collected (and their definitions), the level of data disaggregation, which data to be shared, types of data analyses/level of trend analysis expected, etc. Based on this, an overall framework will be drafted and shared for consultation; and
- Procurement of a consultant.

#### Implementation Phase (February to December 2024)

- Develop the prototype and data collection tools and present them to the ISWG members for feedback at PIDC workshop in March;
- Improve the products by incorporating inputs and feedback;
- Collect data from target Member States;
- Present the updated product to the ISWG members and improve the prototype by incorporating inputs and feedback (repeat several times); and
- Develop a SOP and training materials and conduct training for ISWG members.

#### Monitoring Phase (Planned Extended Project Period of January – May 2025)

- Monitor the data collection and information practices;
- Conduct a follow up training with ISWG members on SOP;
- Present the migration trends and other analysis at PIDC Annual meeting;
- Conduct review of the system for improvement; and



## Workplan

| Activity   | 2024 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2025 |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | # | # | # | 1    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Consultation/Rapid assessment/Nomination of Focal Points             | ■    | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Development of TOR for consultant; Procurement                       | ■    | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Development of data collection tools and platform/e-dashboard design |      | ■ | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Presentation/Consultation with FPs in Samoa (18-22 March 2024)       |      |   | ■ | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Improvement of data collection tools and platform/e-dashboard design |      |   |   | ■ | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Presentation of progress at PIDC Annual Meeting in Solomon Islands   |      |   |   |   |   | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Improvement of data collection tools and platform/e-dashboard design |      |   |   |   |   |   | ■ | ■ |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Presentation of final product at PIDC Board meeting (Venue: TBC)     |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ■ | ■ |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Training to FPs (Venue: TBC)   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ■ |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Launch of Platform   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ■ |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Monitoring   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ■    | ■ | ■ | ■ |   |   |
| Follow up training (data analysis and other relevant topics)         |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   | ■ |   |
| Presentation of data analysis at PIDC Annual Meeting                 |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   | ■ |

**Note:** The project is currently preparing an extension request to the donor. Activities highlighted in yellow are for the extended period which is subject to approval from the donor.

### Sustainability and other consideration

- **Memorandum of Arrangement for Information Sharing** among PIDC member states already exists.
- Taking into consideration varying levels of capacity among the Member States, data collection and entry tools will be as simple as possible for continuity. For instance, some countries have BMIS and collect digital data, and others don't have BMIS and enter limited data manually. Similarly, in some countries, there are limited numbers of officers available for data entry.
- **SOP on Data collection, entry and reporting** will be developed to provide clear instructions on agreed procedures and approval processes (SOP should ideally be available online for easier reference with possibility of online tutorial). This will prevent staff transfer/high turn over from affecting the continued data entry and reporting practices.
- **Trainings** will be provided to ensure that the focal points implement the SOP and collected data are analysed, interpreted and used.
- **Data Protection principles** will be fully observed and the platform will only collect non sensitive, non personal data.
- **Policy Advise** will be provided through recommendations from the analysis and interpretation of data.

### About Project

Funded by the Government of Japan, IOM is currently implementing the *Project for Strengthening Capacity of Border Control for Responding to Infectious Diseases in Pacific Island Countries* aimed at supporting Pacific socio-economic recovery through safe resumption of border management operations and enhanced border management infrastructure, technology, equipment and capacity. The 2-year regional project provides tailor-made capacity building support to 7 Pacific countries including PNG, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Tuvalu and Samoa.