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**Agenda item 13:      Workshop Session One - PIDC Labour Mobility Study: Discussing Report Findings and identifying a way forward for PIDC Members.**

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**Recommendation**

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to:

- a) **note** the work undertaken to advance PIDC support for labour mobility given its important role to national and regional economic development;
  - b) **welcome** the recommendations made by the Workshop to develop Labour Mobility in Suva and the PIDC publication on *Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region*; and
  - c) **consider** and **agree** on key recommendations to guide future PIDC interventions on labour mobility as a way forward.
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FACILITATOR: TBC

**Purpose**

To brief Members on recommendations developed for possible PIDC interventions to support and advance labour mobility in the region given its importance as an economic driver and the unique function immigration agencies have as a border regulating agency.

**Background**

2. PICTs have identified labour mobility schemes as important mechanisms for promoting economic growth for both sending and receiving countries in the region, with specific recognition in regional trade agreements such as PICTA and the PACER Plus. Australian and New Zealand seasonal worker schemes have become key economic drivers and in several PICTs, skilled migrant workers in the medical, teaching and tourism sectors have filled vital labour shortages.

3. At the 2017 Regular Annual Meeting, Members agreed to explore avenues on how PIDC could best position itself to support national and regional efforts to promote labour mobility schemes from the immigration agency perspective. A crucial part of this exercise was to ensure that the PIDC interventions, did not duplicate any existing work currently being undertaken by other bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat so as to not waste the limited resources available to the PIDC community.

4. To advance this work, PIDC as part of its 2017/ 18 Annual Work Plan: (a) funded a research activity to provide more information on involvement of immigration agencies with labour mobility and develop recommendations on how it could contribute to regional efforts without duplicating existing activities; (b) hosted a regional workshop to build Member awareness of labour mobility issues and also support the research activity; and (c) supported

the annual Pacific Labour Mobility Meeting hosted by Australia in November 2017 to raise regional awareness on PIDC's current activities.

5. Labour Mobility Workshop - The Secretariat with the support of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat hosted a Workshop to develop Labour Mobility in Suva, Fiji from 2 – 4 October 2017 (Report attached as Attachment One). Attended by 23 participants from 13 PIDC Members<sup>1</sup> and partner organisations, the Workshop allowed PIDC Members to understand the national and regional importance of Labour Mobility to the future sustainable development of PICTs and also how immigration departments were vital to supporting aspects of labour mobility policies and schemes.

6. In support of these activities and in recognition of vulnerabilities faced by Smaller Island States (SIS), the Immigration officials also held a side event meeting chaired by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to advance the regional agenda set by SIS Leaders in September 2017. The Workshop acknowledged immigration's important role in facilitating effective labour mobility schemes as the national agency responsible for managing cross border migration. In addition, participants developed a number of recommendations that would be used as a basis to guide future PIDC interventions at the national and regional levels.

7. A key part of discussions was a review of a draft PIDC publication on ***Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region*** (attached as Attachment Two) drafted for PIDC by Matt Gibbs and Dr Charlotte Bedford which: (a) provides an overview of labour mobility opportunities that PICTs currently have access to; (b) examines the roles that PIDC immigration agencies currently play in labour mobility schemes; (c) identifies crucial challenges identifying in particular the limited institutional capacity available to PICT LSUs; and (d) assesses how these agencies may be impacted by future expansion of regional labour mobility opportunities. The report, which contributes significantly to regional discussion on labour mobility has succeeded in providing key information and recommendations to guide future PIDC work in this area.

8. Under Agenda Item 13, Members will review the recommendations made by the Workshop participants as well as recommendations contained in the publication to achieve a common consensus on how PIDC can go forward in contributing to PICTs. The recommendations have been disseminated to Members for their review and all PIDC representatives will be asked to go through and highlight which recommendations they think are a national priority. Members will be asked to discuss their positions through this Regular Annual Meeting Workshop Session to assist in developing a PIDC Labour Mobility Framework that should coordinate future activities based on national priorities.

### **Financial Implications**

9. There are no specific financial implications identified at this stage. It is envisaged that at the conclusion of the workshop session, the Secretariat will draft possible activities based on the priorities identified by Members.

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<sup>1</sup> Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

**Format**

10. The session will open with the facilitator outlining the objectives of the workshop session. Members will use the subject presentations, discussions in specialist presentations that were delivered in previous sessions, and their respective national experiences as a reference point for their group discussions. Conference participants (including Observers) will be divided into four groups. Each group will discuss the workshop question and will have five minutes to report the key points of their discussion back to the Conference. Groups will report back to the plenary with a view to identifying any common themes for future work that may be incorporated within the PIDC work program.

***Group discussions (15 minutes)***