



PACIFIC IMMIGRATION
DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Document Control

This Document was Adopted and Endorsed by the PIDC Board on the _____ Day of _____, 20____.

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| Policy Owner | PIDC |
| Review Frequency | Three Yearly |
| Date of Last Review | |
| Date Next Review Due | |

Review History

| Date | Reviewed / Modified by | Comments / Description of changes |
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** Any Policy review and/or any proposed amendments must be approved by the PIDC Board*

Document Approval

| | Version Approved | Approval Date | Approved by (Name & Title) |
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** All approved Policy amendments or insertions as per Board approval above has to be sighted and vetted for final document approval by HOS or equivalent.*

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Part I: Pacific Immigration Development Community

Introduction

Migration and border security are becoming increasingly complex issues in the Pacific region. To address these challenges effectively, the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) recognizes the need for a coordinated, regionally agreed approach to engaging with diverse partners and stakeholders who are active or beginning to have an interest in migration in the Pacific.

Partnership, in its broader sense, encompasses formal agreements between PIDC and its member countries, built on mutual respect and a shared commitment to protecting Pacific borders through cooperation in resourcing, knowledge sharing and information exchange. Additionally, partnerships with donor partners are grounded in both mutual understanding and the goodwill of donors to support programs aimed at strengthening the capacity of immigration officers and government agencies. These collective efforts help address, mitigate, and overcome border security challenges across the region. Furthermore, such partnerships are driven by shared interests in Pacific security and the overall well-being of Pacific communities.

Consequently, this Partnership Engagement Policy is designed to foster meaningful collaboration between the PIDC (including its members) and the memberships' national governments, Pacific regional organizations, border and security coordinating international agencies, relevant civil society, and the private sector, where necessary. By establishing clear guidelines for partnership, the policy seeks to ensure that all efforts in migration and border security are aligned with PIDC's strategic objectives and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders' regional priorities, respecting national sovereignty, upholding human rights, and contributing to the overall security and development of the Pacific region.

Partnerships under this policy may take various forms, each with distinct roles and responsibilities. Strategic partnerships involving long-term collaboration with entities that share common goals, such as regional organizations and international agencies, to drive policy alignment and capacity-building initiatives. Operational partnerships focus on specific projects or programs, where national governments or regional and international partners contribute resources, expertise, or implementation support. Advisory partnerships provide technical or policy guidance, ensuring that best practices and emerging trends inform decision-making. By understanding these different types of partnerships, all stakeholders can better navigate their roles, rights, and expectations, fostering more effective and sustainable cooperation.

Background

The Pacific region faces unique challenges in managing migration and ensuring border security due to its geographical disparity, diverse political landscapes, and varying levels of national capacity. In recent years, there has been an increase in cross-border migration, both legal and illegal, alongside pressing issues such as transnational organized crime, people smuggling and human trafficking, and emerging climate-induced displacement. Many Pacific Island nations lack the necessary infrastructure and resources to fully address these complex challenges independently.

To date, the PIDC has worked with several traditional partners (including national governments, multilateral organizations, and regional institutions) through existing agreements and forums. Some of these partners hold member or observer status within the PIDC, contributing to dialogue and the members' decision-making processes. However, the PIDC will benefit from a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to engagement, that brings in additional partners and strengthens collaboration with those already involved.

This policy aims to build on existing partnerships, creating a structured and transparent framework for engaging with all stakeholders in the migration and border security space. It will ensure that efforts are harmonized, resources are shared effectively, and actions are aligned with regional and national priorities, ultimately strengthening the Pacific region's capacity to address current, new and any consequent emerging pressing challenges in the future.

Part II: Partnership Engagement Policy

Purpose

This policy aims to establish a collective, regionally agreed approach to engagement between the PIDC and partners and stakeholders involved in migration and border security in the Pacific. It provides a framework for collaboration, ensuring that all engagements are transparent, effective, and aligned with the PIDC's strategic objectives.

Key Objectives

The key objectives for this engagement policy are as follows:

1. **To establish a framework for engaging new and existing partners** in alignment with PIDC's strategic priorities and organisational integrity.
2. **To provide clear guidelines for partnership engagement** that define roles, responsibilities, expectations and rules of collaboration, fostering transparency, accountability, and mutual respect among all stakeholders.
3. **To strengthen and sustain collaborative relationships** by promoting active dialogue, knowledge sharing, and joint initiatives with partners and stakeholders, enhancing regional cooperation and capacity to address the PIDC members' migration and border security challenges.

Scope

This policy applies to all partnerships and engagements between the PIDC and governments, non-governmental organizations, international bodies, private sector entities, and civil society organizations. It will work in parallel with each member country's sovereign bilateral and multilateral engagement policies and practices.

Policy Statement

The PIDC is committed to fostering effective, transparent, and inclusive partnerships with stakeholders in the field of migration and border security across the Pacific region. Through this Partnership Engagement Policy, we aim to create a collaborative framework that:

1. **respects** members' national sovereignty and national interests;
2. **promotes** human rights and protects the cultural values of PIDC members;
3. **builds** local capabilities and capacities; and
4. **ensures** sustainable and coordinated efforts to ensure the region has the most effective and efficient migration and border security arrangements.

We recognize the importance of working collectively with governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to achieve common objectives while upholding the principles of fairness, accountability, and shared responsibility.

Existing Partnership Arrangements

The PIDC has existing partnerships with traditional partners and Observer organizations including the following:

Regional Partners: Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Pacific Islands Legal Officers Network (PILON), PACER Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU),

International Partners: International Organisation for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Bali Process.

PIDC Approved Observer Organizations: PICP, OCO, FFA, PIFS, PILON, PICP, IOM, UNHCR, UNODC & Bali Process.

The Partnership Engagement Policy shall cover the existing traditional partners and observer-status organizations by integrating them into the new framework, while respecting and acknowledging their established roles.

i. Collective Benefits Respecting Sovereign Independence

The PIDC's member states will benefit from collective partnerships engagements, but nothing in this policy restricts individual states from negotiating their own sovereign partnership agreements and arrangements.

ii. Recognition of Existing Agreements

The policy formally acknowledges existing partnership agreements with traditional partners, ensuring that these are respected and maintained. Any new frameworks or processes introduced by the policy will take into account previous agreements and ensure they remain valid and operational.

iii. Alignment and Integration

Existing traditional partners, including observer-status organizations, will be integrated into the broader partnership engagement strategy. Their roles, contributions, and expertise will continue to be valued, while ensuring that their activities align with the PIDC's evolving goals in migration and border security. This includes harmonizing their efforts with those of new partners for greater cohesion and impact.

iv. Consultation and Dialogue

Traditional partners will continue to be engaged in regular consultations to ensure their input is considered in shaping new initiatives or revising existing programs. Their historical knowledge, resources, and experience will be essential in ensuring continuity and in facilitating the transition to the new collective approach outlined by the policy.

v. Observer Participation

Partners with observer status will continue to participate in PIDC Regular Annual Meeting (RAM) regional discussions, forums, and working groups. The policy will reinforce their right to observe and contribute to PID RAM discussions, ensuring their expertise is leveraged without undermining the decision-making processes of full member states.

vi. Enhanced Collaboration

The policy encourages traditional partners to deepen their collaboration with new stakeholders. By fostering cooperation between long-standing and newer partners, the policy promotes synergy, reduces duplication, and ensures that resources are used effectively to address migration and border security challenges.

vii. Review and Renewal of Agreements

Traditional partnerships and observer statuses will be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with the evolving needs and strategic priorities of the region. Where appropriate, existing agreements may be updated in consultation with the partners to reflect new developments in migration and border security, while preserving the spirit of the original arrangements.

In this way, the policy maintains respect for the existing roles and agreements of traditional partners while encouraging greater collaboration and alignment within the regional body's broader engagement strategy.

Part III: Principles of Engagement

The Principles of Engagement outline the core values and guidelines that govern all partnerships and collaborations under this policy. These principles ensure that engagements are conducted in a transparent, inclusive, and coordinated manner, while respecting national sovereignty and upholding human rights. By adhering to these principles, PIDC and its partners will foster trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility in addressing migration and border security challenges across the Pacific region.

1. Autonomy

Engagement with, or contributions by, new partners do not infringe on the decision-making autonomy of the PIDC. Decision making is retained by member states and membership of the PIDC is limited to nations in the Pacific.

2. Transparency

Engagements with partners must be open, clear, and accountable. Information regarding partnership activities, objectives, and outcomes should be shared with relevant stakeholders to foster trust and mutual understanding.

3. Inclusivity

The PIDC seeks to include a diverse range of stakeholders in the conversation, including relevant national governments, regional organizations, civil society, international partners, and affected communities.

4. Collaboration and Coordination

A collaborative approach ensures that efforts are complementary and avoid duplication. Partners should work together to harmonize strategies, pool resources, and share best practices to strengthen border security and manage migration effectively.

5. Respect for National Sovereignty

While fostering regional collaboration, the policy acknowledges and respects the sovereignty of each Pacific nation in managing its own migration and border security issues. Engagement must align with national priorities, policies, national security and legal frameworks.

6. Capacity Building

A key objective is to support PIDC Member states to strengthen their own capabilities to manage migration and border security. Engagements should prioritize technical assistance, knowledge sharing, and training to build local and regional capacities.

7. Sustainability

Partnerships should aim for long-term, sustainable outcomes that enhance the resilience of Pacific Island countries in managing migration and border security. Initiatives should address immediate challenges and opportunities, as well as long term strategic goals.

8. Human Rights and Dignity

The policy emphasizes the protection of human rights in all migration and border security activities. Partners are expected to uphold international human rights standards, with a particular focus on the treatment of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

9. Data Sharing and Privacy

Partners should collaborate in sharing data relevant to migration and border security while respecting privacy and confidentiality agreements. Any information exchange should comply with relevant legal frameworks and ethical standards. Members will decide what information they contribute that can be shared with funding partners.

Part IV: Partnership Process

The Partnership Process outlines the steps and mechanisms through which the PIDC will engage with partners and stakeholders. It provides a clear roadmap for identifying potential partners, formalizing partnerships through agreements, and ensuring continuous collaboration through regular forums and evaluations. By establishing a structured and transparent process, the PIDC will foster effective, coordinated efforts that address migration and border security challenges while maximizing the contributions of all partners.

1. Identification of Partners

The PIDC Secretariat will identify potential partners, based on their alignment with the PIDC's policy objectives, and provide the offer to the Board for approval. Partners may include, but not be limited to, national governments, regional organizations, international bodies (e.g., UN, IOM), civil society groups, and the private sector.

2. Engagement Mechanisms

The acceptance of non-member donor funding or other partnerships can only be approved by the PIDC Board.

Regular regional and international forums, working groups, and bilateral meetings will be established to facilitate dialogue and coordination among partners. These mechanisms will serve as platforms for discussing challenges, sharing information, and developing joint strategies.

3. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Formal partnerships with non-members will be approved by the PIDC Board, and be governed by an MoU that outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes for both PIDC and the non-member partner organization/entity. The MoU will include monitoring and evaluation criteria to assess the effectiveness of the partnership.

4. Partnership Due Diligence and Risk Assessment

Prior to approving and formalizing any non-member partnership, the PIDC will conduct a due diligence review and risk assessment to evaluate the potential non-member partner's capacity, reputation, and alignment with regional priorities. This assessment will be led by the Risk and Audit Committee and provided to the PIDC Board for consideration as part of any approval process, to help mitigate threats and maximise opportunities and ensure that the partnership adds value to the overall objectives of the PIDC.

5. Capacity-Building and Knowledge Transfer

Partnerships should promote mutual learning and capacity-building initiatives to strengthen both PIDC and partner organizations. Joint training, workshops, and knowledge-sharing activities will be encouraged to enhance the skills and expertise of all parties involved in migration management and border security.

6. Communication and Reporting Framework

A clear communication plan and reporting framework will be established and adapted for each partnership; supported by template documents. This framework will specify reporting timelines, content expectations, and communication channels to keep all stakeholders informed and aligned on the partnership's progress and challenges.

7. Exit Strategy, Review and Renewal Process

Every partnership will include an exit strategy as well as a reviewal and renewal process, allowing the PIDC Board to end or renegotiate partnerships as needed. Partnerships will be reviewed at least annually by the Audit and Risk Committee (or otherwise with the agreement of the Board). The exit strategy will define conditions for disengagement, ensuring minimal disruption to ongoing projects, and the renewal process will enable successful partnerships to be continued and adapted over time.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing assessments will be conducted to ensure that partnerships are achieving their objectives. Feedback from stakeholders will be collected regularly to inform adjustments in the partnership approach, ensuring continuous improvement.

Part V: Conflict Resolution

In the event of disagreements or conflicts between the PIDC and its partners, the policy encourages dialogue and negotiation to resolve issues. A neutral third party may be engaged if necessary to mediate and facilitate a fair resolution.

Part VI: Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with the evolving challenges and opportunities in migration and border security in the Pacific. Adjustments will be made as needed, with input from key stakeholders.

Conclusion

This Partnership Engagement Policy establishes a comprehensive, regionally agreed framework for the PIDC's collaboration with partners on migration and border security in the Pacific. By fostering transparent, inclusive, and sustainable partnerships, the policy should assist the PIDC membership in addressing migration challenges while protecting and safeguarding members' respective sovereignty and the region's security and development.

In aligning with regional priorities and international standards, this strategy consequently emphasizes more effective, efficient and economical regional coordination of capacity-building, knowledge exchange, and coordinated response mechanisms. It aims to leverage each partner's strengths and resources, promoting a more resilient and adaptive approach to migration management.

Through continuous evaluation and adaptation, this policy aspires to enhance the collective efforts of PIDC partners in supporting the PIDC members' collective capacity to navigate emerging migration trends, mitigate risks, and harness opportunities, while ensuring that the Pacific remains a secure, inclusive, prosperous and peaceful region for all.