

**What are the expected results for the Support Programme to RAO?**

The programme is expected to ensure enhanced capacity of the RAO to coordinate, implement and report on the EDF Pacific Regional Indicative Programmes, and provide technical support to SIS, NAOs and TIAs in relation to EDF.

Strengthened and effective development coordination in the Pacific region; and increased visibility and awareness of EDF Programmes is also expected to be achieved through this programme.

**About The Pacific Islands Forum**

The Pacific Islands Forum is a political grouping of 16 independent and self-governing states. Established since 1971 the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat drives regionalism and coordinates action by Pacific Island countries to address regional issues. Membership encompasses: Australia, Cook Islands, Federates States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

**Regional Authorising Officer (RAO)**



**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**



**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**



This programme is funded by the EUROPEAN UNION



## Background and history of the Regional Authorising Officer

Formal cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the ACP states began in 1975 with the signing of the Georgetown Agreement. The PACP states have benefited from a number of financial programmes provided by the EU, including the Pacific Regional Indicative Programme.

In 1999, PACP Leaders mandated the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General as the RAO for the duration of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (until 2020). The Secretary General's role as the RAO was again confirmed at the PACP Leaders Meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands in August 2012.

The role of the RAO is defined by the "Implementation and Management Procedures" outlined in the revised Cotonou Partnership Agreement 2005 (Article 35 of Annex IV). Because of the important functions, technical roles, and the overall coordination and management responsibility that the RAO performs, the RAO is supported by a team of technical experts.

A 'Support programme to RAO' provides necessary support to the RAO and the Pacific region in the implementation of the Pacific Regional Indicative Programme.

### **What is the purpose and objectives of the Support Programme to RAO?**

The overall objective of this programme is to contribute to poverty reduction in the Pacific via the strengthening of regional cooperation and integration.

The programme specifically seeks to enhance aid effectiveness by building capacity of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to fulfil its role as the RAO and increase the capacity of Smaller Island States (SIS), NAOs and Technical Implementing Agencies (TIAs).

## What is the role of the Regional Authorising Officer (RAO)?

The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum of is the Regional Authorising Officer (RAO) for the Pacific ACP region.

The Regional Authorising Officer plays a significant role in the administration of the European Development Fund (EDF) for the Pacific members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (PACP) states.

Working closely with the PACP National Authorising Officers (NAOs) and with the European Union (EU) Delegations in the Pacific, the RAO's functions are to programme, manage, implement and coordinate the Pacific Regional Indicative Programmes (PRIP).

The Pacific Regional Indicative Programme is the regional envelope through which regional projects are funded and administered under the EDF. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is the Duly Mandated Regional Organisation for the Pacific.

The Office of the RAO also leads and coordinates various regional working groups and facilitates the Steering Committee on the 11th EDF Pacific Regional Indicative Programme, in partnership with the EU.

