



LISTENING TO THE PACIFIC

FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM REGIONAL INITIATIVE SUBMISSION TEMPLATE 2016

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

Regional Issues and Guidance

When preparing your submission, think carefully about why this is an issue of regional significance and why it should be placed before the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum. For further information on the process and types of submissions being sought, please refer to the guideline below.

To Submit a Regional Initiative

1. Complete the below regional initiative template below.
2. Submit initiative to the Forum Secretariat by deadline: **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016.**
3. Initiatives should be submitted to the Forum Secretariat, through one of the following ways:



FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM – REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative

Christopher Odorry, Cerullo Waranaka, Julie-Anne Waranaka, and Margaret Vaka-Vivili

Name and position of primary contact

Student

Email address

Phone number

Fax number

Mailing address

2. Name of Initiative

Pacific Islands Labour Sharing Collaboration - Job Creation and Youth Employment opportunities within Pacific Island Nations.



3. What is the common regional issue or challenge that this regional initiative aims to address?

You may also want to address the following: What are the causes of this issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.



The Islands of the Pacific are found in a unique and diverse region of the world's largest ocean with a combined population of about 3.4 million people inhabiting hundreds of islands, scattered over an area equivalent to about 15 percent of the globe's surface. The World Bank classifies Fiji as the largest, while Tuvalu is the smallest. Kiribati is one of the most remote and geographically dispersed, while the Solomon Islands the poorest when measured in terms of GNI per capita (Vaka-Vivili, 2015; World Bank, 2013). However, geographically Papua New Guinea happens to be the largest in terms of land mass area and population excluding Australia and New Zealand (Wikipedia, 2016).

These countries face similar socio-economic challenges (both at macro and micro levels) in terms of health, education, urban drift, youth unemployment apart from climate change and sea level rise. The issue this paper intends to raise is collaborative labour sharing (Job creation and Youth employment) opportunities to be created within the Pacific Islands. As stated above youth unemployment is a common issue affecting these Island nations as well as many developing nations. This particular issue stems from various socio-economic challenge hence, the cause cannot be attributed to a single factor but rather three (3) distinct entities encompassing the issue on a spectrum for analysis.

First and foremost, is the failure of previous and successive leaders to facilitate the creation of an environment that can spawn employment opportunities within the region. They have proceeded to invest and develop policies that treats the 'symptoms' rather than the cause of the issue- bandage quick-fix solution to an issue that reemerges in a much more severe way the next time around. As a result of this 'treating the symptoms rather than the cause' attitude, leads to symptoms persisting and disintegrating the very fabric of our societies in the Island nations. Rather than indulging into the past these lessons can be learned from these previous experiences and a corrective measure taken now to reset the compass to steer the course of the Pacific Island Nations.

Secondly, an important mitigating factor in the dilemma of Job Creation and Youth Employment Opportunities within Pacific Island Nations is education. The present education systems already gain significant funding from Pacific Island governments as well as support from donors and development partners within the region. However, the cost benefit ratio of funding to quality education remains low. Concerns have been raised regarding one such institution producing sub-standard and incompetent



graduates today than a decade ago. The National newspaper in Papua New Guinea published a front page article bearing the title “standards down” on the 2nd of September, 2014. This report was based on a medical symposium held in Goroka, Papua New Guinea that week, and this issue was raised by three senior prominent doctors who had extensive practical knowledge and experience in the medical field.

One of the topics discussed was on the training of medical doctors in PNG. The general opinion of these senior medical doctors present during one of the discussion sessions was that the quality of medical training was declining and that there was a need to review how doctors are training at the UPNG SMHS.

The discussions identified two major themes:

1. The urgent need to review the Problem Based Learning curriculum at the University of Papua New Guinea and modify it to suit our settings in PNG
2. Urgent need for government intervention to improve infrastructure, increase staffing and improve staff salaries at the UPNG School of Medicine.” (Itaki, R., 2014; The National, 2nd September, 2014)

These sentiments from the School of Medicine & Health Sciences at the University of Papua New Guinea, the premier university in the Pacific that caters for human resource development in Papua New Guinea as well as other Pacific Island countries highlights some of the realities that education standards could be dropping across the Pacific Island Countries.

Thirdly is an inability to recognise and address the lack of performance quality and shortages within the workforce or a profession. Vaka-Vivili, 2015, reported a severe shortage of teachers in Tokelau prompting the Tokelauan government to set up scholarships to send more students to New Zealand to train as teachers. The Seventh Day Adventist Church in Tonga sends their teachers to study for degree qualifications at the Pacific Adventist University in Papua New Guinea (Vaka-Vivili, 2015). Already we can see the attempts made by some of these countries to uphold quality or monitor and maintain shortages in the labour force.

The introduction of the proposed Labour Sharing Collaboration will prompt governments to not only raise standards within the respective institutions in their countries, but allow for labour sharing and cater for shortages and much valued work experience by participants. Not only that but it will create employment opportunities for our youth and the unemployed in some of our Pacific countries. Hence, we could review of our educational curriculum and tailor it with local expertise to be applicable within the region as well as infrastructural development. The education system that has been in use does not suit the type of economy and support infrastructure as it does in the places it was developed. This significantly contributed partly to



the decline in the performance of the education system within the Pacific Island Nations. Thus, creating a bottleneck in facilitating the progress of Job Creation and Youth Employment Opportunities within Pacific Island as skilled labour workforce.

The final component of the cause encompasses the major themes that were raised on the medical symposium on a regional scale. In conclusion, Job Creation and Youth Employment Opportunities within Pacific Island Nations has been hindered by previous leadership, decline in education system output caused by syllabus and infrastructure components.



4. Briefly describe this regional initiative

You may also want to address the following in this section:

How would this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region?

Who are the main beneficiaries?

How would the initiative contribute to the vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism?

Has the initiative been carried out previously?

What are the key risks in implementing this initiative?

Are there any complementary projects and programmes that are currently active?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

The Pacific Island Labour Sharing Collaboration aims to address skill shortages and provide employment opportunities for qualified and skilled citizens within the region. It serves to provide a pool of skilled personnel from which participating countries can draw from to cater for their skill shortages.

This is not a new concept in the region. The Youth Employment Promotion in Pacific Island countries was one similar initiative ran by the United Nations under the International Labour Organization (ILO) that included six countries in the Pacific: Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which could have complimented this initiative but is no longer active (Riodan, T., 2010).

However this proposed collaboration has not been carried out as a mutual agreement in the past. The South Pacific Commission (SPC) already employs skilled personnel from the region and teachers from Papua New Guinea are employed in Nauru and until a few years ago, Tonga. Most of these people were employed in their own merits through their own job seeking efforts. However, if this initiative is opened up, it will provide a basis for new graduates to seek work experience and building social skills through exposure outside of their home towns and islands.

The main beneficiaries would be:

1. New graduates and their families
2. Government departments in need of personnel
3. Manufacturing and mining Companies
4. Fisheries and Agriculture
5. Education and Education Colleges
6. Small business owners



This initiative would provide closer collaboration between partner countries of the region and promote a positive and productive labour force. In doing this, countries would be prompted to uphold quality in terms of education and training as well as maintaining quality work ethics and accountability. It will promote peace and harmony, social inclusion and prosperity of Pacific peoples which falls within the framework for Pacific Regionalism (PIFS, 2016).

The main risk of this initiative would be brain-drain, where people would migrate to seek employment opportunities outside of their own countries creating shortages back in their home countries. However if monitored and planned well, it should work out well. Within the Pacific Islands, the land and environment would provide and cater for the needs of the majority of the population whose demography and geography would be quite familiar. The absence of job creation and youth employment opportunities drive the masses of population in the urban areas into scavenging and foraging to make ends meet. This would also mean an increase in crime rates and breakdown of civil law and order, reflecting the structural collapse of society. Implementing this initiative would alleviate in dealing with the social and economic issues, benefiting the countries and the region at large.

The second risk in the implementation of this initiative (PILS Collaboration for job creation and youth employment), but not as economically crippling in particular that begs the attention of policy makers is the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) which many Pacific Island countries are yet to sign up. The TPP gives corporations the power to sue the government of a country in foreign tribunals suppose the government legislate laws that affects their future profits. A tricky situation in which multinational investors can muscle their way against their host to be submissive. It can also be destructive concoction that will serve the interest of multinational companies rather than host countries.

There is currently an active program for seasonal fruit pickers and unskilled labour in Australia and New Zealand farms mainly hiring labour hands from Pacific Island Nations. However, a majority of these operations are actively run by individuals and business that are at times, cunning and unscrupulous in their conduct, surfing on the current unemployment status quo of the Pacific Island Countries, preying and exploiting the desperate unemployed population.

This Pacific Island labour sharing collaboration (PILS Collaboration) is all about job creation and providing youth employment opportunities for member countries. This change would reform and transform the Pacific Island nations to also conform to the changes of globalization. However, the rapid rate of globalization has



penetrated into the core of the demography, causing urban drifting in search of better education, health care and other government services in which the basic components of survival.

The current status quo creates a misleading scenario to its youth and the next generation. How can the government of Pacific Island nations convince the current generation that education is the key to success when little attention is drawn towards quality education and training. The present generation would not want to be a generation surrounded by rich criminals and poor graduates. Implementation of the PILS Collaboration will be seen as the grease to the bearing of the wheels that drive the vision of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism which states “Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity. Hence, all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy, and productive lives” meanwhile supporting the values of a;

- Safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring full security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific.
- And supporting full inclusivity, equity and equality for all people of the Pacific (PIFS, 2016)

To summarize, the PILS Collaboration would greatly benefit the people within the Pacific Islands and facilitate the Framework for Pacific Regionalism to achieve its vision and address core values as well. The initiative seeks to operate within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific under the Pacific Operations Centre.

5. Why does this initiative require the attention of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum?

Please consider whether this initiative requires the attention and consideration of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in order to be implemented and outline why this is the case. Could it not be overseen or implemented at the level of Ministers, officials or by a regional agency?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.



This particular initiative does fully require the attention and consideration of the Pacific Islands forum in order for it to be implemented due to the very basic fact that it is a ticking time bomb that which over time will explode to an economic pandemic for the Pacific Islands, shoving the Pacific Island societies to the brink of collapse and extinction economically. The implementation requires a fully cooperative partnership with development partners as Ministerial and Regional agency collectively.

This would ensure that laws and regulations that creates a platform to host the initiative of the PILS Collaboration for Job Creation and Youth Employment Opportunities within Pacific Islands are not only enacted to collect dust in the filing cabinets but enforced and regulated to prevent exploitation and further create a distinct line between alien dominance and expert knowledge for it to be fully functional on a grand scale.

A fundamental aspect of Ministerial and Regional governance will spread the risk and diversify the alternatives that pre-exist untapped. Apart from that, it enables a model that enhance scenario which solely focuses on maximizing the returns from the initiative. Protecting the job market that has been created, fully utilizing its economic and social benefits as well as creating a sustainable and continuous development of the initiative for the generations to come.

6. Attachments

Please attach additional information in support of this initiative.

References:

1. Field, E. Sampson, A. (2016) Shocking Conditions Exposed in Federal Government Seasonal Worker Program, *The Weekly Times*
2. Itaki, R. (2015) Debate on Training of Medical Doctors in Papua New Guinea, retrieved from: <https://pacificfamilyhealth.wordpress.com/2014/09/16/debate-on-training-of-medical-doctors-in-papua-new-guinea/>
3. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, (2014) The Framework for Pacific Regionalism, retrieved from: www.forumsec.org
4. Riordan, T. (2010) Youth Employment Promotion in Pacific Island Countries, retrieved from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_120578.pdf



5. Vaka-Vivili, M. (2015). The Future of Science Teacher Education in Tonga, Victoria University of Wellington, Master of Education thesis, Wellington, New Zealand, pp 28-38.

7. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website

In line with the process outlined in the [Framework for Pacific Regionalism](#), all submitted initiatives, inclusive of all attachments, will be publicly available via the Forum Secretariat website.

8. Guidelines and Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline below or contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:



Submission Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to assist those submitting regional initiatives through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. For more information contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:

1. About the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

2. How do I submit a regional initiative?

To submit a regional initiative, complete all sections of the submission template and submit to the Forum Secretariat by no later **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016**.

Submissions must be made on this template. Submissions made directly via email, letter or other format will not be considered.



3. Who can submit an initiative?

Any interested stakeholder can submit a regional initiative. This may include individuals, or groups of individuals or organisations, including government, civil society (including church or religious organisations), the private sector, community groups, multilateral agencies and CROP agencies.

4. What information is required?

In completing the regional initiative template, you should:

- a. Identify and seek to respond to issues and challenges that are common to the Pacific region and that could be best addressed through a regional response.
- b. Demonstrate that a high level political decision needs to be made.

This is not a process for seeking endorsement of existing projects or activities. No standing fund exists in which to allocate funds to initiatives that are endorsed. Submissions that consist of projects or initiatives that may be ordinarily carried out under the governance arrangements or work-plan of the submitting organisation are unlikely to be successful.

- c. Demonstrate how the initiative would contribute to one or more of the objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

5. What assistance will the Forum Secretariat provide through this process

The Forum Secretariat will provide general advice and suggestions to those making submissions. This advice will include clarifying the information set out in this guideline, such as how initiatives can be completed and submitted; the type and level of information sought; the assessment process; and clarification of the overall process.

6. Assessment process

Step 1 The Forum Secretariat will collate all submitted initiatives and check them for completeness.

Step 2 The Forum Secretariat will, in collaboration with CROP agency officials and other experts as required, conduct a first round of assessment of all submitted initiatives using the tests for regional action (see Table 1 below).

Step 3 The Forum Secretariat will provide all assessed initiatives to the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), which will assess initiatives against the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework (see Table 2 below). Reports on current regional initiatives under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism that are in progress will also be considered by the SSCR when they assess initiatives.

Step 4 Based on its assessment of all submissions, the SSCR may recommend a limited number of initiatives to Forum Leaders. Those initiatives recommended to Leaders will be first sent to the Forum Officials Committee for commentary and incorporation on the Leaders' annual meeting agenda. Forum Leaders will then receive the final recommendations of the SSCR and make decisions on these at the annual Forum Leaders Meeting. In 2016 this meeting will take place in the Federated States of Micronesia



Proponents whose initiatives have been selected for Leaders' consideration will be informed of this selection within two weeks of the SSCR's decision. All proponents will be informed in due course of the outcome of their submissions.

7. Leaders' decisions on initiatives

Forum Leaders' decisions on initiatives will be publicly announced through the Forum Leaders' Communique that is issued at the conclusion of the Leaders' meeting. As directed by Leaders, the Forum Secretariat will initiate implementation of the decisions in consultation with the proponent, the proposed implementing agencies, funding partners, and other relevant organisations or stakeholders.

8. Further help and feedback

For further information or guidance or to provide feedback on the process, contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:



Table 1 – Tests for Regionalism

TEST	CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION
Market test	The initiative should not involve a service that markets can provide well.
Sovereignty test	The initiative should maintain the degree of effective sovereignty held by national governments (countries, not regional bodies, should decide priorities).
Regionalism test	<p>The initiative should meet one of the following criteria at a sub-regional or regional level, in support of national priorities and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ establish a shared norm or standard▪ establish a common position on an issue▪ deliver a public or quasi-public good which is regional (or sub-regional) in its scope realise economies of scale▪ overcome national capacity constraints▪ complement national governments where they lack capacity to provide national public goods like security or the rule of law▪ facilitate economic or political integration▪ Where benefits accrue sub-regionally, the contribution to broader regionalism should be clear.
Benefit test	<p>The initiative should bring substantial net benefits, as demonstrated by a cost-benefit analysis. The distribution of benefits across countries and across stakeholders within the region should also be considered—particularly with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The relative costs and benefits for smaller island states (an “SIS test”)▪ How inclusive the proposal is of all stakeholders who might benefit from regionalism.
Political oversight test	The initiative should require the Leaders’ attention and input (as opposed to being within the mandate of Ministers or other governing bodies).
Risk and sustainability test	The initiative should demonstrate a robust risk and sustainability evaluation, be based on a sound implementation plan, be supported by some identified funding, and demonstrate available capacity and experience for successful implementation.
Duplication test	The initiative should not be currently under progress by another organisation or process, and there should be no duplication of effort.



Table 2 – Vision, Values and Objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

Vision:

Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives

Values:

- We value and depend upon the integrity of our vast ocean and our island resources.
- We treasure the diversity and heritage of the Pacific and seek an inclusive future in which cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed.
- We embrace good governance, the full observance of democratic values, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies.
- We seek peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring full security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific.
- We support full inclusivity, equity and equality for all people of the Pacific.
- We strive for effective, open and honest relationships and inclusive and enduring partnerships—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond.

These Pacific regional values will guide all our policy-making and implementation.

Principal Objectives:

- Sustainable development that combines economic social, and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods and well-being and use the environment sustainably;
- Economic growth that is inclusive and equitable;
- Strengthened governance, legal, financial, and administrative systems; and
- Security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.