

REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative	International Trade Centre (ITC)
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2. Name of Initiative

Women Economic Empowerment in Tourism in the Pacific Region

3. Background and Rationale

You may consider: What is the issue being addressed by this initiative? What are the causes of this issue? Are there relevant studies that have been carried out to support the issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

ITC believes there are unexploited opportunities to integrate vulnerable women entrepreneurs in the Tourism value chain in the Pacific region.

Current shortcomings the present regional programme would address :

- Existing institutions lack market knowledge and connections when it comes to women-made products in the Pacific region which could integrate into Tourism value chains and offer much needed income to women across the region.
- There is no current strategy to empower women in the Tourism value chain through increasing their capacities to participate.
- Better adaptation of products made by women to international tourism market requirements is needed to increase the chances of selling to tourists in the Pacific, enhancing inclusion and linkages opportunities between communities, villages and local suppliers and Tourist spending.
- Limited participation and Tourism revenue share with women-owned business, and very limited participation of women-owned local enterprises in Tourism services.
- Very limited women operated enterprises/cooperatives which could do business with international tour operators and offer their services
- There exist punctual assistance projects to women serving the tourism sector (e.g. craft producers), but no regional strategy and implementation of the strategy from a regional perspective, building on specific women-related issues and assets
- Lack of coordination between cruise ship visits and sales of creative industries products and services
- Mismatch between what is being offered and what tourists want
- Limited appreciation of the cultural significance and value of products and lack of awareness amongst tourists of what to buy and where to buy it
- Lack of attention to variety, design, finishing, packaging, and display of handicrafts
- Poor understanding of biosecurity regulations and intellectual property rights
- Loss of traditional knowledge and skills in handicraft production and cultural expressions

Gender:

Whilst there is normally no formal discrimination against women in employment, politics, or economic participation in the Pacific region, **women are less represented in professional and paid employment, earn less than men, and are more likely to be informally employed. Rural women are particularly disadvantaged.**

The UNWTO Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 aimed to promote women's empowerment and protect women's rights through better tourism work. The report analysed data on eleven indicators from 172 developing countries. **It finds that tourism provides significant opportunities for women's advancement through formal, informal, and supply-chain employment such as handicrafts.** The benefits of tourism for women were summarised in the following points:

- Tourism has a wide employment multiplier-effect, low barriers to entry, and is more likely to employ women and minority groups than other industries
- Tourism provides home-grown entrepreneurship opportunities in handicrafts, food products, tour guiding, and many other areas.
- Tourism offers part-time and shift work that can be helpful to women with household responsibilities
- Tourism development can improve infrastructure such as water supply, health facilities, electricity, and

communications that can make a major difference to the lives of poor women.

The flexibility of work such as souvenir and handicraft making allows women to continue with their traditional activities while improving their standard of living. **Empowering women with the skills and confidence to professionalise their handicraft business and participate in the tourism value chain safeguards against exploitation.**

Cruise Ship tourism:

The South Pacific has seen significant growth in cruise tourism over the last five years. There are now more vessels, more attractive packages, and the greater volumes are driving the prices down to appeal to a mass market. Only between 2006 and 2008, Carnival Australia, the region's largest cruise line, reported a 20% growth rate, the highest in the world. Carnival's cruising capacity increased 300% in the same period. Homeports were established in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Fremantle, and Auckland. To illustrate this growth, Carnival Australia's main brands include P&O Cruises Australia, P&O Cruises UK, Princess Cruises, Seabourne, Holland America, Costa Cruises, and Cunard. Carnival Australia serves around 250,000 guests a year. P&O cruises and Princess together account for approx. 195,000 visitors, representing a 140% increase in their passenger numbers up from 81,800 in 2005. The present project will ensure that local communities benefit from this growth through the empowering of women to propose better quality products and services to the Tourism value chain. Cooperatives and their marketing organizations need to be better organized to put forward quality women made local products and services aimed at tourists.

Vanuatu remains the most visited cruise ship port in the South Pacific. This is due to a combination of geography, infrastructure, and existence of sheltered anchorages, wharfs, and safe navigational aids. Despite Cyclone Pam in 2015 and the current tourist cancellations in Vanuatu, the general trend of cruise ship port calls is expected to continue in the long run. The International Trade Centre (ITC) current runs a project in Vanuatu assisting rural women hat makers in Samna province improve the quality of their hand made hats and enabling them to sell more and at better prices to cruise ship tourists.

Other popular destinations are New Caledonia, Loyalty Islands (administratively part of New Caledonia), and Fiji.

Other newer and nascent destinations are selected ports in **Papua New Guinea (PNG)**. Specific tours are starting in PNG and training women tour guides could offer new employment opportunities for women. The ITC currently has a Women Economic Empowerment programme in PNG where it supports rural women make better Bilum bags for sales to tourists and export.

4. Description

Please provide a brief overview of this initiative. Try to address the following: Does this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region? What makes this initiative of importance to the Pacific region as a whole? Who would implement this initiative? Who are the main beneficiaries? Are regulatory or legislative changes required at the national level to implement this initiative? How would the initiative be funded? Has this initiative been carried out previously? What are the key risks in implementing this initiative? Are there any complementary projects and programmes currently active? What is the proposed timeframe for this initiative? How would the initiative be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Tourism can support women take home much needed cash. Whereas Tourism creates jobs in tourism related supply chains like food, services (e.g. transport, hospitality), creative industries (e.g. handicraft, art, dance, music) and national heritage items to name a few, integrating women with a targeted objective of giving them full participation

opportunities in the above makes all the sense, especially given that local markets are limited. A **regional programme of capacity building** is best suited to use opportunities of scale and at the same time explore regional gender-specific synergies. In the process, **women associations and cooperatives** with the express objective of empowering women in tourism need to be either created or strengthened. Business linkages and collaboration facilitated and promoted across the region as well as with international tour operators and cruises is needed. The proposed initiative aims to offer a coherent approach.

The goal of the initiative is to enhance sustainable livelihood opportunities for Pacific women service and produce providers by revitalising cultural practices and developing innovative products and experiences that meet the expectations of international tourism markets (cruise ship visitors and overnight tourists).

The initiative will focus on:

- **Geographically:** Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Island (and any other country fitting into the approach might be added after more analysis has taken place)
- **Sectors: Creative industries**, including handicrafts, visual and plastic arts and creative services (music and dance), **handmade food products** and **tourism services** like cultural community tours, guide services and hospitality services.
- **Beneficiaries:** (1) Pacific communities with the potential to supply products and services to tourists (e.g. women handicraft and food makers in rural areas, women-organized and -managed cooperatives which promote and market the produce). (2) Tourism services providers (e.g. tour operators and guides). Both groups of beneficiaries will be selected with focus on women entrepreneurs.

The initiative will do so by:

Product and Services Development:

- **Improving products and services** to be supplied to tourism value chains (serving as springboard to future exports)
- **Developing local Tour guide services and tourism product offer** in an inclusive way with the concerned communities

Association strengthening and Development

- **Strengthening** and/or creating respective **tourism and tourism supply producer and service associations**

Market linkages

- Facilitating **integration of local suppliers' offerings into tourism tours**, by promoting these to inbound and international tour operators and make sure that the generated income is distributed in a fair manner

Outcome: Export competitiveness of the selected Pacific countries' tourism sector strengthened with focus on women entrepreneurs

Output 1 Product and Services Development: Export capacity of tourism-related suppliers of goods in services in selected Pacific countries as well as tour operators and guides strengthened

Activities may include training in enhancement of product design and quality, design and upgrading of cultural tourism tours, improved materials on biosecurity, and greater awareness of intellectual property rights.

Output 2 Support Associations Development: Increased capacity of tourism associations as well as associations of tourism-related supply chains in providing sector development support services to their clients

Activities may include the identification and assessment of existing associations and its creation, strengthening and

formalization. Through the associations, capacity would be built to analyse product and trade related data and maintain updated databases, available to producers and traders.

Output 3 Business linkages: Facilitate business linkages and sales

Activities may include market research, awareness raising of tourists for the value of local products and services, sales outlet upgrades, organization of local and regional sales fairs and night markets, business skill training, and improved liaison between producers and the tourism industry. The initiative would also support women tour guides who need to improve their knowledge and delivery of cultural heritage. Linkages to international Tour Operators would be facilitated through export promotion and marketing training of Pacific inbound Tour Operators.

The Regional governance approach recommended for the project is one that is owned, implemented and coordinated by Pacific women, uses transparent processes, disseminates results widely, uses Pacific master crafts trainers where possible, and is economically, culturally, environmentally, and socially sustainable. Project implementation will be led in-country via local women capacity building organisations and a project coordinator. Support will include international and national experts and trainers.

Risks:

The product risks are a resistance to change amongst producers, the unsustainable use of resources and increasing cost of resources, and 'copy-cat' production of handicrafts.

The market risks for the project are a decline in the number of cruise ships and visitors to the respective island and the poor coordination and marketing of cruise ship tourism. The cruise ship market is the fastest growing market segment. Poor coordination of cruise ship marketing would be addressed by the project through the full-time Regional Coordinator, the emphasis on market research, and the close collaboration with Cruise ship companies.

ITC's role in this project will be that as an umbrella organization bringing in partners. ITC will work on three levels, namely Government/Policy making bodies, Trade Associations and the private sector (SMEs and local communities).

ITC can confirm that to implement such an initiative does not require any regulatory or legislative changes at the national level. From ITC's previous experiences and given that the region has been stable; there is no significant risk for implementation beyond those specific project-related risks mentioned above.

To be sustainable and impactful, the initiative should run at least for three years and would require the mobilization of approximately US\$ 5m in total.

5. Alignment to Regional Vision, Values and Objectives

Briefly describe how your initiative supports the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. These can be found in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism document or in the submissions guideline document.

Please limit your response to no more than 500 words

The proposed initiative is in full alignment with the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*, with a commitment to supporting women's integration in trade in pursuing deeper regionalism. The initiative supports regional public policy, bringing the Gender perspective to policy planning. The initiative will ensure that clear and equitable benefits are gained by women, at all levels in the tourism sector.

Mainstreaming of Women entrepreneurs in Trade.

The initiative will mainstream women in trade through an inventory of existing initiatives at the country and regional levels, with a view of giving them new impetus and necessary support. The initiative will train women entrepreneurs on how to bid for new business in the international space and will sensitize international companies/buyers on all goods and services available by women owned and operated enterprises and communities. The initiative will link buyers to Pacific women owned and operated companies and communities and organize buyer mentor group sessions to ensure products are adapted to the needs of the buyers. The initiative will sensitize buyers on the economic and societal benefits of procuring goods and services from women owned enterprises.

Empowerment of women entrepreneurs to participate in the global market

The proposed initiative will deliver capacity building to selected groups of women on a regional basis so that **a)** know how on global trade is transferred to them, and **b)** regional networks of businesswomen in tourism are formed and **c)** Regional cultural heritage and intellectual property recognition aspects are enhanced.

Empower women to engage in the consultative process on policies affecting them.

The initiative will put special emphasis with definite targets to be reached with the programme in including and engaging women entrepreneurs in the consultative process on policies affecting the. The initiative ensures the women's voices are included.

Strengthening trade policies in regards to the participation of women entrepreneurs

The initiative will bring global experience ensuring policies are promulgated which improve and develop women livelihoods, giving them the capacities to sustain their economic empowerment.

Building capacity

The initiative will mainstream women in trade through building capacity on three levels: **a)** At the policy level with government and civil society on the economic and social benefits of mainstreaming women in trade as well as procuring goods and services from women owned enterprises; **b)** at the trade promotion institution level in order to organize this effort with an institutional setting and in a sustainable manner; and **c)** at the micro enterprise level, empowering Pacific owned and managed enterprises in tourism to integrate global markets.

Developing synergies

ITC will be guided by PIFS Secretariat and PT&I – Sydney on ensuring all possible synergies are developed. ITC already has an MOU signed with PIFS on the margin of the SIDS conference in Samoa in 2014 and this collaboration will be the opportunity to activate our collaboration.

6. Additional Information

Please provide or attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.

ITC is a 100% Aid for Trade agency and thus best placed to deal with the **trade issues of tourism and women empowerment**. ITC has a clear advantage in strengthening trade support institutions, delivering export development projects to small communities in diversify export commodities, deepen regional trade integration, poverty reduction.

ITC's Women and Trade programme is geared to increasing economic benefits business women draw from their

participation in Trade. The ITC Women and Trade programme implements global programmes which have scalability and replicability, which operate with a strong local ownership and engagement, which are sustainable, which build quality supply capacities and which link local SMEs to international networks.

Capitalizing on its global experience, ITC acts as umbrella organization in bringing in world class partners, and working on three levels (Government, trade associations and SMEs/Communities) paving the way for women economic empowerment through trade. ITC, through its global presence and experience of other regional initiatives has the capacity to link local producers to Global buyers.

For more information on ITC's work, please visit ITC's website and the organisation's Global experience in enhancing Trade for developing countries: www.intracen.org

7. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website

In line with the process outlined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, please note that all initiatives will be uploaded to the Forum Secretariat website at the close of the call for initiatives, i.e. 12 June 2015.

8. Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline or contact:

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