

# SUBMISSION TO INFORM AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is committed to the principle that human and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organisation, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants. IOM has strong presence across the Indo-Pacific region, which includes 12 member states in the Pacific region. IOM has a unique capacity to facilitate cooperation between stakeholders, prioritizing integrated operations and intervention that can be effectively scaled across countries.

IOM commends Australia's increased emphasis on regional partnerships, climate action, labour migration and remittances, and inclusive development to leave no one behind. The new International Development Policy provides opportunity to increase effectiveness in priority areas. IOM provides the following recommendations based on its global expertise, regional experience, and continuously developing evidence base relating to migration and human mobility.

## Recommendations:



**Climate resilience and peacebuilding:** Harmonize regional, national, and community adaptation and resilience initiatives, in both policy objectives and program design.



**Transformative labour mobility:** Invest in pre-departure and reintegration initiatives to ensure transformational outcomes, thus benefitting cross-national social stability and relationships for a more resilient future.



**Border security and migrant protection:** Build government capacity to collect, analyse and use migration data, including via supporting Regional Training Centres on Immigration and Border Management, to support regional prosperity, public health, and protection.

IOM supports Australia's commitment to connecting partners with Australia and regional architecture. The IOM Pacific Strategy provides analysis of key Pacific partnerships by thematic area and organisational type, and is aligned with the Pacific UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027. IOM welcomes Australia's continued support to the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and its 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific, the Pacific Immigration Development Community, the Bali Process, and agencies of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific.

The IOM Pacific Strategy further details key considerations in integrating four key themes across our programming; COVID-19; localisation; gender, disability and social inclusion; and research data and evidence. Contextually specific approaches are necessary to meaningfully achieve progress and effective programming in these areas. As such, IOM welcomes DFAT investment in aid management capacity and adaptive, long-term projects, which improve accountability and effectiveness.



## Climate resilience and peacebuilding

**Recommendation:** Harmonize regional, national, and community adaptation and resilience initiatives, in both policy objectives and program design.

This extends to support for climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and human mobility as methods to improve overall resilience and human security.

IOM recognises Australia's positive steps in this area via their endorsement of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, that recognises that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of Pacific Peoples. IOM also recognises DFAT's investment in Disaster Risk Reduction via a range of programming, and key facilitative events such as the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

DFAT should now move to promote harmonized regional, national, and community level resilience approaches in the International Development Strategy, and commit to funding interventions that facilitate such harmonization across regional, national, and local arenas. Continued efforts should be made to ensure support for policy, social, and financial adaptation measures as well as physical infrastructure, and to recognise the importance of adequate preparation and planning for climate related mobility, noting the limits of in-situ adaptation measures. These efforts should be guided by rights-based, innovative and gender sensitive approaches.

The Pacific Resilience to Disasters and Displacement program has facilitated capacity-building at community and national level, which has then informed regional-level collaboration on climate mobility and displacement management, thus fostering South-South collaboration and improving capacity for regional response. Community and national-level capacity building under the project facilitated IOM surge support to the Government of Tonga in early 2022. Using this experience, IOM and Government counterparts from Tonga contributed to recent regional training and consultations on disaster displacement in Fiji. This promoted common understanding of response procedures, coordination and protection mechanisms, from community to regional level.

Working via regional architecture and at a national level further assists in promoting international norms and stability. This is central to ensuring a holistic approach to peacebuilding. IOM's initiatives in the Solomon Islands, PNG, and elsewhere recognise that community-level peacebuilding initiatives must be complimented by national efforts to address key drivers of instability. Alongside a peacebuilding and protection initiative in Isabel Province Solomon Islands, IOM has supported National Relocation Guidelines, which in turn have informed our programming on disaster and displacement resilience.

This proposal responds to Australia's aims to:

-  reinforce the foundations of a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific, with a focus on:
-  enhancing states and community resilience to external pressures and shocks,
-  connecting partners with Australia and regional architecture, and
-  generating collective action on global challenges that impact our region.



## Transformative labour mobility

**Recommendation:** Invest in pre-departure and reintegration initiatives to ensure transformational outcomes, thus benefitting cross-national social stability and relationships for a more resilient future.

Strategic investment in improving protection, sustainability, and governance of labour mobility can be transformational. The Australian government should strengthen pre-departure assistance and sustainable reintegration support to migrant workers. This benefits social cohesion in both Australia and sending countries, and via improved financial literacy and education, facilitates improved social development outcomes.

There are many risks associated with seasonal migration, including gender-based violence. IOM has expertise in addressing these risks, including in [Australia](#), [Pacific](#), and [Asian](#) contexts. Our experience indicates that migrants benefit from interconnected services at different stages of their journey, including pre-departure, transit, arrival, integration, and (if applicable) return and reintegration.

Quality pre-departure training also provides critical protection purposes. Training can promote understanding of Australia's laws, expectations, and support systems relating to family violence, workplace exploitation, and public health and hygiene. It can also promote greater inclusion and gender equality by improving opportunities for traditionally excluded people to take up important roles in income generation or household financial management. Migrant support training should include the migrant's family and be interconnected with wider community support. This has been implemented in the [Famili I Redi](#) initiative in the Pacific, which should be further expanded.

Australia can promote greater alignment with international standards by promoting the prohibition of recruitment fees and related costs charged to migrant workers participating in Australian labour migration programmes as well as overseas supply chains (see IOM's submission in response to the Review of Australia's Modern Slavery Act 2018). Australia should ensure its inclusion and social cohesion initiatives draw on current approaches and lessons learned by engaging with the [Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion \(DISC\) Initiative](#).

IOM also recommends strengthening government, business and civil society capacities to implement the [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), especially in relation to migrant workers that are key contributors to the Australian economy. IOM's Migration, Business and Human Rights (MBHR) Asia initiative underlines the value of private sector engagement for migrant protection.

This proposal responds to Australia's aims to:

-  reinforce the foundations of a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific, with a focus on:
-  building effective, accountable states that can sustain their own development,
-  enhancing states and community resilience to external pressures and shocks,
-  connecting partners with Australia and regional architecture, and generating collective action on global challenges that impact our region.



## Border security and migrant protection

**Recommendation:** Build government capacity to collect, analyse and use migration data, including via supporting Regional Training Centres on Immigration and Border Management, to support regional prosperity, public health, and protection.

Good understanding and management of border entries and departures is critical to effective and stable government. By gaining a good understanding of the skills and objectives of migrants departing or entering the country, governments can manage their labour force and skills investments to better participate in regional labour migration economies. Improved training and data analysis also facilitates effective migrant protection, enabling border officials to more reliably identify potential cases of trafficking and exploitation.

Australia's International Development Policy should recognise that border security – in particular the ability to track and analyse migration data – is critical to economic development and protection of vulnerable persons. Specifically, the Policy should recognise the importance of supporting national governments' capacity to collect, analyse, and use migration data for economic development and migrant protection. A recent IOM Fiji evaluation confirmed that sharing of tools, skills, and data between government departments, and between Pacific states, is a key area of diplomatic and technical challenge, in which DFAT and IOM could effectively form partnership to unlock progress in the area. IOM's [Migration Profile in Fiji](#) underlined that this issue has particular importance in Pacific states, due to high levels of migration, inter-related migration pathways within the region, and limited current capacity on migration data.

To progress this area, DFAT should support the creation of dedicated Pacific Regional Training Centres on Immigration and Border Management as an important driver of initiatives for improved migration governance in the Pacific; including research and development initiatives related to long-term development of migration management, including counter-trafficking and smuggling. This should be undertaken in cooperation with the Pacific Immigration and Development Community (PIDC).

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For further discussion or information on our areas of expertise, contact [IOMCanberra@iom.int](mailto:IOMCanberra@iom.int). [IOM Publications](#) offers a repository of migration research, tools, strategies and resources, including our [IOM Pacific Strategy 2022-2024](#), and [Asia and the Pacific Regional Strategy 2020-2024](#).