



Terms of Reference

Consultancy to Support the Development of the Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy / Framework and Implementation Approach

ToR Date: 16 July 2026

Publication target: 31 March 2027

Consultancy start date: 31st August 2026

Location: Flexible (Remote work)

Budget: €10,000, all taxes included

1. Background and Rationale

[Forus](#) is an innovative global network of national NGO platforms and regional coalitions working to strengthen civil society's collective voice, influence and capacity to drive social change. It brings together 74 National NGO Platforms and 8 Regional Coalitions from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific, representing more than 24,000 civil society organisations worldwide.

National platforms of CSOs and regional coalitions play a unique and irreplaceable role in coordinating diverse civil society actors, influencing policy for sustainable development, and strengthening civil society's enabling environment at national, regional, and global levels.

In 2025–2026, Forus developed its new [global Strategy \(2026–2030\)](#) through an inclusive, consultative process with its members. Forus' new Strategy 2026–2030 is built around three pillars: Connect, Support, and Influence, underpinned by Network Health. The Strategy aims to ensure the network is resilient, interconnected, and influential at all levels. To deliver on this ambition, Forus is supporting members in different regions to translate the global strategy into practical regional advocacy roadmaps.

During the Forus General Assembly in Siem Reap, members discussed the opportunity to develop a more coordinated and Pacific-led regional advocacy approach that reflects the realities, priorities, and aspirations of Pacific civil society organisations, national platforms and our regional network in the region.

Recognising the diversity of Pacific contexts and capacities, members agreed that any regional advocacy process should be:

- member-led
 - grounded in national priorities
 - aligned with existing regional and global frameworks
 - designed to support practical collaboration and collective influence where appropriate.
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In the Pacific region, civil society platforms operate across a diverse and geographically dispersed landscape. Members face significant geographic and logistical barriers to regional coordination, varying levels of civic space and enabling environment conditions, shrinking and diversifying funding landscapes, climate change and disaster resilience pressures, and limited resources and capacity at national platform level, and digital and physical security risks for platforms operating in politically sensitive or contested contexts. These realities must shape the design, pace and expectations of the process.

At the same time, the Pacific region presents significant opportunities for collective advocacy and solidarity. Pacific regional frameworks, including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, regional decision-making spaces, climate and sustainable development processes, and Pacific traditions of solidarity and talanoa-based dialogue can provide entry points for coordinated influence where this is useful and appropriate for members.

This consultancy will support Forus members in the Pacific to develop a practical, member-led Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy / Framework and Implementation Approach. The process should help members identify shared priorities, points of convergence, advocacy opportunities, potential leverage points, and concrete next steps for regional and inter-regional collaboration.

This process is a member-led process. The consultant or consultant team will not define advocacy priorities on behalf of members. Rather, they will facilitate and accompany a structured process through which members can analyse their context, identify shared priorities, map influence opportunities, and agree on practical advocacy directions.

The available budget is intended to support expertise and service delivery through this consultancy.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to support Forus members in the Pacific region, through a facilitated member-led process, to develop a practical regional advocacy strategy that translates the Forus Strategy 2026–2030 into clear regional advocacy priorities, influence opportunities and concrete next steps.

The consultancy will facilitate a process through which members:

- Ground the Forus 2026–2030 Strategy in the Pacific regional context, including members' priorities, narratives, risks, and opportunities;
- Identify where members have leverage for joint advocacy, including mapping key actors, spaces, moments, pressure points and institutional entry points;
- Identify areas of regional convergence, shared priorities and potential collective advocacy opportunities;
- Map identified priorities against the Forus global advocacy framework, the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, and other relevant Pacific regional frameworks and decision-making spaces;
- Develop a practical action plan clarifying possible roles at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels;
- Identify concrete opportunities for inter-regional collaboration within the Forus network;
- Propose light monitoring markers to help members follow progress and adapt the strategy over time.

This consultancy will not create binding advocacy mandates for participating members, override national advocacy positions or priorities, establish permanent regional governance structures,

directly implement regional advocacy campaigns, or assume responsibility for long-term implementation funding. Participation in consultations, advocacy activities or implementation support will remain voluntary and subject to the capacity and willingness of participating members.

3. Scope and Analytical Approach

The consultancy will produce an evidence-based, member-driven and action-oriented regional advocacy strategy rooted in the experiences of Forus members in the Pacific, including national platforms and regional coalitions.

The analysis should draw on:

- Forus strategic documents and relevant internal materials;
- Member strategies, reports and advocacy priorities where available;
- The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and other relevant Pacific regional frameworks;
- Relevant civil society evidence and monitoring information on civic space, enabling environment, climate justice, sustainable development, financing and other issues emerging from member consultations;
- Consultations with Forus members across the Pacific region;
- Contextual input from PIANGO, National Liaison Units and partner networks where direct participation from specific countries or territories is not feasible;
- Targeted external sources relevant to priorities emerging from member consultations, where useful for identifying advocacy entry points, policy windows and opportunities for collective influence.

The assignment is not expected to provide a comprehensive analysis of the full civil society landscape across all Pacific island nations and territories, nor detailed country-by-country political or legal assessments. Instead, it should use the collective experience of Forus members as the primary evidence base for identifying key priority areas for regional influence, key stakeholders, potential allies, advocacy opportunities and realistic pathways for collective action.

Given the geographic diversity of the Pacific region, the methodology should be inclusive, accessible and realistic, accommodating varying levels of connectivity, capacity and availability. The methodology may include national, sub-regional or thematic conversations where relevant, including Melanesian, Polynesian, Micronesian and other Pacific perspectives represented within or connected to Forus' membership. These inputs should inform one coherent Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy / Framework that identifies shared priorities, differentiated contexts and possible entry points for action.

Opportunities for inter-regional collaboration should also be identified, in connection with Forus' global influence workstreams and the Connect pillar of the Forus Strategy 2026–2030.

4. Scope of Work

The consultant (or consultant team) will work closely with the Pacific Regional Steering Committee and the Forus Secretariat. The scope of work will include:

Inception and Work Planning

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- Hold a kick-off meeting with the Pacific Regional Steering Committee and Forus Secretariat.
 - Confirm the scope, methodology, timeline, risks, consultation approach and expected deliverables.
 - Prepare an inception note and detailed workplan.

Desk Review and Regional Landscape Mapping

- Review relevant Forus documents, member inputs, regional advocacy processes and complementary civil society evidence.
- Identify key regional trends affecting civil society advocacy in the Pacific, including climate change, development finance, and civic space dynamics.
- Map relevant institutions, policy spaces, regional bodies and civil society networks, including the Pacific Islands Forum, the Pacific Community, the Melanesian Spearhead Group, PIANGO and other relevant Pacific regional or sub-regional spaces, as well as development finance actors, climate and sustainable development processes, and advocacy moments relevant to priorities emerging from members..

Member Engagement and Consultations

- Design and facilitate a participatory member engagement process that is accessible, light-touch and realistic given Pacific geographic, connectivity and capacity realities .
- Consult national platforms, regional coalitions and relevant Pacific civil society actors, using a combination of Talanoa-style dialogue, interviews, surveys, focus groups and/or existing meeting opportunities, depending on feasibility and members' availability.
- Ensure the process captures both shared regional priorities and differentiated national realities.
- Where direct participation from specific Pacific nations or territories is not feasible, seek contextual input through PIANGO, affiliated National Liaison Units and partner networks.

Power Mapping

- Identify key decision-makers, allies, pressure points, advocacy spaces and windows for influence at regional levels.
- Analyse where Pacific members already have access, legitimacy, relationships or potential influence.
- Map identified priorities against the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and other relevant regional and global frameworks.
- Identify possible entry points for national, regional and global-level advocacy.
- Identify, where possible, practical engagement pathways and existing relationships, so that members understand who to approach, through which channels, and for what advocacy objectives.

Strategy / Framework Development

- Synthesise consultation findings and desk review results.
 - Support members to identify 2–4 priority advocacy tracks or “influence bets.”
 - Draft the Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy / Framework and accompanying implementation approach.
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- Ensure the strategy is practical, focused, realistic and usable by members with varying levels of capacity.
 - Clarify what can be advanced collectively at regional level, what should remain nationally led, and where inter-regional or global Forus support could add value.

Validation and Revision

- Support at least one regional validation session with Pacific members.
- Present the draft strategy and gather feedback.
- Revise the strategy package based on member and Steering Committee input.

Finalisation and Handover

- Finalise the regional advocacy strategy, power map, action plan, inter-regional collaboration proposals and monitoring markers.
- Provide a short handover note with suggested next steps, source list and possible update points.
- Where agreed and feasible, include a light annex on resource mobilisation and/or communications considerations.

5. Methodology Requirements

The consultant is expected to propose a robust, participatory and Pacific-appropriate methodology that includes:

- **Desk review:** Synthesis of existing Forus and Forus member strategies, relevant regional frameworks, policy processes, and complementary civil society evidence.
- **Member and stakeholder engagement:** A clear and inclusive consultation approach covering participating national platforms, regional coalitions and relevant Pacific civil society actors, using a combination of online surveys, key informant interviews, Talanoa-style conversations, focus groups and/or existing meeting spaces.
- **Pacific-appropriate methodology:** Accessible, flexible and culturally appropriate engagement approaches, including Talanoa where relevant, with attention to time zones, connectivity, capacity and the voluntary nature of member participation.
- **Power mapping:** A structured methodology for identifying key actors, allies, and windows for influence at sub-regional and regional levels, including mapping against major Pacific regional frameworks.
- **Validation:** A clear process for member validation of the draft strategy, involving at least one validation session (online or hybrid).
- **Quality assurance:** Triangulation of sources, clear documentation of evidence, and an approach that supports future updates and replication.
- **Practicality:** A strong focus on producing a strategy that members can realistically use, rather than a long descriptive report.

Do-No-Harm and Confidentiality

Given the varying civic space and enabling environment conditions across Pacific contexts, the consultant or consultant team must apply a do-no-harm approach throughout the assignment.

This includes:

- protecting the confidentiality of member inputs where needed;
- avoiding attribution of sensitive comments without consent;
- adapting consultation methods to members' security concerns, connectivity constraints, and availability;
- taking care when documenting country-specific risks;
- ensuring that politically sensitive findings are presented in a way that does not expose members or partners to unnecessary risk.

6. Tasks of the Consultant

The work is expected to be organised in phases (indicative timeline below). The timeline below is indicative and may be adjusted depending on member review, consultant selection, contracting and Steering Committee guidance.

Phase 1 — Inception (September - October 2026)

- Kick-off meeting with the Regional Steering Committee and Forus Secretariat to confirm objectives, scope, methodology, and risks.
- Submit an inception note: methodology, detailed workplan, proposed strategy outline, sampling and engagement plan, and risk mitigation measures.

Phase 2 — Desk Review and Mapping (October 2026)

- Desk review of relevant documentation, including Forus member strategies and reports, regional policy processes including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, and complementary sources.
- Initial power mapping of key actors, spaces, and opportunities at regional levels.
- Design of engagement tools (survey, interview guides, focus group prompts).

Phase 3 — Member Engagement and Synthesis (December 2026 – January 2027)

- Implement agreed engagement methods: sub-regional or thematic calls, surveys, and key informant interviews.
- Synthesise findings into an interim memo; identify emerging priorities, risks, opportunities and advocacy entry points for Steering Committee review.

Phase 4 — Drafting (January - February 2027)

- Draft the regional advocacy strategy and action plan (v1) and share with the Steering Committee and Forus Secretariat for feedback.
- Revise to v2 incorporating feedback and additional evidence as needed.

Phase 5 — Validation and Revision (January–February 2027)

- Facilitate at least one online (or hybrid) validation session with Pacific members.
- Incorporate feedback and strengthen clarity, accuracy, and usability of the strategy and action plan.

Phase 6 — Finalisation and Handover (March 2027)

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- Submit the final regional advocacy strategy, action plan, power map, inter-regional collaboration proposals, and monitoring markers.
 - Deliver optional companion products (resource mobilisation framework, communications plan) if included in scope.
 - Provide a light handover note (sources list, contacts list, and suggestions for next steps and future updates).

7. Deliverables

Core deliverables are listed below; optional components will only be included if feasible within the available budget. Indicative deliverables (to be confirmed in the inception phase):

D1. Inception note (methodology, detailed workplan, proposed outline, engagement plan, risks and mitigation).

D2. Desk review and power mapping pack: annotated overview of the regional landscape and key actor map; targeted alignment analysis against the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and other relevant frameworks; finalised engagement tools.

D3. Interim findings and draft priorities memo: key findings and draft advocacy priorities for Steering Committee internal review, including emerging advocacy priorities and possible influence tracks.

D4. Draft strategy and action plan (v1) and revised draft (v2) after Steering Committee feedback. Including proposed priorities, narrative framing, target arenas, power mapping, roles at national/regional/global levels, **practical** first steps, and recommendations for coordination.

D5. Validation session package: agenda, presentation slides or equivalent materials, and a short summary of feedback received from members.

D6. Final package: Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy (2026–2030) + power map + action plan + inter-regional collaboration proposals + monitoring markers + optional resource mobilisation framework and/or communications plan, where feasible within the available budget.

8. Profile and Qualifications of the Consultant or Team of Consultants

Key qualifications:

- Proven expertise in civil society advocacy, civic space, and/or enabling environment issues, with strong knowledge of the Pacific regional context.
 - Good understanding of regional dynamics and bodies relevant to civil society advocacy in the Pacific (e.g., Pacific Islands Forum, Pacific Community, PIANGO, Melanesian Spearhead Group, UN Pacific regional mechanisms).
 - Familiarity with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and Pacific-led multilateral policy processes.
 - Strong preference for a Pacific-led or Pacific-based consultant/team, or a team with demonstrated long-standing experience working with Pacific civil society, Pacific regionalism and Pacific-led dialogue approaches.
 - Demonstrated experience with participatory, mixed-methods research and strategy development processes.
 - Demonstrated ability to facilitate culturally grounded, participatory and relationship-based processes, including Talanoa-style dialogue where appropriate.
 - Experience facilitating participatory, member-led processes and translating diverse perspectives into a coherent, actionable strategy.
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- Cultural competency in Pacific contexts; experience with talanoa and other Pacific dialogue approaches is an asset.
 - Experience working with civil society networks and facilitating inclusive, accessible processes across diverse geographic and connectivity contexts.
 - Knowledge of issues likely to emerge through Pacific member consultations, which may include climate justice and resilience, civic space and enabling environment, sustainable development, financing, regionalism, Agenda 2030 / post-2030 processes, and resource mobilisation for CSOs..
 - Excellent writing and communication skills in English; proficiency in Pacific languages is an asset.
 - Familiarity with Forus or similar global civil society networks.

9. Location, Duration and Costing

Location: Flexible. The consultant will work remotely. All activities (desk review, interviews, consultations, validation sessions) can be conducted online.

Duration: September 2026 – 31 March 2027. Estimated 20–30 working days (indicative) over the period.

Costing: The maximum budget is €10,000 (all taxes included). Bidders should submit a detailed budget (day-rates, number of days, and any direct costs).

Payment schedule (linked to deliverables):

- 20% on D1 approval
- 40% on D4 acceptance
- 40% on D6 acceptance

Proposals should clearly prioritise deliverables to ensure quality within the available budget.

10. Member-Led Governance: Regional Steering Committee

In line with Forus' core principles, this process is member-led. A Regional Steering Committee (RSC) composed of Forus member representatives from the Pacific region, including national platforms and regional coalitions, will oversee and guide the process.

Role of the Steering Committee

- Define the scope and priorities of the regional advocacy strategy process
 - Support the selection of the service provider / consultant, in line with Forus procurement and compliance requirements;
 - Guide the consultant throughout the process and help ensure member engagement across the region;
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 - Review key deliverables and provide substantive feedback
 - Validate the final strategy and action plan
 - Ensure the process reflects the collective ownership and priorities of Pacific members
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Membership

The Steering Committee will comprise representatives from participating Forus Pacific members. PIANGO will serve as Secretariat and Chair of the Steering Committee. In this role, PIANGO will convene and chair Steering Committee meetings, coordinate agendas and communications, support alignment with Pacific regional priorities and processes, and facilitate overall coordination of the initiative.

Recognising PIANGO's regional mandate and relationships, PIANGO may provide regional contextual input and perspectives from affiliated members, National Liaison Units or partner networks where direct participation from specific countries or territories is not feasible. Secretariat functions will be undertaken within available capacity and resourcing.

Values and ways of working

The Steering Committee will operate in a spirit of collaboration, mutual respect, transparency, consensus-building and Pacific regional solidarity. The process should prioritise practical and accessible participation approaches that support open discussion, mutual learning and relationship-based collaboration.

The Steering Committee recognises Talanoa as an important Pacific approach to dialogue, relationship-building, shared understanding and collective problem-solving. Where appropriate, verbal updates, discussion-based reporting and informal knowledge sharing through Talanoa approaches may be prioritised over burdensome written reporting requirements.

The process will operate under the principle that Pacific leadership, knowledge, expertise and resourcing should be prioritised wherever feasible and appropriate.

Secretariat Support

The Forus Secretariat will support the process logistically and help ensure alignment with the Forus 2026–2030 Global Strategy, without driving the substance of the work. Support may include coordination and scheduling, set-up of calls and interpretation where needed, and sharing of common templates.

☐ Conflict of Interest — Important Note

Any Forus member or organisation represented on the Regional Steering Committee who wishes to apply for this consultancy is welcome to do so. However, to avoid conflicts of interest, any Steering Committee member who submits an application must fully step out of the proposal review and selection process for that application. They will not have access to competing proposals and will not participate in any scoring or deliberation for the round in which they are a candidate.

11. Composition of the Application and Deadline

Eligibility / contracting restrictions: This consultancy will be contracted under EU funding eligibility rules. As a result, Forus can only contract consultants/legal entities established in an EU Member State or in an eligible ODA recipient country. This means that Forus cannot accept proposals from legal entities established in (non-exhaustive list): the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, or South Korea. Consortium applications are welcome, but the contracting entity must be eligible and able to invoice Forus.

The application file should include:

- Motivation letter addressed to the Pacific Regional Steering Committee and Forus' Advocacy Coordinator.
- Technical proposal (max 10 pages): understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, engagement plan, power mapping approach, risks and mitigation, and detailed workplan.
- Financial proposal: day-rates, number of days, direct costs, and confirmation that VAT/taxes (if applicable) are included. Please include optional costed components (resource mobilisation framework, communications plan, in-person meeting) as separate line items if relevant.
- CV(s) of consultant(s) / team members (max 2 pages each).
- Two writing samples or examples of comparable strategy or advocacy documents produced.
- Two to three references from comparable assignments.

Selection process: Applications will be assessed by the Regional Steering Committee (with Forus Secretariat support) on: (i) understanding of the assignment and quality of methodology; (ii) relevant experience with civil society advocacy in the Pacific region; (iii) feasibility and value for money; and (iv) ability to deliver a practical, member-owned product within the timeline.

Application deadline: 31st August 2026.

Applications should be submitted in electronic format to: recruitment@forus-international.org (subject line: "Consultancy – Pacific Regional Advocacy Strategy").

For questions about these terms of reference, please contact: recruitment@forus-international.org
