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ANNEX

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the support measure in favour of the Pacific Island Countries for 2022

Action Document for Support Measures – Cooperation Facility for Pacific Island Countries¹- Strategic Communication

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes an annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and support measure in the sense of Article 24(2) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Support Measures – Cooperation Facility for Pacific Island Countries – Strategic Communication OPSYS number: ACT-61501 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting (inter alia) TEI “Green-Blue Alliance” between the EU and the Pacific
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in 13 Pacific Island Countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
4. Programming document	The Pacific Multi-Country MIP 2021 -2027 ²
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	MIP Cooperation Facility objectives relating to strategic communication: Strategic communication: political communication and large-scale public campaigns designed to raise awareness, understanding and perception of the European Union’s partnership with the country, particularly around Global Gateway flagships, Team Europe Initiatives and priority areas outlined by the EU’s Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION

6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Not applicable
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¹ The following Pacific Island Countries are covered by this Action Document: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

² Decision C (2021) 9052, 14.12.2021.

7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 17, partnerships for the goals Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 5 – Gender equality SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy SDG 13 – Climate Action SDG 14 – Life below water SDG 15 – Life on land			
8 a) DAC code(s)	4301022010- Multi-sector Communications Policy and Administrative Management (100%)			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	11000- Donor Government 11004- Other public entities in donor countries.			
9. Involvement of multilateral partners	No			
10. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
11. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disabilities			
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Internal markers and Tags.	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective

Digitalisation digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connectivity transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migration (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BUDGET INFORMATION

13. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14 02 01 32 The Pacific Total estimated cost: EUR 600,000.00
	Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 600,000.00

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

14. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Procurement
15. Type of measure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperation facility <input type="checkbox"/> Measures in favour of Civil Society

1.2 Summary of the Action

The action will support the implementation of strategic communication activities designed to raise awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and its partnership with Pacific countries, in line with the priorities identified in the Pacific Multi-Country MIP, as well as relevant global and regional strategies.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The Asia-Pacific region's growing economic, demographic, and political weight makes it a key partner for the European Union in shaping the international order and in addressing global challenges. The EU's current vision, interests and priorities in the Pacific and the wider Asia-Pacific region are outlined in various EU strategies, notably the Indo-Pacific Strategy (2021), the Global Gateway Strategy (2022), and the EU-Pacific Green-Blue Alliance Team Europe Initiative (2021). These comprehensive strategies outline the EU's positive offer and support to the Asia-Pacific region, from sustainable and inclusive prosperity to connectivity, climate, security, research and human

development. They are underpinned by shared values and principles, including democracy and human rights, security, sustainability, and equality.

Ensuring that these strategic priorities are known, understood and well perceived by both specialised and general public audiences in Pacific countries is essential to help position the EU as a trusted and reliable partner. The focus will not only be on what the EU does, but in particular on why it does it, including by emphasising shared values, interests and impact, and promoting the EU's leadership role on key priorities.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Strategic communication plays a key role in strengthening the EU's role in the world. Fragmented, project-specific partner-implemented communication and visibility activities have largely failed to demonstrate the EU's added value as a partner for Pacific countries and their people. By consolidating strategic communication resources in the Support Measures, the EU Delegation for the Pacific will be able to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication activities with the scale and focus necessary to be effective. This will ensure more impactful communication on the EU's international partnership objectives and external policy priorities. The action will therefore contribute to raising awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and its role in the Pacific countries and contribute to enhance EU's influence in the region.

The main stakeholders covered by the action are:

- Wider audiences, comprising ordinary citizens, especially in the 18-35 age bracket, who are not involved in policy, advocacy or international relations, and who may hardly be aware of the EU.
- Key specialised audiences, including opinion leaders, activists and other multipliers who already have a stake in the sphere of policy, advocacy and international relations.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this Action is to position the EU as a partner of reference for the Pacific countries among selected target audiences.

The Specific Objective (Outcome) of this action is to:

- 1) Measurably increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU's priorities, in particular the Green-Blue Alliance, the Global Gateway and Indo-Pacific Strategy.

The Output to be delivered by this Action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objective (Outcome) is

- 1.1 Political communication activities and large-scale public campaigns are designed and implemented to make the EU's brand positioning more understandable, visible and influential to target audiences.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Based on Article 24(2) of the NDICI Global Europe Regulation, which is the sole aim of this Action Document. In particular, the following indicative activities are foreseen:

Activities related to Output 1.1

- Design and roll-out at regional and national level of (a) major public campaign(s) aimed at ordinary citizens, primarily in the 18-35 age cohort, with the objective of measurably increasing the awareness, understanding and perception of the EU's partnership with Pacific countries. All such campaigns will be data-driven and based on clearly defined qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators. Regular monitoring against these KPIs will allow content, channels and approaches to be constantly adjusted to meet the objectives set.

- Design and implement political communication activities to support Summits, events and visits by EU Commissioners;
- Support the integration of relevant regional programmes into country-level strategic plans, particularly those that are flagship Global Gateway and/or Team Europe initiatives.
- On-going monitoring and evaluation: Undertake research required to ensure that strategic communication activities are data-driven and measurable and have the expected impact. This may include audience analysis and perception surveys, media landscape analysis, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities to measure the impact of communication activities undertaken.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

The strategic communication campaigns and activities anticipate creating awareness of environmental protection and climate change issues and will contribute to promoting transformational change towards low-emission and climate-resilient development.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality will be mainstreamed across all activities, ensuring strategic communication activities are inclusive and gender-sensitive.

Human Rights

All strategic communication activities will be values driven, integrating the key principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) of the human rights-based approach.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that the action is considered relevant for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. All activities will be designed to ensure they are inclusive and accessible.

Democracy

Relevant strategic communication activities will promote and support democracy, human rights and good governance by means of a country-specific or region-specific approach.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Social conflicts and violence dynamics are different across the Pacific countries. Therefore, conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm approach will always be considered for all strategic communication activities. The geopolitical context will also be taken into account. In addition, through strategic communication activities climate-resilient development will be promoted.

Disaster risk reduction

Awareness of the impact of climate-related disasters may be made during implementation of activities. Climate vulnerability analysis, adaptation and mitigation planning may be promoted through strategic communication activities.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures

	Increase in COVID 19 outbreaks in certain countries of the Pacific, which could prevent activities being implemented in a timely manner.	H	H	Where possible, activities in a hybrid format will be taken into consideration.
	Unavailability of contractors to provide expected communication services/supplied in some countries of the region	M	M	<i>Regional cooperation:</i> pulling funds could be envisaged across Delegations or services to maximise synergies. This can be a solution to overcome the difficulty to contract certain services/supplies locally and benefit from the availability of such services/supplies in another country of the region.

Lessons Learnt:

Due the specificity of this measure there are no major risks and assumptions. However fully successful implementation will depend on, among other things:

- good coordination between EU Delegation and Headquarters;
- ‘whole of Delegation’ approach to strategic communication and public diplomacy;
- ensuring coherence between different funding sources, notably those managed by EEAS and FPI;
- good management of the various contracts;
- high quality of experts supplied.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is to support the EU-Pacific partnership. It will enable the EU to build support for priorities under the Regional, Multi-Country and Country MIPs and key global and regional strategies.

By targeting specified audiences through professionally designed and implemented strategic communication activities, the action will contribute to measurably increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU’s partnership with Pacific countries.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Given the nature of this Action, a Logical Framework Matrix is not required at Action level.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 30 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission’s responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The programme will be implemented through direct management using procurement contracts.

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹⁹.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Outcome 1: Strategic communication composed of Direct Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3	600,000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	covered by another Decision
Contingencies	0
Totals	600,000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Steering Group will be established at the EU Delegation for the Pacific to oversee and validate the overall implementation of the action, in accordance with the strategic plan which has been developed. It is the responsibility of the EU Delegation to ensure that communication related to TEIs is fully integrated into regional and country-level strategic plans. Detailed Terms of Reference will be prepared for each activity. The EEAS-INTPA-FPI-NEAR strategic communication and public diplomacy Coordination Mechanism will provide any necessary strategic guidance and support at HQ level.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the (main) implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the (main) implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Examples of key indicators for measuring the performance of strategic communication activities undertaken may include:

- positive perception of the EU as a partner;
- social media reach and engagement;
- media items published in top tier media;
- website visits, bounce rate and conversation rate;
- video views and view through rate;
- message recall and follow-up.

Key indicators for measuring the performance of this action will be derived from the Contractor Assessment Form to be completed at the end of the assignments covering performance of the contractor, performance of experts and overall performance.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels, taking into account in particular the fact that the action is designed to implement a new approach to Delegation-led strategic communication activities at country-level.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Strategic communication activities will be implemented to ensure awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and its partnership with the country is commensurate with the scale, scope and ambition of our sustained engagement. Public facing campaigns and political communication, particularly around the Global Gateway, Indo-Pacific Strategy priorities and Team Europe initiatives, will focus not only on what the EU does, but why, including by emphasising shared values, interests and impact, and promoting the EU's leadership role on key priorities.

With varying emphasis, activities will focus on two complementary types of audience:

- Wider audiences, comprising citizens, especially in the 18-35 age bracket, who are not involved in policy, advocacy or international relations, and who may hardly be aware of the EU.
- Key specialised audiences, made up of opinion leaders, activists and other multipliers who already have a stake in the sphere of policy, advocacy and international relations.

These activities will be based on a multiannual strategic plan which reflects the objectives of the EU Delegation as well as the shared values and interest of the Pacific Region.