



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title	PACER PLUS National Coordinator - Tonga
Estimated Duration:	Two (2) years
Estimated Start Date:	1 July 2026
Location:	(Tonga) Locally Engaged Staff – open to nationals or residents only legally able to work in the country.
Reporting to:	This position will be under the direct supervision of the Deputy CEO for Trade, with overall direction from the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development. The position also reports monthly to the PACER Plus Implementation Unit on outputs.

I. BACKGROUND

The Phase II Implementing Arrangement for Development & Economic Cooperation (DEC) Work Programme under the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus was signed by PACER Plus Ministers on 27 November 2025. The Arrangement builds on the 2017 Implementing Arrangement and commenced in December 2025. The DEC Work Programme 2025–2030 focuses on improving trade in goods and services, strengthening investment flows, and enhancing labour mobility through better regulation, cooperation, and private-sector support. The objectives of the DEC aim to deepen regional economic integration and strengthen governance and partnerships across the Pacific.

Effective implementation of PACER Plus and the DEC Work Programme requires coordinated action across numerous government agencies. Currently, responsibilities for PACER Plus–related activities are dispersed among multiple Agencies, resulting in delays, communication gaps, and inconsistent monitoring. Coordination is required across a broad range of sectors—including customs, biosecurity, agriculture, trade, investment, and labour—making the national coordination role both complex and critical to achieving the intended outcomes.

II. OBJECTIVES

The National Coordinators will manage and ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes and outputs of the DEC Work Programme in Pacific Island countries (PICs). The role will be embedded within the Trade Negotiation and Facilitation Division, Ministry of Trade and Economic Development.



More specifically, the objectives of the role are to:

- **Ensure effective country coordination, management, and oversight** of all DEC Work Programme activities.
- **Support high-quality planning and implementation**, including the development, validation, and quality assurance of activity proposals, plans, and country-level data for PACER Plus MELA.
- **Facilitate inclusive stakeholder engagement and consultations** to guide planning, implementation, monitoring, and review of programme activities.
- **Promote GEDSI principles and strengthen PACER Plus compliance and visibility**, including meeting reporting requirements and contributing to public awareness and communication efforts.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To achieve the expected Outcomes and Outputs of the DEC Work Programme and Annual Plan and the Objectives of the role, the National Coordinator will perform the following roles and responsibilities:

The Consultant will deliver the following outputs, at the times indicated in Section IV:

Responsibility	Expected Output
1. Ensure effective country coordination, management, and oversight of DEC Work Programme activities.	• Coordinate and consult with relevant government ministries, development partners, and key stakeholders to identify, prioritise, and update areas of assistance for inclusion in the country's PACER Plus Implementation Plan. • Coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of approved country-specific Activity Plans. Identify national needs, risks, challenges, and opportunities, and communicate these to the PPIU to ensure alignment with DEC Work Programme objectives. • Provide administrative and logistical support, including organising meetings, training, and workshops.
2. Support high-quality planning and implementation, including the development, validation, and quality assurance of proposals, plans, and country-level data for PACER Plus MELA	• Support the development, validation, and quality assurance of activity proposals and plans. Work with focal points to ensure all activities integrate gender, disability, and social inclusion considerations into design, implementation, and final deliverables. • Coordinate the collection, collation, and reporting of all country-level data for Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Adaptation (MELA). • Provide accurate, timely monthly progress updates to the focal point and the PPIU.
3. Facilitate inclusive stakeholder engagement and consultations for planning, implementation, monitoring, and review.	• Lead and coordinate stakeholder consultations to support planning, implementation, monitoring, and review of activities. • Provide administrative and logistical support, including organising and coordinating meetings, training, and workshops. • Facilitate knowledge-sharing and strengthen collaboration between national agencies, and the PPIU.



4. Promote GEDSI principles and strengthen PACER Plus implementation and visibility, including reporting and public awareness.	• Monitor and track national obligations under PACER Plus, including transparency, notification, and reporting requirements under the PACER Plus Implementation Tracker and update of the Tonga Trade Information Portal. • Lead gender mainstreaming across all PACER Plus activities, ensuring they are gender-aware and ideally gender-transformative. • Promote disability inclusion and social equity across all aspects of programme delivery.
5. Maintain and promote the Tonga Trade Information Portal in coordination with key stakeholders and the Trade Division	• Update portal content by uploading new procedures, regulations, and policy documents; updating tariff and trade information; and validating the accuracy of all content with relevant government agencies. • Promote portal usage by conducting awareness sessions with government and private sector stakeholders, engaging the private sector, and disseminating portal information through relevant media channels. • Identify and escalate portal awareness and outreach activities to the Trade Negotiation and Facilitation Division, including recommendations on media campaigns, industry engagement strategies, and stakeholder communication plans to sustain and grow portal uptake.

IV. DELIVERABLES

The National Coordinator will deliver the following outputs, to be approved by the PACER Plus focal point and the PPIU and according to the timelines detailed below:

- i. Monthly Progress Reports summarising implementation status, stakeholder engagement, risks, and recommendations.
- ii. Annual Performance Assessment.
- iii. Mid-Term Review Report assessing progress against expected outputs and identifying areas for adjustment.
- iv. Tonga Trade Portal Quarterly Update Reports documenting content updates (new procedures, regulations, tariff information), and stakeholder awareness activities conducted.
- v. Other reports may be required from time to time.

V. REPORTING:

- The National Coordinator will be supervised by the PACER Plus focal point and will hold responsibility for guiding progress and providing technical advice on delivering the activity.
- Regular discussions with the PACER Plus focal point and PPIU will also be carried out during the engagement period to monitor progress and constraints, support required and proposed solutions.



VI. TIME & PAYMENT

The Assignment shall be expected to be for a two (2) years term. Exact dates of beginning and completion stages as well as the scope of work, may be amended in discussion with the PACER Plus focal point and the PPIU.

VII. REQUIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

This is a locally engaged position; therefore, applicants must be based in-country and eligible to work without relocation or international deployment support.

Education

- Bachelor's degree in Economics, International Trade, Social or Political Sciences, Commerce or related discipline.

Professional Experience

- At least 6 years' experience working in the public sector (highly desirable), and/or with DFAT/MFAT or other donor funded programs (advantageous).
- Solid knowledge and experience working in trade/investment/service sector.
- Demonstrate experience and knowledge of project management cycles.

Competence

- Highly competent in the use of Information and Communications Technologies, including Microsoft applications (Teams, Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint); Communications applications (Zoom, WhatsApp, Conference applications and search engines); File Storage and information exchange (Box, cloud storage systems and drop boxes).
- Ability to develop dynamic working relationships with a range of private sector, government, and community stakeholders in complex and often challenging circumstances.
- A self-driven, proven team-player with well-developed interpersonal, communication, and relationship-brokering skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English and the local language.