



PIANGO

PACIFIC ISLANDS ASSOCIATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS
ASSOCIATION DES ONGS DES ILES DU PACIFIQUE

CONSTITUTION

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1. NAME

a) The name of the organisation shall be the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations herein referred to as PIANGO.

2. REGISTERED OFFICE

a) The Headquarters of PIANGO shall be situated in Suva, Fiji. The registered postal address shall be PO Box 17780, Suva, Fiji.

3. DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATION

- i. PIANGO is defined as a network of Pacific NGOs existing to facilitate communication, provide a common voice at regional and international forums and strengthen Pacific forms of social development, and improve the well being of communities that are served by members of the NGO.
- ii. NGO means Non Governmental Organisation.
- iii. CSO means Civil Societies Organisation.
- iv. NLU means National Liaison Units. They are registered as charitable organisations with the mandate to represent NGO's in their country or territory.
- v. NGOs/CSOs are organisations that are operating outside the government, which exist to help their members and communities through development e.g. school management, youths and women's groups.
- vi. Board means PIANGO Board as spelt out in Article 13.
- vii. Council means PIANGO Council
- viii. Accounting Period means from 1st January to 31st December.
- ix. Clearing House means:
 - a) To facilitate the gathering and sharing of valuable information amongst our NGO/CSO members in the region.
 - b) Referring to part 4.2(a)(i)(d): facilitate process to minimise duplication.
- x. Common Voice shall refer to part 4.2(a)(ii) (which talks about social activities and development).
- xi. Interest: as in areas of charitable interests in order to benefit their members through capacity building of NGO communities so that they are able to carry out their functions effectively.
- xii. Network means of;
 - a) Technological communication, i.e. fax, website, telephones and other telecommunication medium
 - b) Referring to part 4.2(a)(iii)
- xiii. Resource Bank means: A "think tank" group of selected people from our region who can be engaged to be our source of advisors and consultants to direct us on the right course of development.



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4. MISSION STATEMENT

- a) PIANGO exists to enable the Pacific extended family of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to effectively promote and advance the interests and well being of Pacific peoples.

4.1 Objectives

- a) The objectives of the organisation shall be:
 - i. To facilitate active networking among NGOs at all levels throughout the region;
 - ii. To promote and enable access to sharing and dissemination of information, ideas, experiences and resources (including human resources) among NGOs throughout the region;
 - iii. To educate NGOs to better understand, fulfil and develop their roles and functions, and strengthen their organisations and programme capacities;
 - iv. To assist in identifying, monitoring and analysing the needs of Pacific people;
 - v. To provide a means for a collective voice and action on issues of concern to NGOs and the people they serve;
 - vi. To cooperate with other networks and organisations within and beyond the region that have similar objectives.

4.2 Strategies and Activities

- a) PIANGO will achieve its objectives by adopting the following strategies and implementing these activities:
 - i. *Organisational Development*
 - a) Promotion and formation of National Liaison Units (NLU), and strengthening the functioning of their members;
 - b) Facilitate training programmes for NLUs and their membership in networking, organisational management, capacity building and other appropriate training as identified from time to time;
 - c) Maintaining constant and active communication between members;
 - d) Promoting ways of sharing effective methods and operational processes to minimise duplication of efforts;
 - e) Facilitating exchange visits between Pacific NGOs.
- ii. *Providing a Common Voice for Pacific NGOs*
 - a) Promoting the representation of the Pacific peoples' interests in regional and international forums;
 - b) Acting on behalf of the interests of members when requested to do so, within the parameters and means decided jointly by members;



- c) Promoting and supporting the concept of cultural identity and indigenous peoples' rights;
- d) Developing and participating in campaigns to highlight important spiritual, cultural, social, ecological, economic and political issues in the Pacific.

iii. Collection and Dissemination of Information

- a) Developing the role of Clearing House and Resource Bank on NGO needs, activities, experiences and interests of the Pacific people;
- b) Consult, monitor and research the needs of the people of Pacific island countries, territories and NGOs;
- c) Produce and publish directories of Pacific NGOs, its Resource people, Resource materials, newsletters and other relevant publications which are means of sharing information, developing a common Pacific identity and providing a voice on issues of common concern;
- d) Adapt and translate resource materials appropriate and relevant to activities within the region to enable better communication between people across indigenous cultures and languages;
- e) Create and give opportunities for exchanges, sharing and interaction of ideas among NGOs at all levels in the region;
- f) Promote and celebrate the contribution of NGOs to Pacific development and the Pacific way of life through instituting a regional NGO Day.

5. MEMBERSHIP

i. Full Members

- a) All National Liaison Units (NLU) registered as a charitable organisation and mandated to represent NGOs in their country or territory are full members. In countries or territories that do not permit such registration, the organisation recognised as the umbrella NGO, with a mandate to represent them, shall be considered as a full member.
- b) There shall be one NLU per country or territory except where the rights of indigenous people in any country require the establishment of parallel processes. In such cases, two NLUs may be represented but the delegation to Council shall exercise one vote.
- c) Each NLU shall decide its own formation and modus operandi to suit its local conditions.
- d) Full members have speaking rights, voting rights and may nominate and be nominated to the PIANGO Board.
- e) NLU with full membership can lose their membership right if they no longer represent the interest of their national members or no longer operate under their constitution.
- f) A newly formed national umbrella NGO which meets the criteria in 7(a) could apply in writing to the Council to replace the inactive NLU in their country.
- g) All the members of replacement NLU need to sign the application letter giving their support to the replacement NLU.



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- h) In between Council, such application could be made to Board for endorsement as Interim member until application for full membership is approved at the next Council meeting.

ii. Interim Members

- a) Interim membership may be extended to a NGO in any country or territory in the Pacific, which has not yet established a NLU or its equivalent but has the intention of doing so. Interim membership shall not be granted to a one- or two-person organisation.
- b) Interim members have speaking rights, voting rights, right to nominate, but not be nominated to office.

iii. Associate Members

- a) Associate membership may be extended to Pacific regional and sub-regional NGOs which support PIANGO's core values, beliefs and mission statement. An associate member have speaking rights and the right to nominate but do not have voting rights or the right to be nominated to office.

iv. Observers

- a) In countries or territories where no organisation qualifies as a Full or Interim Member, Council may grant Observer Status for an appropriate NGO or individual. Observers have the right to speak.

6. DETERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- a) Council shall determine the granting of, and termination of membership of PIANGO.

7. MEMBERSHIP FEES

- a) Council shall have the power to levy membership and other fees as determined from time to time.

8. QUORUM

- a) The quorum for all PIANGO Council and Board meetings shall be 50% plus one of members who are entitled to vote.

9. VOTING

- a) Voting at all PIANGO meetings shall be by majority vote. In the case of election of Board members, voting shall be by secret ballot.

10. PIANGO COUNCIL

- a) The PIANGO Council is the supreme governing body of PIANGO. It consists of members of the PIANGO Board, representatives from the NLUs, Interim members, Associate members and Observers.
- b) Council shall meet at least once every three (3) years to set policy and programme directions for the organisation as well as:
 - i. To receive reports from the Board on activities conducted since the previous Council Meeting;



- ii. To adopt, develop, review policy and programme directions for PIANGO;
 - iii. To review and amend by-laws;
 - iv. To elect Board members for PIANGO;
 - v. To conduct any other business as it deems fit.
- c) Council meetings are open to the general public.

11. PRINCIPLES FOR CONDUCTION OF ELECTIONS

- a) Each member entitled to do so, shall have equal opportunity to nominate candidates for the Chair and members of the Board;
- b) Only delegates who are members of NGOs affiliated to a NLU are eligible to be nominated;
- c) Delegates may nominate more than one (1) person for any of the positions;
- d) Nominations must be received by 8am on the day of election or at a time decided upon by Council;
- e) The Election Committee shall check each nomination to ensure that the nominees meet the requirements established in this constitution;
- f) All nominations for the Chair and the Board shall be posted after the deadline closes;
- g) The election of the Chairperson shall take place first, after which the result shall be announced immediately. This shall be followed by the election of the Board members.
- h) For the position of the Chair, the candidate must receive 50% plus 1 vote. In the event that there is a tie, a second ballot shall be conducted.
- i) For the Board, the six (6) candidates that received the highest votes shall be deemed to be duly elected. In the event there are less than six (6) nominations for the Board, delegates shall be asked to submit other nominations to ensure that six (6) members can be elected;
- j) Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot and the Election Committee will provide ballot papers.
- k) The Election Committee shall be responsible for counting votes and reporting results to Council.

12. ELECTION COMMITTEE

- a) An Election Committee shall be elected by delegates to Council for conducting elections and adjudicating on all questions relating to the conduct of elections;
- b) This Committee shall consist of no fewer than two (2) and no more than four (4) persons;
- c) National Association of NGOs and Interim members shall have equal opportunity to nominate a candidate to stand for election as a member of the Election Committee;
- d) Delegates who are not standing for any election may be nominated to stand for election as members of the Election Committee;



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- e) The Election Committee shall appoint from among its members a Returning Officer;
- f) In the event that there are more than four (4) nominations for the Election Committee, a vote shall be taken and the four (4) candidates with the most votes shall be declared elected;
- g) The Returning Officer must receive nomination forms, which must be signed by the nominee, the proposer and the seconder, no later than mid-night prior to the day of the election;
- h) Each country delegation shall have one vote.

13. THE BOARD OF PIANGO

- a) The Board of PIANGO shall be elected by the Council and shall manage the affairs of PIANGO in between Council meetings;
- b) It shall consist of seven (7) members including the Chairperson. All of whom are elected by the Council;
- c) The Chairperson can only serve for one (1) term and must stand down for one term before seeking re-election to the Chair;
- d) One third of the sitting Board members, shall remain by vote of the Council;
- e) Board members shall serve for no more than two (2) terms and must stand down for one term before seeking re-election;
- f) A Board member shall be from the country that hosts the secretariat;
- g) The Executive Director of PIANGO shall be an ex officio member of the Board.

13.1 Criteria for Board Membership

- a) PIANGO Board members shall meet the following criteria:
 - i. shall not hold an office in a national political party;
 - ii. shall not hold an elected national public office e.g. parliament, senate;
 - iii. shall be full Board members of an NLU and must have membership in a NGO that has full membership with the NLU.

13.2 Responsibilities and Functions of the PIANGO Board

- a) The responsibilities of the Board shall be to:
 - i. Implement decisions and directives made by Council;
 - ii. Submit reports to Council;
 - iii. Appoint and set performance contract and targets for the Executive Director as well as be responsible for disciplining and terminating his/her contract of service should the need arise;
 - iv. Develop policies, procedures, and operational processes for the organisation and its relationship with all stakeholders;



- v. Approve Annual plans and budgets;
 - vi. Approve the audited financial statement;
 - vii. Evaluate programmes and performances of the Secretariat;
 - viii. Ensure good employment practices;
 - ix. Ensure accountability and transparency;
 - x. Act as advocates for PIANGO;
 - xi. Ensure that the organisation has sufficient resources to operate;
 - xii. Deal with any other matters that may arise from time to time.
- b) The Board shall meet at least three (3) times per year;
- c) Questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. Each member shall exercise one vote, with the exception of the Chair who shall abstain from voting, except in the case of ties, at which time, he or she will cast the deciding vote.
- d) Members shall not receive any remuneration for serving on the Board but are entitled to claim actual out-of- pocket expenses incurred in carrying out the duties.

13.3 Vacation of Seat by a Board Member

- a) A member shall be deemed to have vacated his or her seat if that member:
- i. Resigns by delivering a written resignation to the Chair;
 - ii. Fails to attend three consecutive meetings;
 - iii. Is removed from the NLU of which he or she is a member;
 - iv. Becomes a staff member of PIANGO;
 - v. Has his or her membership terminated; or
 - vi. For other reasons the Board by a majority decision decided that he or she should vacate his/her seat on the Board.
- b) The Board shall have the power to co- opt individuals from the PIANGO membership when vacancies occur.

14. TRUSTEE

1. The appointment and the discharge of trustees shall be at the discretion of the PIANGO Board.
2. The Board shall table their reports to the Council.
3. The appointment and the discharge of trustees shall be made or done in complying with or permitted under the laws of Fiji.



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14.1 Trustees' Powers

- a) Investment: The trustees shall invest money accordingly in a way which the trustees are permitted to invest under the Laws of Fiji.
- b) Other Powers: The trustees may do anything they consider appropriate to administer or manage the Charitable Account, including:
 - i. To draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, execute and issue promissory notes, bills of exchange, bills of lading and other negotiable or transferable instrument;
 - ii. To open accounts with any banks and operate on those accounts in all usual ways of overdraft;
 - iii. To take on lease or license or hire any real or personal property;
 - iv. To effect and maintain policies of insurance (including policies on the lives of any Persons and against the total or partial disablement of any Persons) and to deal with real and personal issues.

15. BY LAWS

- a) There shall be a set of by-laws with more detailed rules and regulations on procedures to be followed in the organisation. It is the responsibility of the Council to adopt and amend any by-laws.

16. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- a) Any proposals from members and interim members to amend the constitution shall be forwarded to the Chair and the Secretariat, which shall seek opinions from members on the suggested amendment(s). The Board shall submit its recommendation(s) to Council.
- b) A decision to amend the constitution shall require a 2/3 majority of the Council to become valid.

17. DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANISATION

- a) A decision to dissolve PIANGO shall be in response to the wishes of not less than two-thirds of members. On deciding to dissolve the organisation, Council shall be charged with the process of liquidation. Any residual funds and assets shall be transferred to a regional organisation approved by the majority of the Council.

18. ENTERING INTO FORCE

- a) This amended constitution was entered into force on 18th October 2005.