

Overview of the Technical Assistance (TA) intervention  
by the ACP-EU Migration Action



# MELANESIAN SPEARHEAD GROUP

Pacific

Proposal  
to improve  
Labour Mobility  
in MSG  
Countries

February 2016 ————— (ongoing)

Requesting entity  
**Office of the Director General  
MSG Secretariat**

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# MELANESIAN SPEARHEAD GROUP | VISAS

## Background

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) is a sub-regional organization of the Melanesian countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) in the Pacific region, headquartered in Vanuatu. The MSG represents 95% of the Pacific region's population, land area and natural resources. Its Skills Movement Scheme (SMS), governed by a

specific Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aims at facilitating the temporary movement of skilled MSG nationals within MSG countries, for the purpose of taking up employment without compromising national laws and policies on health and safety, minimum working conditions and border requirements. To date however, the SMS could not be implemented according

to plan because three member states (all except Fiji) did not modify the national legislations to accommodate the scheme. The Technical Assistance will seek to address this issue and work towards a progressive implementation of the SMS.

## Objective

**Facilitate free movement of people within the MSG region, through the progressive implementation of the SMS.**

### Activities

**Consult with different stakeholders in the MSG Secretariat and within the MSG Member states (Ministries of Immigration, Employment, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Attorney General);**

**Develop recommendations for the amendment of domestic immigration, employment and other relevant legislation, as to allow progressive implementation of the SMS in all MSG countries.**

### Expected results

**Support ongoing regional initiatives that promote labor mobility in the sub-region, such as the adoption of the MSG Travel Card and the Labour Mobility Chapter in the Draft MSG Trade Agreement (MSGTA3);**

**As a next step, create a visa free area to be modelled on the visa application center known as "Schengen House" in order to facilitate free movement of skilled persons and eventually a MSG Visa free system between all parties.**