

The two-monthly CO-Suva publication features a collection of news items from our website <http://www.ilo.org/suva>. Hyperlinks have been added for further reading online. Your feedback and comments are appreciated.

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## Highlight

### **ILO'S 15th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting to be held in Kyoto, Japan; Will consider employment, economic outlook**

The 15th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) will take place from 4-7 December 2011 at the Kyoto International Convention Centre (KICC), Kyoto, Japan. The meeting is expected to be attended by about 500 people, representing more than 46 countries in Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States and Territories in West Asia. Among those scheduled to attend are Prime Ministers, government ministers, representatives of workers' and employers' organizations and academics.

The Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Mr Yoshihiko Noda is due to give the Keynote Statement at the opening ceremony, on Sunday 4 December. This will be followed by a speech by the Director General of the ILO, Mr Juan Somavia. The high level segments of the meeting will also include Keynote Addresses by H.E. Mr Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister of Timor Leste, and Dr Ahamed Luqman, Director General of the Arab Labour Organization. Dr Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary General of ASEAN is also expected to give a special speech. The four-day meeting will include a Leaders Forum on Youth Employment that will bring together young leaders and advocates from across the region including Ms. Jewel Toloa representing the Pacific, to discuss the challenges faced by young people in finding decent work, enhancing their employability and contributing to the economic and social development of their countries.

<http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings/asia/aprm-15/lang--en/index.htm>

## News round up

### **Labour Statistics and Labour Market Information and Analysis in the Pacific**

Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are facing a number of labour market opportunities and challenges, including employment growth and skills development, among others, in order to absorb the increasing labour force in a context of increasing poverty, international labour migration, and climate change. Reliable, timely labour statistics and labour market information and analysis (LMIA) are critical for governments and employer and worker organizations to design, implement, and monitor and evaluate national, regional and local policies and programmes to address the opportunities and challenges.



A first for the Pacific technical training course on LMIA was held in Noumea, New Caledonia (28 November - 2 December). The course is tailor-made for the Pacific on labour statistics and LMIA, and was developed by the ILO Department of Statistics with the support of ILO Offices in Bangkok and Suva, in close consultation with SPC's Statistics for Development Programme. It's development is based on a capacity-building needs assessment and is a outputs-oriented, participatory workshop that combines theoretical presentations, and group and country-specific practical work.

[http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS\\_169215/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_169215/lang--en/index.htm)

### **Kiribati begins the process of reforming its labour laws**

Tripartite constituents in the Pacific Island nation of Kiribati have commenced a policy process to update labour laws to better apply international labour standards, specifically as they relate to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) eight fundamental Conventions that govern the world of work.

[http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS\\_165093/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_165093/lang--en/index.htm)



## Wage Policy training for Fiji's Constituents

The ILO Office in Suva co-hosted a series of workshops in October with Fiji's constituents, including representatives on the 10 Wages Councils. These workshops focused on wages policy and in particular policy making in relation to minimum wages, both at an industry and a national level. The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Laila Harre, Decent Work Specialist (ILO Suva) and Mr John Ritchotte, the Senior Industrial Relations Specialist with the ILO's Bangkok based Decent Work Team will lead the discussion. The three workshops were designed for Government/Independent members of the wages councils, employers' reps and workers'. The ILO is compiling a report that will highlight common ground, areas of differences and options for future policy development. This will then be presented to the tripartite partners as a basis for further discussions.



Meanwhile the ILO has been asked for technical assistance on wages policy and minimum wages in **Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands**. reports on minimum wage fixing machinery have been provided to the tripartite constituents in Kiribati and Solomon Islands and a one day workshop was held in Vanuatu on October to scope out the direction for wage policy there.

## Reporting on compliance with International Labour Standards

As part of the Labour Governance and Migration project, the ILO Office of South Pacific Island Countries has been assisting States with reporting on compliance with International Labour Standards. So far, this has resulted in Vanuatu submitting its first reports on ILO Conventions 105 and 129 and Samoa submitting its first reports on the eight core ILO Conventions it has ratified.

## Solomon Islands progressing establishment of Labour Advisory Board

The tripartite constituents in Solomon Islands has agreed to draft rules for a new Labour Advisory Board that will also make recommendations on minimum wages. The hope is that the rules can be presented to Cabinet for approval and the Board established in the new year.

## Social Protection Floor Initiative

The Social Protection Floor Initiative is a UN initiative which is being led by the ILO globally. With Vanuatu and Solomon Islands DWCPs including priorities around the extension of social protection, the ILO has launched a Social protection floor assessment in both countries which will be completed by March next year. National researchers are working with a lead researcher to undertake the assessment and discuss priority areas for the future expansion of the social protection floor (income support and basic health) and of the social protection staircase (which allows for higher levels of protection to be introduced over time. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/spfag/index.htm>

## Other Recent Events

### Revitalising workers organisations in Samoa

A strategic planning and capacity assessment workshop for workers representatives was held in Samoa in October. Ross Wilson, former President of the NZ Council of trade Unions facilitated the workshop which identified many issues for workers. These included workplace issues - such as the lack of support for workers facing termination of employment, discrimination or disciplinary action; and national issues - including the need to be more active and influential when it comes to influencing the reform of labour laws. With these issues in mind the workers decided to launch a support network for workers: Leo o Tagata Faigaluega - Voice of Workers. In December the ILO has sponsored the development of systems, promotional materials and a training programme for workers wishing to become advocates for Leo o Tagata Faigaluega. The International transport Workers federation (ITF) is also sponsoring a support person, Deborah Taase, to assist the network to get up and running. Membership of the network will be open to all workers. There will be a link to the launch in the next newsletter.

### ILO Senior Specialist on Employers' Activities visit the Pacific

Ms. Miaw Tiang Tang, ILO Senior Specialist on Employers' Activities, visited the Employers Federation of Papua New Guinea (EFPNG) to get to know the organisation, the board and its management team, and discussed employers' priorities and concerns and work plan 2012 – 2013. She was also in Fiji and followed up on the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) Industrial Relations project proposal and work plan. She also visited Kiribati to conduct a workshop on corporate governance and Strategic Planning for Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) while she was there she also briefed KCCI on DWCP, the role of KCCI and how it could benefit from the DWCP, this included a technical briefing and review of current DWCP 2009 – 2012 with the Tripartite Steering Committee.



## **TACKLE Program initiated a SCREAM Camp for Street Children in Child Labour (Fiji)**

The camp was conducted by local trainers from the NGO sector through the support of the ILO TACKLE staff, European Union, Youth Inc Fiji and National Youth Council of Fiji. This pioneer SCREAM camp brought together 35 young people from informal settlements around Suva city who are engaging in some form of Child Labour. These were the first ever camps organized in Fiji whereby young people came together to discuss child labour and children's right issues in an open inclusive fun platform.



All the young people who participated highlighted that they are now more aware of their rights and have developed a concern for the exploitation of children in Fiji and around the world. They have written articles for school magazines and local publications, created works of art, developed dramas, songs, poems, journal articles and talked to friends and relatives about the issue of child labour. The participants of the SCREAM Camp have formed a network among themselves to support each other and to act as a safety net for other children who need support.



## **Making future development practitioner's sensitive to child Labour issues through formal tertiary training course**

Findings from the TACKLE Child Labour Surveys in Fiji and PNG, and anecdotal evidence of child labour in the Pacific region highlight the growing concern of children entering into child labour, and the need for development practitioners in the Pacific to be educated on child labour and its impacts, and on the relevant national laws governing children's work.

The University of the South Pacific (USP), as a Pacific regional organization, provides a good avenue to equip future practitioners with a sound conceptual understanding of child labour, and enhance their practical and theoretical skills to address CL in the region. Students from over 14 countries in the Pacific region, as well as international exchange students, study at USP. The Development Studies Programme in particular at USP, has experience in child labour having led Fiji's first research study of child labour in informal and squatter communities.

The course on Child Labour and Development was developed as a result to encourage future development practitioners to affect change, and ensure a safe and healthy childhood to all. The Child Labour and Development Course involves a blend of theory and practice, participatory teaching methodologies, panel discussions, and field work.

Through consultation with the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) which includes the tripartite partners Plus, a basic Child Labour course incorporated within the wider development issues was developed. The course was tested throughout year 2010 for its suitability within the Postgraduate programme. The course began in the 2nd Semester of 2011 and the course coordinator marketed the course at the beginning of the semester to get the minimum roll of 10 students enrolled.

## **ILO wants law reviewed**

THE International Labour Organisation has urged the government to give priority to the review of the Employment Act. International Labour Organisation (ILO) technical adviser Caroline Scott, who facilitated a two-day review conference, encouraged the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations to be committed to the review. Scott said it was important that the review committee be made up of members who were not just experts but committed to completing it. She said experiences from the 10-year Industrial Relations Bill must be identified, considered and evaluated to successfully complete the review of the act. "Think carefully of who will be in the committee to do the work; you must be committed to finish this job," she said. [http://www.ilo.org/suva/WCMS\\_169337/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/suva/WCMS_169337/lang--en/index.htm)

## **Australia helps to improve PNG labour climate**

Australia is helping to improve the business environment in Papua New Guinea by strengthening the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations (DLIR). Australia will provide K1.7 million through AusAID's economic and public sector programme to build a labour market information system and provide structured training and expert advice for staff in the department.

Acting head of AusAID in PNG Dave Vosen said the DLIR had an important role to play in creating the right environment for business to grow in PNG. "The department enforces fair and equitable terms and conditions of employment and ensures that people are working in a safe and healthy environment. "Having the right environment for business to expand in PNG will help create jobs and better livelihoods for the citizens of PNG," Vosen said. <http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=292>

## Addressing Youth unemployment challenges in Vanuatu

The ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries is applying its Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology to help address youth unemployment challenges in Vanuatu. Technical activities started during the April 2008 – April 2010 sub-regional project entitled 'Education, Employment and Decent Work for Youth in Pacific Island Countries' are being continued in Vanuatu, in close collaboration with the tripartite constituents and the SHEFA Provincial Council. Various economic opportunities are emerging for unemployed youth on the island of Efate - the major island within the SHEFA provincial administrative area of Vanuatu. These opportunities are resulting from the completion in mid-2011 of a new 140 kilometre road, built with the assistance of the Millennium Challenge Fund, to circumnavigate the island.



## Look ahead

### ILO Pacific Trade Union Workshop on ILS and Capacity Building

29 November - 1 December 2011, Auckland, New Zealand

In the Pacific Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Samoa ratified all eight Core Conventions and Vanuatu did so except Convention No.138, while Marshall Islands and Tuvalu, which are new ILO member states, ratified none of them. Solomon Islands ratified only Convention No. 29. The Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work adopted in Port Vila in February 2010 set the progress on ratification and improved implementation of Core Conventions as one of outcomes to be realized by 2015.

Under the initiative of ACTRAV together with NORMS and ROAP the ILO has launched the campaign in the Asia and the Pacific region on the ratification and implementation of Core Conventions and in particular on Conventions No. 87 and 98.

The Expected Outcomes of the workshop include; Producing Appeal from Pacific Trade Unions to Kyoto APRM on Right at Work, promoting the union unity and capacity at the national and sub-regional levels to increase voice and representation of labour and to secure Rights at Work. A total of 9 participants will attend the workshop; 7 top union leaders, one each from Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu as well as one resource person and one ILO official

### Tripartite Meeting on proposed revisions to Vanuatu's Employment Relations Bill

12 -16 December 2011, Port Vila, Vanuatu

During the week of the 12th of December 2011, the ILO will be contributing to further discussions on proposed revisions to Vanuatu's Employment Relations Bill. In August, a meeting of tripartite constituents agreed on key areas where changes are needed to progress the Bill. A key area of agreement is that new provisions need to be developed to ensure that workers and employers have access to a simple, timely and low cost system for resolving employment disputes. The ILO has since be preparing a revised draft to reflect workers, employers and Government discussions.

## Key Resources

### Skills for Employability and Green Jobs

The Skills for Employability and Green Jobs team held a discussion forum on Skills for Green Jobs on 30 November 2011. Valuable comments and contributions have been received. Online comments and suggestions were made and constituents participated in a stimulating and thought provoking forum. The discussion forum link is:

<http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th/discussions/forum/one-stream-of-conversations> Please register to be a member of the Skills and Employability community by following the below link: [http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th/join\\_form](http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th/join_form)

### Research and data

The ILO publishes research on important labour market trends and issues to inform constituents, policy-makers and the public about the realities of employment in the globalized economy and the issues facing workers and employers in developing, transition and industrialized economies. Labour statistics and data play an essential role in the efforts of member States in achieving decent work for all and for the ILO's support of these efforts. Statistics and supporting databases are needed for the development and evaluation of effective policies and to assess progress towards the goal of achieving decent work for all. The ILO supports member States in the collection and dissemination of reliable, up-to-date, gender- and age-disaggregated labour market statistics based on international standards and definitions. More broadly, the ILO collaborates with national ministries, statistical offices and social partners in the development of Labour and Social Trends reports.

<http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/research-and-data/lang--en/index.htm>

**News@ILO, November 2011;** The November 2011 e-newsletter of the ILO in Asia and the Pacific contains the latest news from the regional office, a feature on green jobs, a selection of the latest publications, and details of forthcoming events and meetings. [http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/newsletters/WCMS\\_166781/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/newsletters/WCMS_166781/lang--en/index.htm)

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