

Message from the Director

We are pleased to share with you the 4th edition of our “News in Brief” for 2012. The purpose of these short publications is to inform our constituents and other stakeholders of the range of work that the International Labour Organization (ILO) is supporting in the Pacific Island Countries. You can learn about any of these items on our website and we always appreciate receiving feedback and suggestions for improving our services and communications to constituents.

In this edition we are very pleased to inform you that Mr Guy Ryder has been elected as the 10th Director-General of the ILO. Mr Ryder, who is currently the ILO’s Executive Director for International Labour Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, was elected by secret ballot by the ILO’s Governing Body. He will begin his five-year term in October 2012. He succeeds Mr Juan Somavia who has been the ILO’s Director-General for more than 13 years. Mr Ryder was in the Pacific last year leading a High Level Mission to Fiji.

We also sincerely welcome the Republic of Palau as the 185th member of the ILO. The Republic of Palau’s membership became effective on 29 May 2012, following receipt of a letter at the ILO headquarters in Geneva stating, on behalf of the Government, that Republic of Palau formally accepts the obligations of the Constitution of the ILO.



Mr. Guy Ryder with ILO staff in Suva, Fiji. (July 2011)

Palau joins eight other Pacific Island Countries who are members of ILO. This provides an excellent opportunity to share knowledge and experience between countries of relative close geographical proximity, cultural and historical ties, and similar development paths. The ILO team in the Pacific looks forward to partnering with the government of Palau and social partners to support their efforts in creating decent and productive employment for their workers. In particular, we will work with Palau to align its labour laws with international labour standards, and imp of the Maritime Labour Convention.”

This month we are launching two new small projects. The first in the Solomon Islands the ILO is contributing to a broader joint UN project titled **Human Security Initiative for “tensions” reduction, reconciliation and rehabilitation in the Solomon Islands**. The ILO will manage the component on empowering the economic security and promoting sustainable livelihoods for the target communities and returned former combatants, through income generation measures.

Secondly, a project titled **Pacific Island Work Places Combating HIV/AIDS** will start this month. This project aims at improving the lives of working women and men from stigma and discrimination associated with the HIV and AIDS epidemic and STIs. The project covers Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Finally, I take this opportunity to remind government and social partners that Annual Reports on Ratified Conventions (Article 22) are due by 1st September this year. Earlier this year you should have received guidance from Geneva on what Conventions you are requested to report on this year. If you require any information on these procedures, please contact our office.

David Lamotte
(On behalf of the ILO Team in Suva)

Reforming the New Employment Relations Bill in Papua New Guinea

A Working Group comprising unions, employer and Government representatives established by the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations to reform the Employment Act met to consider the first draft of a new Employment Relations Bill, in Port Moresby, PNG in August. The new Bill will repeal and substantially update the existing labour laws. The AUSAID funded Labour Governance and Migration Project with the support of Commissioner John Ryan from Fair Work Australia is providing technical support for this work. The focus of this month's discussions included considering core employment entitlements including wages protection, annual leave, sick leave, maternity protection and the law relating to dismissal and redundancy. The Working Group will be continuing with its deliberations over the coming months. For further details contact Anne Boyd, Project Manager, Labour Governance and Migration Project boyda@ilo.org <http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/events-and-meetings/lang--en/index.htm>



Seasonal Worker Program Conference 2012 -Australia

At the conference the Australian Senator Jacinta Collins officially launched the Seasonal Worker Program at the inaugural Seasonal Worker Program Conference in Sydney in the first week of August. The program builds on the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme and will provide a shot in the arm to industries facing seasonal labour shortages. While horticulture remains the focus of the program, a targeted three-year trial will run in the aquaculture, cane, cotton and accommodation industries.

The ILO was invited to present to the Conference which included international officials from participating countries and New Zealand, representatives from peak horticultural, aquaculture, cane and cotton grower associations, grower representatives, Employers, unions, academics, community representatives and Australian Government officials. The ILO's presentation on "Maximizing the Social and Economic Development Opportunities for Returning Workers and their Families", was based on a case study in Vanuatu which will shortly be published.



ILO's presentation to the conference is available online:

http://www.ilo.org/suva/WCMS_186880/lang--en/index.htm

More information on the Seasonal Workers Program visit:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/seasonalworker>

ILO works to ensure optimal outcome of seasonal work for labourers and their communities

Vanuatu joined New Zealand's Recognized Seasonal Employer (RSE) in 2007. In the financial year 2011-12, 2563 workers have participated in the scheme of whom 17% are women. ILO is undertaking research to assess the needs of returning migrant workers and their family members. About half of the workers interviewed (47) have started small businesses. The first priority of the workers is to improve housing and shelter. The absence of the workers in the home communities and temporary break-up of the family unit has however led to tensions in the family and some neglect of communal and agricultural activities.

The ILO is working with the Department of Labour in Vanuatu to develop options and a road-map for introducing one-stop reintegration services that would enhance the development impact of migration and provide advice and referrals (on economic and psycho-social issues) as well as enhance savings and access to credit. ILO Regional Migration Specialist, Nilim Baruah, was in Vanuatu recently to meet with the Commissioner of Labour and other stake-holders and draw up recommendations on introducing reintegration services for migrant workers and recommendations to further strengthen labour migration management in Vanuatu.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/projects/WCMS_155803/lang--en/index.htm



World Day Against Child Labour - June 12, 2012- Human rights and social justice...let's end child labour

The EU funded project Tackling Child Labour through education (TACKLE) successfully mobilised stakeholders and partners to organise various activities in Fiji. These included a media awareness workshop, community outreach activities, teacher training, oratory contests, poster competitions and a sports day.

For more information on these activities go to:

http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/projects/WCMS_155852/lang--en/index.htm



Consultative Forum on Non- Formal Education for Out-of-School Children

The Pacific Community Network in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and ILO TACKLE Fiji, a two day forum on Non- Formal Education for out of school children was held in Suva in July 2012. The objectives of the forum were to explore the special issues faced by children who are out-of-school, at risk of dropping out of school, and in engaged in child labour; and to design a non-formal education bridging programme as a strategy to link out of school children and child labourers to formal education or vocational and skills-based training. The forum included representatives from key government stakeholders as well as NGO's across the Central Division of Fiji.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/projects/WCMS_155852/lang--en/index.htm



10 stories of people with disabilities in waged and self employment in Fiji and Vanuatu - Publication Launch

Employers in Fiji and Vanuatu are encouraged to involve people living with disability to work in their organisations. These comments were made by International Labour Organisation for South Pacific Island Countries director David Lamotte during the launching of the book named '10 stories of people with disabilities in waged and self employment in Fiji and Vanuatu' that was held in Nadi, Fiji.

<http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/publications/lang--en/index.htm>



We want green jobs (RIO +20)

"As young people, we are all concerned with growth, development, income, and jobs. We are way more affected by unemployment than our parents generation are. Green jobs can provide meaningful work for a generation so affected by unemployment. This is the chance for us to take control of our future, lets not let it go to waste. A youth discussion forum organised at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat recently heard that addressing youth unemployment was also one of the sustainable development concerns of the Pacific Island youth and that green jobs was one of the ways to address this." says Krishneil Narayan *Executive Director of Project Survival Pacific*.

To read a feature article by Krishneil Narayan (*Executive Director of Project Survival Pacific, a youth environmental organisation that works to safeguard the survival of the Pacific island people from the impacts of climate change and to promote sustainable development within the Pacific*) please visit the *Fiji Times* website.

The ILO has participated in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), 20 - 22 June 2012

<http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/events/rio-20/lang--en/index.htm>

Questions and answers on the skills for green jobs challenge

<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/lang--en/index.htm>



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS on the “Cash for Work project”

http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_186990/lang--en/index.htm

Mike Shone is a civil engineer and town planner by profession and a former senior ILO official, who worked previously with the CRISIS Unit in Geneva. He is currently an independent consultant who has been undertaking a number of separate assignments in the Asia-Pacific region for AUSAID and ILO including work on the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Sichuan earthquake. He has recently been in Fiji to review the Nadi Town Council/UNDP / ILO / UNWOMEN “cash for work project” in the West of Viti Levu which has been impacted by severe flooding.

Mike Shone was interviewed following his field visits and discussions with disaster preparedness and response specialists in

Q: Can you describe the Cash for work programme in Fiji ?

A: Most CfW programmes internationally are essentially Social Protection programmes, whereby the most disaster affected communities are able to quickly earn cash under ‘decent work’ conditions to enable them to get back on their feet, in return for participating in disaster clean up and restoration activities. They are usually of limited duration and fill the need for local communities while longer term rehabilitation measures are put in place and resumption of employment is possible..



Q: When do CFW programmes usually start?

A: Provided that the immediate post crisis needs assessment surveys address loss of employment and small and micro-businesses, these programmes should be part and parcel of the immediate response activities. Unfortunately this was not the case in the West of Fiji, and it is only more recently been realised and the current CfW programme is now actually part of the early recovery component of the overall response.

Q: What are your impressions of the CFW programme?

A: The project is well organized by a dedicated small team and the project has a focused team and is worthy of further support provided that there is some basic design improvement incorporated into the work.



Q: What improvements do you suggest?

A: The project needs to move towards task- based remuneration, paying participants on the basis of their outputs. There needs to be a greater emphasis on fairness and inclusiveness in the work groups which ideally should better integrate the i'taukai and Indo-Fijian workers. Screening for the most disadvantaged will also likely identify persons with disabilities who will need some assistance. For the next phase of the project based in Nadi, the Ministry of Labour has kindly agreed to brief all workers (expected to number 1000 and comprise mainly women) on OSH and Ministry of Labour and Employment Relations labour standards. All workers will also be provided with safety clothing for their specific activities, which will now focus more on future needs rather than immediate clean- up tasks.

Q: Are Cash for Work programmes sufficient in themselves to better prepare communities for mitigating the impact of natural disasters?

A: The short answer is no, as CfW programmes are usually event driven and of limited duration and scope. What I feel is needed in Fiji and indeed elsewhere in the region is large annual “Public Works Programme (PWP) or Public Employment Programme (PEP) “ in which government and donors cost share a large scale programme as for example the AUSAID funded programme in East Timor, where by thousands of unskilled workers are engaged for a month or so each year on basic infrastructure maintenance, and disaster preparedness activities such as environmental protection, re-forestation, water-shed management and flood protection works, which will improve the resilience of communities to climate change. With the Fiji economy impacted by damage currently averaging USD 80 million per year from natural disasters, such a programme is well justified and the additional benefits of these programmes are that they also address at the same time poverty reductions and improvements in the attainment of MDG's. At the request of the Minister of Labour, Mr. Jone Usumate, I am currently working on the design of such a programme for Fiji, which will incorporate the world best practises of similar on-going ILO programs in the Asia-Pacific region.



Look ahead

International Youth Day

This year, International youth day will be celebrated on 12 August, with the theme Building a Better World: Partnering with Youth. The ILO, in its capacity as the chair of the UN Working Group on Youth is involved in coordinating various activities taking place in Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa and Solomon Islands. These event will be funded and organised in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific, Pacific Leadership Programme, Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Pacific Youth Council and other UN Agencies.

To read more on these activities please visit our events page:

<http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/events-and-meetings/lang--en/index.htm>

Director Generals statement for International Youth Day

http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/press-and-media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_186947/lang--en/index.htm

Disability Workshop on Convention (No. 159) on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) for Pacific Island Governments

The ILO in partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat are planning to hold a regional meeting on Convention 1983 (No. 159) on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disable Persons). This meeting is tentatively scheduled from 5th - 7th September 2012. The ILO has a commitment towards advocating for the signing and ratification of ILO Convention 159 under Thematic Area 1: Strengthen Political Leadership and an enabling environment of the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (2011-2015). Of the eight ILO member countries in the Pacific, only Fiji has ratified C159. This regional meeting on Disability will provide an opportunity for the other countries to consider signing and ratifying C159. It will include fourteen of PIFS member countries, which are inclusive of the eight members countries of the ILO in the Pacific.

One of the core objectives of the meeting is to promote decent work for disabled people through effective legislation and incorporation of the disability related employment policies in respective National Development Strategic Plans. The ILO will provide technical experts who will address the participants on the importance of ratifying Convention 159 and its implication in the Pacific to create better work opportunities for persons with disabilities.

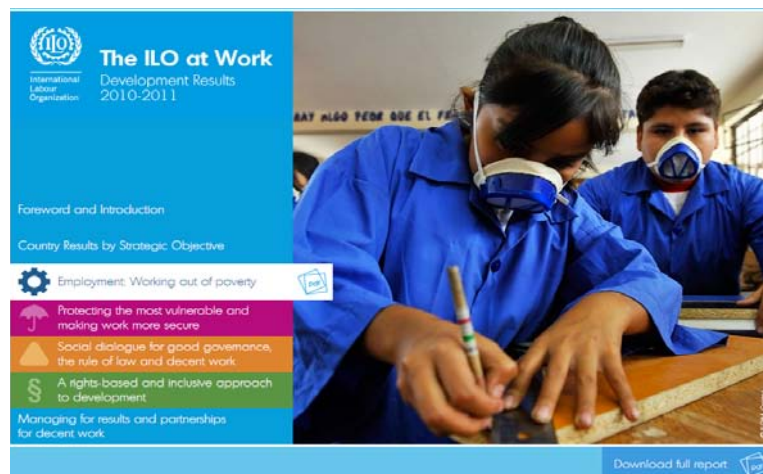
<http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/events-and-meetings/lang--en/index.htm>

Key Resources

The ILO at Work

Development Results 2010-2011

The ILO is concerned with the human condition of work, starting from the principle that “labour is not a commodity” as set out in the ILO’s Constitution. Respect for the dignity of work is consistent with and essential for sustainable development. The centrality of work to people’s lives as a source of well-being, security, identity and a pathway to progress, as well as to societies and to economies, requires the quantity and the quality of work to go hand in hand. This Report illustrates through stories, pictures, facts and figures from our development cooperation programme, how the ILO’s mandate and approach translate into results that contribute to better lives for people through the world of work in a variety of circumstances.



<http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/pardev/development-results/2010-2011/index.html>

General information on the ILO and its operations in the Pacific

Download a PDF to learn more about the ILO in Pacific Island Countries

http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/publications/WCMS_186878/lang--en/index.htm



DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.