

# Pacific Islands Regional Training on Evidence-based policy making for decent work

15-16 November 2021 (Online phase)  
2022 (Face-to-Face, TBC)

## Concept Note

### Justification

As stipulated in the ILO's Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), the ILO seeks to "*help, wherever necessary, the institutional capacity of member States, as well as representative organizations of employers and workers, to facilitate meaningful and coherent social policy and sustainable development*". As a follow up, the Resolution on Advancing Social Justice through Decent Work (105<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference 2016) calls for ILO to effectively assist its members through capacity building and training activities. Capacity development is a core element of the ILO's aim to achieve decent work and further social justice. It is defined by the ILO as a "process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time" (GB.317/POL/6). Capacity development is therefore considered as an integral process where ILO constituents' priorities and needs guide the Office in its role as supporter (GB.335/INS/9).

The ILC resolution on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work also calls on building capacity especially in enhancing research capacity (2017) and evokes the need to "*provide evidence-based and integrated capacity building and training for constituents*". ILO's Strategic plan 2018-21 also calls for continuously increasing the capacity of its constituents to enhance the ability of constituents to give value to their members and potential members, and have the capacity to engage in policy-based advocacy, so that they can make the maximum possible contribution to decent work outcomes (GB.335/INS/9). The fundamental importance of capacity building, especially in enhancing knowledge of state-of-art ILO research, is affirmed in several ILO strategies – including the Strategic Plan 2018-21, the Knowledge Strategy 2018-21, and the ILO-wide strategy for institutional capacity development. The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development goals (SDGs) also call for evidence-based policy making and increased capacity building in member countries. Additionally, the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (adopted the centenary ILC 2019) calls for "*Strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world*" and for the need for ILO to strengthen the capacity of its tripartite constituents. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic and its short- and long-term implications further emphasize the need for greater institutional capacity development of employers, workers and governments. The crisis has

highlighted gaps and vulnerabilities in societies which undermine the vision of social justice and decent work. In this light, capacity development becomes only more necessary by providing the constituents with tools and instruments for evidence-based policy making. ILO's training can help to identify and strengthen institutional weakness in order to improve policies and protections and better equip societies for dealing with future crises.

The ILO's role has therefore taken a crucial importance in the context of the current COVID-19 crisis, especially in terms of moving beyond the pandemic and building back better (GB.340/HL/2). The scale and gravity of the unprecedented world of work crisis triggered by the pandemic make necessary a specific focus on the implications of the pandemic for ILO work and on how the ILO can and must take a lead in the process of recovery (GB.340/HL/2). One area in which the ILO can help is to build the capacities of its tripartite constituents to build back better. As such this proposed online training and its platform will *“combine the various tools in the ILO toolbox for the purpose of helping ILO constituents access and co-create knowledge, cross-fertilize good practice and experience in standards implementation, and expand common ground through (evidence-based) policy dialogue”* (GB.340/HL/2).

The Programme and Budget 2020-21 refers to the capacity building and training activities within the Outcome A (Output A.2 *“use of ILO research and tools to train ILO staff and constituents in the design and implementation of effective, evidence-based policies”*) and puts particular focus on the increased institutional capacity of employer and business membership organizations (Outcome 1.1) in this area through *“strengthening analytical and research capacity to enhance the understanding and anticipation of changing business realities and to develop evidence-based policy proposals”* and of workers organizations (Outcome 1.2) through *“contributing effectively to the formulation and coherent implementation of economic, social and environmental policies at the national, regional and international levels, including in multilateral frameworks or institutions”*. In respect to the linkage between constituent capacity in this area and wider UN engagement, Output A.4 of the P&B refers to *“targeted technical training and Office support for constituent representatives to better enable them to contribute decent work perspectives and priorities in the UN Cooperation Frameworks, voluntary national reviews and other strategic national development processes”*.

Emerging evidence from Pacific Island countries and constituents<sup>1</sup> shows that there is a large gap in the capacity of the tripartite decision makers to generate and use evidence effectively, which hampers the use of evidence in practice. ILO's Pacific Island constituents are requesting support to bridge this gap in research and policy development skills. The training will provide assistance to constituents in both the use and generation of evidence from a variety of sources, including not only ILO evidence but also from national and local sources, including evidence generation through data and metadata analysis.

The training will be organized by the ILO Research Department in cooperation with the CO Suva, Regional office for Asia and the Pacific and the ITCILO Turin Centre. It is timely given the need for better informed and effective evidence-based policies relating to decent work issues, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic creating an unprecedented impact on workers and enterprises around the world. In recent years, there has been a worldwide push to move towards coherent and evidence-based policy making. In this context, it is indeed fundamental for the ILO to provide its constituents with a training that allows them to effectively produce evidence-based policies for decent work. Participants would have

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<sup>1</sup> A Study on the Future of Work in the Pacific, ILO, 2017.

enhanced capacities to contribute to their respective countries/organizations' policies while having an impact on how policies are planned and delivered. This contribution could happen either in a direct or indirect way, through their interaction with senior decision makers. The ILO Research Department is particularly well equipped to organize and deliver this training using ITC ILO's online facilities given its expertise in research and policy experience. Working in collaboration with the Bureau for Workers Activities, the Bureau for Employers Activities, and policy area experts in the ILO Decent Work Team for Asia and the Pacific, the training will be tailored to ensure enhanced technical rigor and focus in areas where results/change are most needed and likely.

## Aim & Objectives

The aim of this training is to build capacities of ILO's tripartite constituents in the Pacific Islands using case studies, best practices, research papers, guidelines, and other data and information sources for evidence-based policy making for decent work. Three main priorities have been identified by the ILO experts in the region, to be included in the training (social protection, migration and informality), while three other cross-cutting topics (climate action & green jobs, COVID 19 & world of work and social dialogue) will be included throughout the training. As such the specific objectives of this training are to:

- Incorporate processes in order to help improve existing social dialogue mechanisms on tripartite and bipartite forms;
- Improve skills and knowledge of individuals and organizations to use a wide variety of evidence sources in a balanced way;
- Establish research and policy dialogues between social partners to promote the use of evidence in policy making and facilitate and enhance the bipartite/tripartite dialogue;
- Develop research and policy communities of practice with social partners and policy-makers for evidence-based policy making and share lessons on evidence use for promoting decent work.

By the end of this training, the participants will be able to:

- build skills and knowledge for evidence-based policy making, advocacy and service provisions for decent work;
- use skills and knowledge acquired in the training to build a culture of evidence-based policy making, advocacy and service provisions;
- build a robust evidence base for policy reconciling different perspectives, findings, and, conflicting evidence for advocacy and service provision purposes.

## Audience

This training would be targeted to those mid to senior level tripartite officials who are involved in policymaking, policy/statistical analysis or advocacy in the Pacific islands on the topics related to decent work and labour market issues. These individuals play a crucial role in providing information, analysis and recommendations to guide policy-making and advocacy strategies and support informed debate.

## Methodology

The training will be organized in 4 Modules, separated into two phases. The online phase will be held from 15 to 16 November 2021. It will be delivered through the ITCILO e-campus platform, including self-learning tools, webinars for online conferences and online interaction tools. The face-to-face phase will be organized in 2022, whenever the sanitary situation improves.

The training will use a practical, work-based approach to evidence-based policy making and is designed to be built around everyday situations, using best practices/case studies. This is not an academic or theoretical course. Throughout the course, participants will utilize both primary and secondary data and information sources, such as surveys, focus groups, and metadata analysis directly related to one of the topics/issues already mentioned.

This training is organized in such a way as to give the participants the opportunity to learn and practice the skills and knowledge of evidenced-based policy-making. The training takes a learner-centred pedagogical approach while ensuring building institutional capacity in a holistic approach. An integrated approach will be used to address the three dimensions of capacity development whereby the transformation in learning that occurs at the individual level will affect, from a results chain perspective, the changes at organizational level. The learners should be able to achieve the objectives in the minimum time and to transfer the learning to their organization. Each session will be organized as follows:

- **Introduction:** it shows the purpose, objectives, process, experiences of the participants and how the knowledge will be applied;
- **Learning:** structure and content, learning methods, skills and knowledge practice, progress monitoring, memory aids;
- **Review:** review or test learners to make sure the objectives have been achieved and to bring the session to a close (e.g. establish what the next steps are).

To enable a real appreciation of the above-mentioned achievements, it will be consolidated according to the Organizational Performance Assessment (OPA) framework, adapted to define learning and capacity development results. The framework will allow translating learning into concrete changes that have taken place at the level of skills, work behaviors and practices by individual participants, as well as the transfer to his/her own work unit, organization or network. It is intended that the outcomes at these levels will not only be the consequence of the training, but that the training will have substantively contributed to their achievements. These results, although preliminary and self-assessed, will be followed up after the completion of the course, which will function as an informal validation of the acquired skills.

## Course framework

### Online phase (15-16 November 2021)

**Day 1: Opening remarks, Introduction to the ILO and decent work agenda**

**Day 2: Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy Making for decent work**

## Face-to-Face phase (2022, TBC)

**Module: Searching for Evidence**

**Module: Appraising Evidence**

**Module: Synthesizing Evidence**

**Module: Wrap up and learning milestones**

## Course structure

Prior to the course participants will be requested to formulate their major learning goals and take a pre-course assessment. During the training, each of the learning modules of the course has a fixed structure and includes the following components:

1. Live Webinar, with the group and ILO trainer and/or invited speakers (session of 3,5 hours) *ILO experts will facilitate 3,5 hours sessions on the topics of each module. Each session will include 90 minutes on the concepts and trends by the ILO training team, followed by a 90-minutes presentation by an expert, with a break in-between. The final 15 minutes of each session will be used for a specific review that would encourage participants to apply the concepts and tools they have been introduced to and ask questions.*

3. Forum discussions, self-facilitated or facilitated by the ILO trainers

## Evaluations

A post-course evaluation will be conducted to assess the individual learning outcomes.

A final evaluation will be conducted to receive the feedback of the participants on the training methodology, content and the learning tools.

Upon completion of the course, participants will receive a certificate of participation.

A follow-up phase: 6 months after the completion of the training, participants will be asked to fill out a survey and to attend a webinar to discuss and bring examples on how their new learning has contributed to improved practices both at the individual level and at the organizational level.

## Working language

The training will be delivered in English.

## Composition

The training will be offered to 33 tripartite participants including workers, employers and governments from various countries at the global level from the Pacific Island countries. Other interested participants could be invited including ILO staff, national statistical officers, and UN staff.

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