

This two-monthly 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 always appreciated.*

101st Session of the International Labour Conference, 30 May - 15 June 2012



The 101st session of the International Labour Conference of the ILO is to be held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 30 May to 15 June 2012. Each member State of the ILO can be represented by a delegation consisting of two government delegates, an employer delegate and a worker delegate. Delegations are often accompanied by advisors. Every delegate has the same rights, and all can express themselves freely and vote as they wish. This year we have been informed that from the Pacific Islands Countries there will be delegations from Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu participating.

For 2012, the agenda included two important topics of interest to us living in the Pacific:

Youth Employment – The youth employment crisis is a global challenge, though its social and economic characteristics vary considerably in size and nature from one country and region to another. Today almost one person in five is between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Altogether, there are over 1.2 billion youth in the world and globally, youth were three times as likely as adults to be unemployed. Across the Pacific Island Countries (PIC's), young people represent around 20 per cent of the Pacific population and are up to six times more likely to be unemployed than adults. For some countries, such as, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Samoa, around half of the young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed. Young women face higher rates of unemployment than young men due to factors including male preference in terms of hiring in the formal sector, male dominated labour migration abroad, and discriminatory practices which make it harder for women entrepreneurs to access land, assets and credit.

Recent statements by Pacific Island leaders and key groups have reaffirmed their commitment to tackling the youth employment challenge in the region. At the 42nd Pacific Islands Forum in Auckland, New Zealand, in September 2011 they explicitly recognised the need for the development of a regional framework for youth employment. The ILO is currently leading, along with the Pacific Island Forum and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the engagement with PICs to develop this framework. It is thus now appropriate and necessary to move from policy advocacy and pilot programmes to large-scale projects that have tangible impacts on the lives of young women and men. You can learn more about Youth Employment at: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/lang--en/index.htm>

Social Protection Floor - Social Protection Floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees. They aim at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. Such guarantees may be achieved through contributory or non-contributory schemes, whether means-tested or not. This year, the ILC Conference will consider the possible adoption of an international labour Recommendation under the single discussion procedure.

In the Pacific a recent ILO study shows that some elements of the social protection floor are already in place but much more needs to be done to ensure national coverage. Solomon Islands and Vanuatu for instance have established universal free primary health care services and free education services at primary school; Solomon Island's Rapid Employment project, operating in Honiara, provides income security to the working age poor, particularly among youth and women. Furthermore, traditional structures and obligations in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu play a vitally important part in providing for social needs. You can learn more about the Social Protection Floor at: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/social-security/lang--en/index.htm>

We will keep you informed of the outcomes of this year's International Labour Conference and we take this opportunity to wish those delegations going from the Pacific a productive, rewarding and enjoyable Conference.

Solomon Islands ratifies six ILO Human Rights Conventions

Following several years of cooperation between Solomon Islands and the ILO, the Government of Solomon Islands has decided to ratify six fundamental conventions. The registration of which was made on 13 April 2012 in ILO headquarters.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_181245/lang--en/index.htm



No recovery in sight for labour markets, warns ILO

According to the ILO's "World of Work Report 2012: Better Jobs for a Better Economy", despite signs that economic growth has resumed in some regions, the global employment situation is alarming and shows no sign of recovery in the near future.

http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/press-and-media-centre/news/WCMS_179449/lang--en/index.htm

Child Labour in Papua New Guinea

The International Labour Organization has published the first comprehensive child labour research report for Papua New Guinea. The research report (conducted in Port Moresby) reveals that child labour exists, and children from different sectors of the community are engaged in the worst forms of child labour, including commercial sexual exploitation, specifically child prostitution, illicit activities and hazardous work. The report is based on interviews with 175 child sex workers, mainly girls, and over 200 children working on the streets. 68% of the children were found to be involved in hazardous work, including chopping firewood for sales, moving furniture, loading and unloading boxes from containers, controlling traffic, scrap metal scavenging, working very long hours, and being subjected to physical and verbal abuse. Children were also engaged in illicit activities, and working in activities such as begging, stealing and selling drugs.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_178588/lang--en/index.htm

To listen to an interview by Radio Australia's Pacific Beat with Marie Jane Fatiaki, National Programme Coordinator, Tackling Child Labour Through Education (TACKLE), please follow the link below.

<http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/program/pacific-beat/poverty-driving-child-sex-workers-in-png/930734>



Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Government of the Republic of Kiribati and the Government of the Republic of Fiji on Technical Assistance in the Field of Labour Reform and Labour Inspection

South-South cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity among the countries and peoples of the South that contributes to their national well-being, national and collective self-reliance, and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals and standards. It is not a substitute for official development assistance, but is a partnership among equals based on solidarity (*excerpts from a speech given by Mr. David Lamotte, Director ILO Office for the South Pacific Island Countries*).

http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/speeches/WCMS_180048/lang--en/index.htm



Temporary employment boosts early recovery from Fiji floods - UN

The cash-for-work initiative, funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with support from UN Women and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), is being implemented with the Government of Fiji to focus initially on market vendors in Rakiraki, one of the country's worst affected districts, located halfway between the capital Suva and the western town of Nadi. With the support of the ILO Regional Office for Asia Pacific, the ILO is providing technical assistance in (a) in the design of an operational manual (b) mentoring the project staff delivering the project and (c) in designing an expanded phase of the project. In addition the Fiji Minister of Labour has indicated interest in the management and success of such programme and a ½ day information sharing workshop will be organized for Ministry staff and ILO social partners.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_179233/lang--en/index.htm



OSH Day Celebrations in Fiji 2012

The Fiji tripartite OHS Committee organized the 2012 OSH Day and celebrated with primary and secondary school students in the western division to raise awareness on the importance of securing a future promoting a safe and healthy green economy. This significant day was observed on Friday 27 April in Lautoka, Fiji. Essay and poster competitions were organized for students around Fiji. Key note addresses were delivered by the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment, Mr. Jone Usamate; Mr David Lamotte, Director, ILO Suva, Office for Pacific Island Countries; PNG High Commissioner to Fiji – His Excellency Mr. Peter Eafeare; and Mr Mark Mathews, President, Fiji Employers Federation.



http://www.ilo.org/suva/information-resources/public-information/press-releases/WCMS_179408/lang--en/index.htm

Labour Law Reform Progressing in Vanuatu, Kiribati and PNG

There is increasing momentum for labour law reform in Pacific Islands countries and an increasing commitment to modernise legislation. The ILO's Labour Governance and Migration project has been providing technical assistance to Pacific Island countries to reform labour laws under their Decent Work Country Programmes. The Vanuatu Government is working to progress the Employment Relations Bill which modernises and consolidates existing labour legislation. Vanuatu's Tripartite Labour Advisory Council is playing a leading role in finalising the Bill with technical assistance from the ILO. It is expected to be finalised in the first half of this year. In April this year, the ILO facilitated a tripartite workshop in Kiribati with assistance from union and employer mentors from New Zealand. The aim was to identify policy priorities for reforming existing labour legislation to bring it up-to-date and provide for greater consistency with ILO standards.

The ILO will continue to work closely with constituents to identify policy options to inform the development of new legislation during the next six months. The PNG Government has prioritised reforming the Employment Act – which was developed more than 30 years ago. In April, the ILO with assistance from Commissioner John Ryan from **Fair Work Australia** met key constituents to discuss priorities for law reform. The initiative is contributing to the development of a new Bill to modernise the legislation over the next few months. The Labour Governance and Migration project is funded by AusAID under a Partnership Agreement between the ILO and the Australian Government.

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

Development of a Pacific regional framework for youth employment

A regional technical meeting on advancing the development of a Pacific regional framework for youth employment was held on 10-11 May 2012 in Brisbane, Australia. The meeting was supported by the Pacific Leadership Programme (PLP) and the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). This meeting was a follow through of the Pacific Declaration on Investing in Youth Employment which called for the development of a Pacific Youth Employment Strategy (PacificYES) and the Forum Leaders Communique which highlighted the need for the development of a regional framework for youth unemployment. At the meeting, the ILO presented a draft of the PacificYES to representatives of government, youths and technical agencies. It is envisaged that the PacificYES will provide the technical input to the youth employment component of the regional youth framework. Deliberations from this meeting will culminate in a major Youth Employment Forum in Geneva and the 2012 International Labour Conference. (see *Look Ahead* page 4)

<http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/events/youth-employment-forum/lang--en/index.htm>

Labour Governance and Migration Project - literature review

The publication identifies pre-departure and reintegration services for temporary migrants and the impact of these services. In relation to reintegration services, it focuses on services that support building economic livelihoods, income generation, skills and employment prospects. The primary focus was on literature relating to the New Zealand Government's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme and the Australian Government's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS). This review also explored Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme (CSAWP) and the Philippines temporary migration scheme to the extent that any lessons learned might be relevant to good practice and opportunities in the South Pacific region.

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



Wages policy in Fiji report of 2011 tripartite workshop series published

Wage policies, including processes for establishing minimum wages, are central to decent work. This publication reports on discussions from three separate constituent workshops on wage policy in Fiji, draws themes from those discussions and makes observations and suggestions to prompt further dialogue on wage policy and the improved operation of the current system.

http://www.ilo.org/suva/what-we-do/publications/WCMS_178142/lang--en/index.htm

Youth Employment Forum - 23-25 May 2012, ILO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland

As youth unemployment reaches unprecedented levels in many countries, the ILO will hold a global Youth Employment Forum to address the challenges young people face in the labour market. The Forum will gather a hundred young men and women involved in the promotion of decent work for youth. Participants will share their experiences and views on the current employment situation and discuss practical examples of successful initiatives which have led to the promotion of decent work for youth.

<http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/events/youth-employment-forum/lang--en/index.htm>



Training workshop on the worst forms of child labour including trafficking: Formulating a National Action Plan 28 -31 May 2012

The Ministry of Labour in Fiji has established a Child Labour Unit (CLU) to act as a centralised resource hub on child labour issues. The CLU is now organising a national level workshop to develop a national action plan against the Worst Forms of Child Labour, including trafficking, while ensuring complementarity and cross-referencing with the national plan on trafficking.

The workshop will bring together labour officers, labour inspectors and practitioners from a range of relevant departments (including education, social welfare, immigration and police), workers and employers organizations, and NGOs.

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

World Day Against Child Labour 2012: Human rights and social justice...let's end child labour

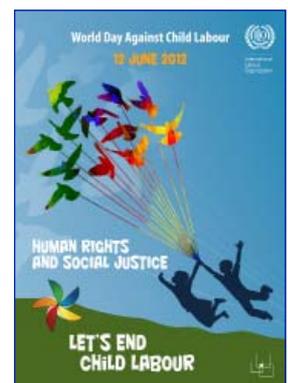
This year the World Day Against Child Labour will provide a spotlight on the right of all children to be protected from child labour and from other violations of fundamental human rights. In 2010 the international community adopted a Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, which stressed that child labour is an impediment to children's rights and a barrier to development. World Day 2012 will highlight the work that needs to be done to make the roadmap a reality.

Join with us on June 12!

The World Day Against Child Labour promotes awareness and action to tackle child labour. Support for the World Day has been growing each year and in 2012 we look forward to a World Day that will again be widely supported.

- We would like you and your organisation to be part of the 2012 World Day.
- Join us and add your voice to the worldwide movement against child labour.
- For more information contact ipec@ilo.org.

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/2012/lang--en/index.htm>



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

The International Labour Organization (ILO), in partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) 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 16-20 July, 2013 in Nadi. The International Labour Organization (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 (8) 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. This meeting on C159 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 their 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

Conference Guide to the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference

The 101st session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) is to be held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 30 May to 15 June 2012. This year the topics at the Conference include the youth employment crisis and the possible adoption of a recommendation on the Social Protection Floor. These topics are of particular relevance to Pacific Island Countries, and we will keep you informed as more information is made available. By now each government should have received the letter of convocation, the form for credentials and its explanatory note, and the Conference guide. Please let us know if you have not received this information or if you need any other assistance. Having a strong and well informed delegation from a number of Pacific Island Countries is very important if we are to make our unique and collective needs and expectations clear.

http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/WCMS_172489/lang--en/index.htm

ILO topic portal on social security

Only 20 per cent of the world's population has adequate social security coverage and more than half lack any coverage at all. The ILO actively promotes policies and provides assistance to countries to help extend adequate levels of social protection to all members of society. Social security involves access to health care and income security, particularly in cases of old age, unemployment, sickness, invalidity, work injury, maternity or loss of a main income earner. A "Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All" launched in 2003 builds on efforts already underway in more than 30 countries. These include projects to help countries extend coverage at the national level and to strengthen community-based social security organizations.

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

ILO topic portal on youth employment

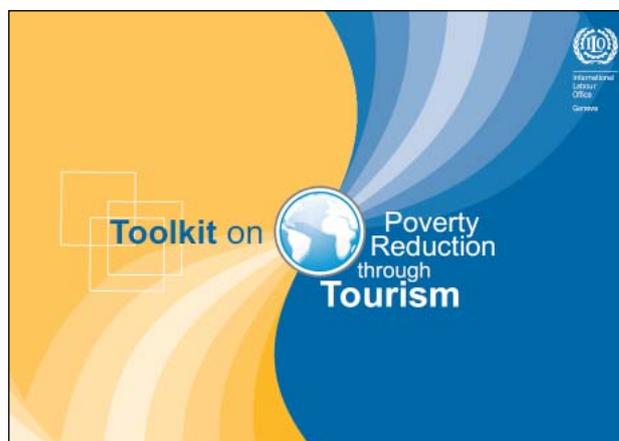
The world is facing a worsening youth employment crisis: young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults and over 75 million youth worldwide are looking for work. The ILO has warned of a "scarred" generation of young workers facing a dangerous mix of high unemployment, increased inactivity and precarious work in developed countries, as well as persistently high working poverty in the developing world. The ILO's programme on youth employment operates through a global network of technical teams at its headquarters in Geneva and in more than 60 offices around the world. It provides assistance to developing countries through coherent and coordinated interventions on youth employment. This integrated approach combines macro-economic policies and targeted measures which address labour demand and supply, as well as the quantity and quality of employment.

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

Toolkit on Poverty Reduction through Tourism

The toolkit outlines the background to poverty reduction approaches and how the ILO is involved within the context of decent work and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Recent developments in tourism and a vision for an inclusive, pro-poor tourism industry are summarized.

http://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/training-materials/WCMS_162289/lang--en/index.htm



News@ILO, May 2012; The May 2012 e-newsletter of the ILO in Asia and the Pacific contains the latest news from the regional office, a feature article on the importance of ratification of fundamental ILO Conventions, a selection of the latest publications, and details of forthcoming events and meetings. http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/newsletters/WCMS_179608/lang--en/index.htm

DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.