

## Background

- Fiji's population of 837,271 at the time of the 2007 Census is largely comprised of the two ethnic groups of indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians. The 2007 Census was the first Census which enumerated more people in urban (51%) than in rural areas;
- Fiji faces an uncertain future after the military takeover of the elected civilian government in December 2006. This was the fourth coup in Fiji in 20 years;
- The 2006 coup greatly reduced investor and business confidence. The average real GDP growth in Fiji was 3.4% in 2006, falling to a negative 6.6% in 2007. ADB estimates that Fiji's economy grew by just 0.2% in 2008, and forecasts that it will contract by 0.5% in 2009, as key revenue sources such as tourism, remittances and sugar continue to decline;
- Each year over 17,000 new entrants join the labour market in Fiji including some 10,000 school leavers. There are about 9,000 jobs openings in Fiji per year, enough only for about half of those entering the labour market. The prospects of young school leavers obtaining paid employment in the formal sector are limited. Unemployment in the age-group 15-24 is twice Fiji's national average;
- Child labour exists besides youth unemployment in Fiji;
- After several years in the making, the Employment Relations Promulgation came into effect in April 2008 and the Mediation Services and Employment Relations Tribunal became operational in September 2008;
- The only social security scheme in Fiji is run by the Fiji National Provident Fund. It includes a degree of protection for formal economy workers against loss of income due to age, death and disability;
- The state of labour market information in Fiji is the most developed in the region. Fiji is the only country that has conducted a full Labour Force Survey. The most recent Household Income & Expenditure Survey (HIES) was conducted in 2003. In addition, labour market information is available from an Annual Employment Survey. In contrast to the availability of labour market data, analysis and dissemination is less developed.

## ILO in Fiji

- Fiji became a member of the ILO in 1974;
- In 1975 ILO opened its Office for the Pacific Island Countries in Suva;
- Fiji has ratified 31 conventions including the eight Fundamental Conventions, of which 28 remain in force;
- The tripartite constituents are the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, the Fiji Employers Federation and the Fiji Trades Union Congress;



National Flag

- ILO has developed an in-depth understanding of the particular needs of the constituents and has helped to build the capacity of the tripartite constituents through technical assistance and training programmes;
- Tripartite institutions have not been formalised since the passing of the ERP;
- ILO will provide technical assistance for the review of certain clauses of the ERP, including minimum wage legislation, dismissal processes, jurisdiction and mediation in order to improve the clarity, equity and fairness of the ERP;
- The Integrated Human Resource Development Programme for Employment Promotion (IHRDPEP) aimed at employment generation and human resource development through training was run by ILO between 1999 and 2007;
- With funding from UNFPA, ILO runs the project "Men as Partners in Reproductive Health" under which the capacity workers' and employers' organisations in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention, domestic violence, gender issues and reproductive health is built;
- ILO's "Tackling Child Labour through Education" (TACKLE) project, funded by the EU, was launched in Fiji in early 2008. Child labour issues are addressed through strengthening legal frameworks and policies, strengthening capacity leading to improved implementation of child labour laws, creating replicable models for direct interventions to remove children from hazardous work and give them access to appropriate educational alternatives. Achievements so far include the formation of a Project Advisory Committee on Child Labour, the conduct of a legislative review of child labour and the training of union and employers' representative in child labour issues
- Strengthening the Creative Industries in Five ACP Countries Through Employment and Trade Expansion, funded by the EU, and implemented jointly by the ILO, UNCTAD and UNESCO, will run in Fiji between 2009 and 2013. ILO's contribution will be in the area of employment perspectives for artists and the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of artists.

# *Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)*

The first Decent Work Programme (DWCP) which details ILO cooperation activities with Fiji for the period 2010 – 2012, based on tripartite consultations, was signed on (ADD LOCATION AND DATE).

## *Priority 1. Review and implementation of the ERP and related legislation*

Outcome 1.1: Selective review and improved implementation of the ERP.

Outcome 1.2: Ratification of ILO Conventions and compliance of Fiji's labour legislation with the International Labour Standards.

## *Priority 2. Promotion of decent employment opportunities*

Outcome 2.1: Adoption of employment related policies and plans.

Outcome 2.2: Skills development which is relevant to labour market needs and based on improved production and analysis of labour market statistics

Outcome 2.3: Effective progress is made towards the elimination of child labour.

## *Priority 3. Extending social protection*

Outcome 3.1: Extension of the scope of social protection.

Outcome 3.2: HIV/AIDS workplace policies will be adopted and implemented.

## *Priority 4. Capacity building of tripartite partners and strengthening of tripartite institutions*

Outcome 4.1: Strengthening of tripartite structures and institutions.

Outcome 4.2: The social partners are actively involved in tripartite institutions.

### **Contact Information:**

ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries  
FNPF Place, 8th Floor  
Victoria Parade  
P.O.Box 14500, Suva, Fiji  
Tel: +679 331 3866  
Fax: +679 330 0248  
Email: [suva@ilo.org](mailto:suva@ilo.org)