

# Solomon Islands

## Background

- In terms of land area and population, Solomon Islands is one of the largest Pacific Island Countries. The population was estimated at around 580,000 in 2008. The bulk of the population lives in the rural areas and depends on agriculture, fishing, and forestry;
- Solomon Islands is one of the poorest countries in the Pacific region and the economy experienced major setbacks during the period of ethnic tensions between 1999 and 2003 and civil unrest in 2006;
- Solomon Islands' population is highly youthful with 40% of the population under 15 years of age. The labour market is unable to absorb all the school leavers and youth unemployment rates are considerably higher than for the general population;
- The formal social protection system in Solomon Islands is limited to the SINPF which largely covers formal sector employees. Plans are underway to broaden the scope of social protection to establish a national pension scheme and a National Health Insurance Scheme;
- The availability of labour market statistics in Solomon Islands is very limited, infrequent and scattered.



Solomon Islands National Flag

- Tripartism and social dialogue came under threat during the ethnic tensions and civil unrest and has been adversely affected by the absence of previously existing bodies such as the Labour Advisory Board. The recently established tripartite Labour Law Review Committee is responsible for the review of labour laws, as well as to help re-establish other tripartite institutions;
- 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;
- ILO's technical cooperation project "Men as partners in reproductive health", funded by UNFPA, has run since 2006. The awareness on HIV/AIDS at the workplace and the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS have been raised with tripartite constituents and assistance was provided with drafting workplace policies in compliance with ILO's Code of Practice;
- ILO's "Sub-regional Programme on Education, Employability and Decent Work for Youth in the Pacific Island Countries", funded by the Netherlands, was also launched in early 2008.

## ILO in the Solomon Islands

- Solomon Islands became a member of ILO in 1984;
- Solomon Islands has ratified one of the eight Fundamental Conventions as well as another 13 ILO conventions, all in 1985;
- The implementation of ILO Conventions ratified by Solomon Islands as well as the fulfilment of reporting obligations have been a focal area between ILO and the constituents;
- The tripartite constituents are the Labour Division, within the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI), the Solomon Islands Council of Trade Unions (SICTU) and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI);



# Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)

The first Decent Work Programme (DWCP) which details ILO cooperation activities with Solomon Islands for the period 2009 – 2012, based on tripartite consultations, was signed on 26th August 2009 in Honiara, Solomon Islands

## Priority 1. Capacity building of tripartite partners and improvement of social dialogue

Outcome 1.1: The social partners are strengthened to increase the effectiveness of their institutions, to provide meaningful services to their members and to extend the representation of their organisations.

Outcome 1.2: The understanding of international labour standards is improved among the tripartite constituents.

Outcome 1.3: An effective tripartite social dialogue mechanism is established to make tangible progress in promoting Decent Work for both women and men.

## Priority 3. Improvement of the labour market information and analysis system

Outcome 3.1: The capacity of production, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated labour market statistics is increased.

## Priority 2. Promotion of decent employment opportunities, particularly for young women and men, and inclusive of persons with disabilities

Outcome 2.1: Improved decent employment opportunities for youth through improved support services and improved coordination of youth employment programmes and policies.

## Priority 4. Increasing social protection

Outcome 4.1: Design of an expanded social protection system.

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