

International  
Labour  
Organization



# The ILO in the Solomon Islands

## The Solomon Islands and decent work



## ILO contact

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### Tripartite constituents

**Government:** Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI)

**Workers' organizations:** Workers Union of Solomon Islands (WUSI), The Solomon Islands Council of Trade Unions (SICTU)

**Employers' organizations:** Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI)

### Find out more

[ilo.org/solomonislands](http://ilo.org/solomonislands)

The Solomon Islands are an archipelago of almost 1,000 islands. As a nation it has gone through some critical tests ranging from governance concerns, post-conflict and peace building challenges, and a high degree of vulnerability, all of which have affected its development since independence in 1978.

Economic growth and established industries, such as agricultural exports and palm oil and tuna processing, offer opportunities to realise economies of scale. But the economy is still recovering from the severe flooding which struck the capital, Honiara, and surrounding areas in April 2014. The floods killed 23 people, damaged key infrastructure, and disrupted livelihoods.

The Solomon Islands became an ILO Member in 1984 and has ratified **22 international labour Conventions**.

### **ILO Strategic framework aligned with the national priorities**

ILO actions are aligned with major priorities identified in **the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017** and the National Development priorities. The ILO is considering with its constituents practical and flexible modalities for delivering the work programme in the future. This would include efforts to strengthen tripartism through the establishment of a Labour Advisory Board.

## Key challenges

- Nearly **60%** of the country's population is under 25 years of age.
- In Honiara, approximately **20%** of youth are unemployed, while in rural areas youth unemployment rates reach **50%**
- Solomon Islands are ranked **156** out of **188** countries on the 2014 UN Human Development Index.

## Main actions and key results

### Human Security Initiative: “tensions” reduction, reconciliation and rehabilitation

The Solomon Islands experienced severe economic contraction and stagnation over the period of ethnic conflict (1998–2003). Ensuring human security was particularly important due to the lingering causes of ethnic conflict or “tensions”, pervasive political manipulation, social fragmentation, chronic poverty, and lack of basic social facilities in many areas. A joint UN initiative (ILO, UNDP and UNICEF) was designed to focus on (i) empowering both ex-combatants and affected communities by improving local governance and community participation, and (ii) successful post-conflict recovery of affected communities by promoting human security and co-existence, with a view to preventing a recurrence of violent “tensions” in the future.

The ILO has contributed by improving the livelihoods of people affected by the civil unrest, in particular young people, inmates, persons with disabilities, and females affected by the tensions.



Emphasis was placed on improving their business skills through the introduction of different business concepts such as business idea generation, marketing strategies, customer services, product pricing, costs and planning. The ILO also reinforced the capacities of existing small business owners to enhance their business productivity, profitability and opportunities for business expansion. Support was also provided to organizations such as Youth@Work, Honiara City

Council, Solomon Islands Correction Services, Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Unity, National Reconciliation and Peace, to run enterprise development programmes such as Start Your Business (SYB), Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) and career counselling to support decent work opportunities for the people of the Solomon Islands.

### Eliminating child labour

Based on ILO research that shows that many children in the Solomon Islands are involved in hazardous work, commercial sexual exploitation and other illicit activities, the ILO:

- Enhanced the capacity of labour officers, workers, employers and relevant stakeholders to address child labour issues;

- Strengthened the capacities of education officers to address child labour issues and improve formal and non-formal education programmes;
- Enhanced the knowledge base on the worst forms of child labour through targeted research and actions;
- Created a regional sharing platforms on child labour;

- Conducted a rapid assessment of child labour in Honiara in 2014. The assessment showed that some children are involved in hazardous work, commercial sexual exploitation, and other illicit activities.

### Responding to disaster through cash for work

Heavy rain from a tropical depression, which later became Tropical Cyclone Ita, caused severe flooding in the Solomon Islands in early April 2014 and affected more than 50,000 people.

The ILO, in partnership with local partners and other UN agencies, developed, launched and implemented a **cash for work (CFW) programme**, which is a small scale, short duration social protection initiative implemented in

the “response” and “recovery” phases. The most disaster affected communities were able to quickly earn cash under decent work conditions which enabled them to get back on their feet, in return for participating in disaster clean-up and rehabilitation activities.

Some of the observed benefits arising from the pilot ILO programme included the following:

- Houses, community buildings, wells and washing facilities were cleaned and repaired.
- Food crops were replanted.
- Resources in the form of wages and tools were injected into the local economy.
- Community members were motivated to participate.

### Extending social protection to the most vulnerable

In line with the country’s National Development Plans, the ILO helped to increase the level and scope of social protection and to develop social protection floors in the country. To do so, the ILO organized a **National Workshop**

**on Social Protection in the Solomon Islands** to improve stakeholders’ awareness and common understanding of social protection. Furthermore, efforts have been made to raise awareness of social protection issues, and an assess-

ment-based National Dialogue on Social Protection has been updated. The ILO also conducted a review of the Workers’ Compensation Act of 1952.

## A YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR MAKING USE OF HER ABILITIES IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

*"Anyone can become a good business person, you only need the driving force to move into starting your own business, be committed and have support from your families."*

Mary, a young woman with an intellectual disability, is excited to become an entrepreneur. She has decided to set up a small business selling doormats she has made.

She recently completed the Young Entrepreneurs Programme, which focuses on helping young people understand that self-employment is an alternative option to consider. An ILO Start Your Business trainer said *"Mary is very creative and makes use of her abilities."*

Mary, together with 15 other young people, received a grant on completing the course in the form of materials to set up her business. Mary said she was glad to receive assistance and is doing her best to make the most of it.



## Next steps

The ILO Work Programme for 2016-17 is based on consultations with constituents (the Government, and employers' and workers' organizations) in the Solomon Islands, and has taken account of links with the National Development Plan, the UNDAF for the Pacific Sub-Region, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The last DWCP for the Solomon Islands came to an end in 2012 and faced several implementation challenges. The ILO

is discussing practical and flexible modalities with constituents to deliver the programme in the future.

Entrepreneurship training is a key ILO tool for job creation, targeting youth, women and persons with disabilities. Start Your Business Programmes (SYB), Community-Based Enterprise Development Programmes (C-BED) and career counselling programmes have been introduced. Youth entrepreneurship continues to be a priority

for the ILO in the Solomon Islands in 2016-2017.

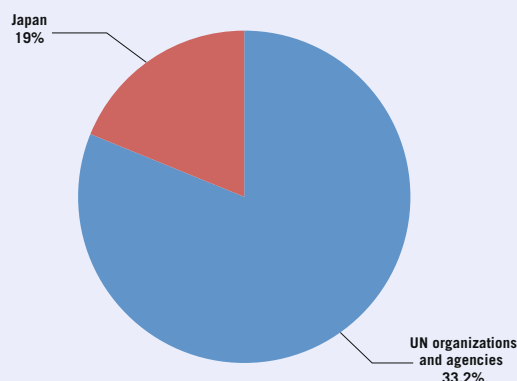


## Partnership for decent work

Under the UN Delivering as One, the ILO participated with UNDP and UNICEF in organizing livelihoods support programmes for people affected by the ethnic tension. Collaboration with the UN and regional organizations will continue to provide the ILO with opportunities to amplify its voice and create synergies in employment promotion and the protection of workers.

Similarly, the ILO seeks to strengthen partnerships with the major development partner countries in the Pacific and has also established working relationships with regional organizations such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Youth Council (PYC).

Major ILO donors for the Solomon Islands (2012-2015)



## THE ILO AND DECENT WORK — A MANDATE FOR PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that labour peace is essential to prosperity. Today, the ILO helps advance the creation of decent work and the economic and working conditions that give working people and business people a stake in lasting peace, prosperity and progress. Its tripartite structure provides a unique platform for promoting decent work for all women and men. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.

## Selected Country Programme Results for the Solomon Islands in 2014 and 2015

COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTCOME AND RESULTS ACHIEVED	ILO CONTRIBUTION (OUTPUTS)
<p>Strengthened capacity of member States to ratify and apply international labour standards and to fulfil their reporting obligations</p>	
<p>The Government in consultation with the tripartite partners has completed Article 19 reports of all Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the ILC since 1984. The report has been finalized and ready for submission to Parliament for endorsement.</p> <p>Nine outstanding Article 22 reports on ratified Conventions for 2014/2015 have been prepared by the Government and were submitted to NORMES (International Labour Standards Department) in Geneva. The responses to the Direct Requests and Observations were also included in the reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Facilitation, technical support and training for Government Officers in Solomon Islands on the reporting and the application of the International labour standards.</li> <li>&gt; In 2014, the ILO provided a fellowship to a Government officer to attend ILS training in Turin. In addition a "Distance Training course in Best Practices in International Labour Standards Reporting" was also organized from 16 March to 8 May 2015.</li> <li>&gt; Distribution of the guide on ILS reporting "Reporting on ILO Standards - Guide for Labour Officers in Pacific Island Member States" to the tripartite constituents.</li> </ul>
<p>Economic security empowered and sustainable livelihoods promoted through income generation measures</p>	
<p>A total of ten secondary schools in Solomon Islands have been capacitated to deliver career counselling for its students. As the result of the training the schools have developed an action plan to implement the training in their respective schools.</p> <p>The Solomon Islands Correctional Services has institutionalised the CBED training programme for prisoners in three of their prisons.</p> <p>A Cash for Work programme implemented by Government and the Employers organisation provided temporary employment for persons affected by the April floods in 2014.</p> <p>The Secretariat of the Pacific Community has institutionalized the SYB and CBED programmes in Solomon Islands.</p> <p>The Government and the Employers organisation have enhanced capacities in identifying disaster recovery programme and they directly implement flood recovery initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Three SYB training programmes targeting youths, females and persons with disabilities to encourage self-employment.</li> <li>&gt; Design and distribution of approximately 600 copies of the "My Guide to Employment – For Young people in the Pacific".</li> <li>&gt; Ten schools and the Youth at Work was supported to implement the programme after participating in the TOT (Training of Trainers) in career counselling.</li> <li>&gt; CBED TOT for the Correctional Services and other partners.</li> <li>&gt; A video on experiences of the Cash for Work project in Solomon Islands was produced and has been shared with various stakeholders on how to run similar programme in the future.</li> </ul>



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