Strengthening Labour Market Information and Analysis in the Pacific through Regional Partnership and Capacity-building

ILO Office for the Pacific Island Countries
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Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

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STATISTICS, EMP/TRENDS, RO-BANGKOK, SRO-BANGKOK

Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) Statistics and Demography Programme, the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

USD 2.5 million
1. Rationale and Justification

Governments of the Pacific Island Countries must deal with numerous and increasingly difficult labour market challenges, such as growing intra-regional labour migration, unemployment and underemployment, and skills mismatches, among others. To this end, timely and accurate labour market information and analysis can help policymakers to better design, implement, monitor and evaluate national and regional socioeconomic policies that promote decent work and productive employment. However, the eight Pacific Island Countries face challenges and constraints in all phases of LMIA. Although the situation differs from country to country, a number of challenges can be summarized that generally apply throughout the region:

1. Need to harmonize a set of key labour market indicators for the Pacific, both on the regional and national levels, defined according to internationally accepted standards that can serve as a basis in survey design, data collection, analysis and use in policymaking;
2. Need to develop and conduct regular labour force surveys that produce internationally accepted and regionally harmonized labour market indicators;
3. Need for national labour market data storage systems, and strengthening of regional labour market database initiatives;
4. Need to build institutional capacity in the field of collection and storage of labour market data;
5. Need to develop labour market analysis mechanisms, both at national and regional levels and a strategy to disseminate this analysis to policy makers;
6. Need to improve information on regional supply and demand for skills for both employers and job-seekers in order to stimulate intra-regional labour mobility.

In July 2006, the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers adopted the Forum Economic Action Plan 2006, which "Prioritised as a matter of urgency the upgrading of their statistical offices and ... agreed to carry out a study, as soon as possible, to progress the upgrading of country and regional statistical information services systems."

In November 2007 at the Tripartite Technical Meeting on Decent Work for the Pacific Island Countries, the tripartite constituents of the ILO called for "improving labour market information for Pacific Island Countries and developing a regional mechanism to facilitate the process along with technical assistance by the ILO." To this end, the possibility of setting up a regional labour market information system under the auspices of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat was also discussed.

Furthermore, in April 2008 at the 10th Session of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries, delegates called for economic and social policies to address labour market trends in the region. Deliberations acknowledged that "improving the regularity, scope and availability of public information about trends and features in labour markets would improve the design and implementation of employment and other social policies." Critically important, the use of standardized methodologies and labour market information disaggregated by gender was also recognized.

Most recently, in October 2009 the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers adopted the Forum Economic Action Plan 2009 and called for the mobilization of a team of regional experts to provide capacity supplementation to National Statistical Offices and the optional contracting out of some statistical work by certain Forum Island Countries. More specifically, the Economic Ministers envisage the Forum Secretariat to liaise with and lend support to SPC and the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre, to strengthen national statistical capacity with technical and financial assistance from development partners.
2. Strategic fit

2.1 Link to Decent Work Country Programme

The project will directly support the priorities and outcomes of the following decent work country programmes:

- Fiji (2009-2012): Priority 2, Outcome 2.3 (Skills development which is relevant to labour market needs and based on improved production and analysis of labour market statistics);
- Kiribati (2009-2012): Priority 1, Outcome 1.3 (Skills development which is relevant to labour market needs and based on improved production and analysis of labour market statistics);
- Republic of Marshall Islands (2010-2012 draft): Priority 3 (Human Resources Development calls for establishment of a labour market information system for effective evidence-based labour policy development);
- Papua New Guinea (2009-2012): Priority 3, Outcome 3.3 (Improved labour market statistics are collected and used);
- Samoa (2009-2012): Priority 2, Outcome 2.3 (The capacity of production, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated labour market statistics is increased);
- Solomon Islands (2009-2012): Priority 3, Outcome 3.1 (The capacity of production, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated labour market statistics is increased);
- Tuvalu (2009-2012): Priority 2, Outcome 2.1 (Outcome 2.1: The capacity of production, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated labour market statistics is increased); and
- Vanuatu (2009-2012): Priority 2, Outcome 2.2 (Improved youth labour market statistics are collected and used) and Priority 3, Outcome 3.4 (Improved socio-economic data are collected and used for policy formulation).

The project will also support the following priorities and outcomes of regional and national development frameworks:

- Pacific Plan: a) Priority 12: Improved transparency, accountability, equity and efficiency in the management and use of resources in the Pacific; and b) Priority 12.4 Upgrade and extend country and regional statistical information systems and databases across all sectors;
- UNDAF for the Pacific Sub-region (2008-2012): a) Outcome 1: Pacific island countries develop and implement evidence-based, regional, pro-poor and National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) to address population, poverty and economic exclusion issues, stimulate equitable growth, create economic opportunities and quality employment, and promote sustainable livelihoods; and b) Outcome 1.2: National and regional statistical information systems and databases are established, strengthened (to support information systems), upgraded and harmonised focusing strongly on demographic-disaggregated data and poverty indicators;
- Kiribati Development Plan (2008-2011): Key Policy Area 5: Governance: a) Strengthen and enhance the capacity of statistical units in all Government agencies, and in the island councils; and b) Promote and strengthen use of statistics for management and planning purposes;
- Papua New Guinea Medium-Term Development Strategy (2005-2010): Guiding Principle 9: Empowering Papua New Guineans and Improving Skills: To help Papua New Guineans to help themselves through improving access to basic health and education services, information, markets and appropriate technology, with a special focus on the needs of those in the informal sector.

2.2 Link to Programme & Budget

The project will link to Outcome 1 (Employment Promotion: More women and men have access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities), Outcome 7 (Labour Migration: More migrant workers are protected and more migrant workers have access to productive employment and decent work) and Outcome 19 (Mainstreaming Decent Work: Member States place an integrated approach to decent work at the heart of their economic and social policies, supported by key UN and other multilateral agencies.)
3. Project Strategy

The immediate objective of the project will be to improve labour market information and analysis processes and systems and institutional capacity at the national and regional level, through enhanced coordination and mobilization of regional resources and expertise, as outlined in the Forum Economic Action Plan 2009. The development objective is to increase understanding of Pacific labour markets based on sound labour market statistics for the formulation of policies and programmes that can support enhanced intra-regional labour mobility, create decent employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth, and support economic growth and economic integration.

The direct beneficiaries of the project will be national government bodies that deal with any phase of the labour market information and analysis process, including: a) national statistical offices and the Ministries of Planning, Labour and Education; and b) individual and institutional users of the labour market information, such as research organizations, civil society, workers’ and employers’ organizations, and international organizations. The indirect and ultimate beneficiaries will be the male and female jobseekers of the Pacific Islands countries, including intra-regional labour migrants, who will have better access to up-to-date and quality information regarding productive and decent employment opportunities, and enterprises and employers who will benefit from improved information on labour supply and skills for recruitment and planning.

Expected key results and activities

Result 1: Promotion, development and harmonization of regional LMIA activities to enable increased regional economical integration, intra-regional labour mobility and decent employment opportunities (regional activity):

Activity 1.1: introduction of Key Pacific Labour Market Indicators
Activity 1.2: development of a standard Pacific labour force survey questionnaire
Activity 1.3: development and implementation of a Pacific Labour Market Database
Activity 1.4: production of a series of annual Pacific Labour Market Trends Reports

Result 2: Strengthening governmental capacity in collection, storage and production of socio-economic statistics, with a special focus on labour market information (national activity in all 8 countries):

Activity 2.1: introduction and adjustment of regionally developed labour force survey questionnaires and database models for national implementation
Activity 2.2: technical assistance with implementation and optimization of data collection methodology
Activity 2.3: capacity building in survey methodology and production of labour market statistics

Result 3: Strengthening tripartite capacity in labour market information and analysis (national activity in all 8 countries):

Activity 3.1: technical assistance in introduction of LMIA systems
Activity 3.2: implementation of an LMIA dissemination and usage strategy
Activity 3.3: capacity building in LMIA
Activity 3.4: introduction of national LMIA stakeholder forums

Government bodies, notably national statistical offices and the Ministries of Planning, Labour and Education, will be directly involved in key results 2 and 3, while the tripartite partners (Ministries of Planning and workers’ and employers’ organizations) will be involved specifically in activity 3.2-3.4.

The LMIA project will support long-term national ownership through a focus on capacity building in relevant national and regional bodies and the production of manuals. With regard to key result 1, this ownership is guaranteed through continuing involvement (including the period after the project) of the agencies in the maintenance of the Pacific Labour Market Database and the production of Labour Market Trends Reports.
4. Comparative advantage and partnerships

The ILO has extensive experience in building capacity in the field of labour market statistics and analysis through diverse methods. First, the ILO Department of Statistics is the leading agency in the determination of international standards on labour market statistics through hosting the International Conference for Labour Statisticians. Furthermore, it provides technical assistance to national statistics offices in the development of questionnaires and methodologies. Second, the ILO Employment Trends Unit has implemented a multitude of projects to strengthen regional and national LMIA processes. The team specifically focuses on improving capacity in labour market analysis and the production of analytical reports. Examples of similar past and current projects are the Caribbean, Namibia, Pakistan and EC-supported Viet Nam LMIA projects, and ILO technical assistance for the implementation of labour force surveys in Cambodia, Liberia and Nepal, among others. In addition, through the collection of sound labour market information, the project will support other ongoing or proposed ILO project initiatives in Pacific Islands Countries, including the Youth Employment Project and the project on intra-regional labour migration.

The project will be implemented by the ILO working in partnership with its tripartite constituents and in collaboration with regional organizations with the expertise and mandate to support such an initiative. This will include the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) Statistics and Demography Programme, the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The SPC Statistics & Demography Programme has a permanent mandate and budget to assist national constituents in developing their statistical capacity; it also has the mandate under the Pacific Plan to coordinate statistical development activities.

5. Timing

- Project start date: Q2 (June) 2010
- Activity 1.1-1.3: Completed by Q4 2010
- Activity 1.4: Annual trends report completed by Q4 2011, Q4 2012 and Q4 2013
- Activity 2.1-2.3: Commenced in eight countries after Q1 2011 and completed between Q4 2011 and Q4 2012
- Activity 3.1-3.4: Commenced in eight countries after completion of activities 2.1-2.3 and completed by Q3 2013
- Project end date: Q4 2013

6. Other information

The following are available ILO tools and resources that will support project implementation:

7. Pakistan Employment Trends Series 1-6, published by the Ministry of Labour and Employment of


9. Various tools and resources from on-going ILO technical support for strengthening national capacity in LMIA in a number of countries (Afghanistan, Cambodia, Egypt, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Viet Nam)

### Annex A: Programme and Budget 2010-11 outcomes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Standards</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Outcome 1</strong> Employment Promotion: More women and men have access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 2</strong> Skills Development: Skills development increases the employability of workers, the competitiveness of enterprises, and the inclusiveness of growth</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 3</strong> Sustainable Enterprises: Sustainable enterprises create productive and decent jobs</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 4</strong> Social Security: More people have access to better managed and more gender equitable social security benefits</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 5</strong> Working Conditions: Women and men have better and more equitable working conditions</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 6</strong> Occupational Safety and Health: Workers and enterprises benefit from improved safety and health conditions at work</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 7</strong> Labour Migration: More migrant workers are protected and more migrant workers have access to productive employment and decent work</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 8</strong> HIV/AIDS: The world of work responds effectively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 9</strong> Employers’ Organizations: Employers have strong, independent and representative organizations</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 10</strong> Workers’ Organizations: Workers have strong, independent and representative organizations</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 11</strong> Labour Administration and Labour Law: Labour administrations apply up to date labour legislation and provide effective services</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 12</strong> Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations: Tripartism and strengthened labour market governance contribute to effective social dialogue and sound industrial relations*</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 13</strong> Decent Work in Economic Sectors: A sector-specific approach to decent work is applied</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 14</strong> Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining: The right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is widely known and exercised</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 15</strong> Forced Labour: Forced labour is eliminated</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 16</strong> Child Labour: Child labour is eliminated, with priority being given to the worst forms</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 17</strong> Discrimination at Work: Discrimination in employment and occupation is eliminated</td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 18</strong> International Labour Standards: International labour standards are ratified and applied</td>
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### Policy coherence

**Outcome 19** Mainstreaming Decent Work: Member States place an integrated approach to decent work at the heart of their economic and social policies, supported by key UN and other multilateral agencies

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