

Pacific Tripartite High-Level Dialogue on Decent Work and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

23 - 26 April 2024 | Suva, Fiji

Launch of the ILO Pacific Employment and Social Monitor and discussion on the role of evidence-based policy making

25 April, 9.10 – 10.00

This version: 23 April 2024

Proposed Speakers

Moderator: Mr Jaap Van Hierden, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Kiribati

► Government, employers' and workers' representatives:

- Hon. Kessy Sawang, Minister for Labour and Employment, Government of Papua New Guinea
- Mr Jonetani Tonawai, Chief Executive Officer, Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation
- Ms Mele T. Amanaki, National Secretary for Tonga National Workers' Organization

► Technical experts:

- Mr Christian Viegelahn, Decent Work and Employment Specialist, ILO
- Mr Tite Habiyakare, Regional Labour Statistician, ILO
- Ms Maria Musudroka, Manager Statistics Collections, Statistics for Development Division, SPC

Background

Well-functioning labour markets are fundamental to achieving social justice. Lack of access to decent work, and inequalities in having such access across different demographic groups, will

undermine social justice. Understanding decent work gaps and inequalities in the labour market is therefore essential for effective policy making that aims to further social justice.

The ILO has a long history of providing global, regional and country level analysis on access to decent work and inequalities. However, a comprehensive analysis can only be based on comprehensive data on labour market and social conditions. Regularly conducted labour force surveys represent the primary data source upon which the ILO bases its reports analysing labour markets. Those surveys need to be representative of the population, but they also need to allow consistent statistics across time and across countries. For that reason, it is fundamental that the surveys are conducted in concordance with the guidelines set out by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

In the past the Pacific Island states have not featured prominently in the ILO's reports analysing labour markets. The relatively small population means that regional aggregates are not necessarily representative of the Island States. Indeed, some of the ILO member states in the Pacific Islands do not feature among the country database of the ILO modelled estimates, as that list was at some point compiled based on (a) availability of labour market statistics, and (b) size of country or economy.

However, since the last ten years the ILO support in the Pacific islands has contributed to increasing availability of labour markets data, equally thanks to the collaboration of active international partners in the Pacific region such as the Pacific Community with its Statistics for Development Division (SPC/SDD). From just only four ILO member States (including Australia and New Zealand) collecting labour market data in the Pacific, the region has seen some data collection in an additional seven ILO member States during the last ten years.

Objectives

One objective of the session is to present and launch the new ILO Pacific Employment and Social Monitor. This is the first report of the ILO that focuses on the Pacific subregion only, with particular attention given to the small island states. It is a sister product of the series of publications World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends, and the Asia Pacific Employment and Social Outlook.

The report provides the key reference for the state of labour markets in the region. It analyses labour markets in multiple dimensions which all play a key role for social justice: (1) deficiencies in access to employment, (2) deficiencies in the quality of employment, including informality, incomes and working poverty, (3) inequality both in terms of access to employment, and the type of employment, across gender and age. Knowledge of those issues is vital to design policies that can better enhance social justice. In addition, this report will highlight the data gaps that prevent a more comprehensive analysis of regional labour markets. Aside from irregular frequency of conducting surveys, those gaps also include a lack of detail in the statistics that can be derived from the LFS.

Another objective of the session is to reflect on how the existing data collection systems on labour market statistics can be enhanced, or how current national statistical systems can be improved to gather the needed labour statistics on regular basis, particularly in those islands that have never collected comprehensive labour market data.

Specifically, the session will cover some of the following topics:

- ▶ What exists in terms of labour force surveys?
- ▶ What are the challenges with conducting those surveys?

Questions for discussion

- ▶ What are the key data needs for an informed employment policy design and monitoring? What information do we need to see progress in advancing social justice?
- ▶ What is the current situation (availability) of labour market data for evidence policy making towards social justice in the Pacific islands?
- ▶ What can we in the Pacific, commit to do to improve data we need for informed labour market policy that serves our progress to social justice?

Detailed agenda (draft)

Moderator: **Mr Jaap Van Hierden**, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Kiribati

9.10 - 9.15:

Opening and introduction by moderator

9:15 - 9:25:

Presentation of key findings from ILO Pacific Employment and Social Monitor: What is the current state of labour markets in the Pacific?

- **Mr Christian Viegelahn**, Decent Work and Employment Specialist, ILO

9:25 – 9:30:

Discussant: Data needs and the importance of labour market data for employment policy design and monitoring

- **Hon. Kessy Sawang**, Minister for Labour and Employment, Government of Papua New Guinea

9:30 – 9:35:

Discussant: Data availability for evidence-based policy making on labour markets in the Pacific islands

- **Ms Maria Musudroka**, Manager Statistics Collections, Statistics for Development Division, SPC

9:35 – 9:45:

Plenary discussion on countries' commitments on regular labour market data for evidence-based policy making

9.45 – 9.50:

Comments:

- **Ms Mele T. Amanaki**, National Secretary for Tonga National Workers' Organization
- **Mr Jonetani Tonawai**, Chief Executive Officer, Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation

9:50 – 9:55:

Key take aways: Future plans in improving the collection and use of labour market data for evidence-policy making

- **Mr Tite Habiyakare**, Regional Labour Statistician, ILO

9:55 – 10:00:

Closing by moderator