

DECENT WORK

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Port Vila Statement on Decent Work

incorporating the **Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work**



ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries



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Preface by the Regional Director

In February 2010, as the world was slowly recovering from one the worst financial and jobs crises in living memory, Government, Employers' and Workers' delegates from the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Pacific Island member States, came together in Vanuatu for a truly historic conference – the “Tripartite High Level Meeting on ‘Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific’”

On the 9th of February, Ministers of Labour and their Social Partners unanimously adopted the Port Vila Statement on Decent Work (Port Vila Statement). They also incorporated the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work (Pacific Action Plan). Three days later, on the 12th of February the Port Vila Statement and Pacific Action Plan were further endorsed by Pacific governments and development partners more broadly, in the Vanuatu Outcome Statement of the ‘Pacific Conference on the Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis’ also held in Port Vila.

The adoption of the Port Vila Statement and Pacific Action Plan¹ reflects a commitment by tripartite constituents to support a jobs-led recovery from the global economic crisis, by promoting Decent Work in the Pacific region. In effect, the Pacific Action Plan provides for the application of the Global Jobs Pact to respond to specific situations found in the Pacific. The Global Jobs Pact was adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2009. It offers a series of policy responses to get people working again, mitigate the effects of unemployment and promote sustainable economic growth that benefits the majority of society. The Port Vila Statement and Pacific Action Plan are similarly directed to the achievement of these objectives, and the latter also presents an opportunity for Pacific member States to address serious challenges presented by climate change, through mitigation and adaptation programmes generated to focus on ‘Green Jobs.’

In late 2005, Pacific leaders adopted a regional framework, The Pacific Plan, with the aims of enhancing economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security in the Pacific through regional initiatives. In August 2009 at a Pacific Island Forum, Pacific leaders agreed to the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific and the Recommendations for Progressing the Pacific Plan, with the aims of improving economic opportunities and employment generation in the region. The Port Vila Statement and Pacific Action Plan have been developed in the context of these existing regional plans and arrangements. The ILO will therefore work closely with regional organizations to ensure policy coherence and collaboration in the Pacific.

¹Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2007): The Pacific Plan, For Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration. First published October 2005, revised October 2007.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the ILO's tripartite constituents in the Pacific for their active engagement in the Port Vila Tripartite High Level Meeting and for their work in developing and adopting the Port Vila Statement and Pacific Action Plan. I would also like to thank all my ILO colleagues and, in particular, Trevor Riordan and the team in the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries, for their hard work and dedication in organizing this very successful meeting. The ILO looks forward to working with tripartite constituents and other partners to fully implement the Pacific Action Plan and to the realisation of the outcomes which it sets out.

Sachiko Yamamoto
Regional Director
Asia Pacific Region

Port Vila Statement on Decent Work

1. The Tripartite High Level Meeting on ‘Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific’ (THLM) was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 8 to 9 February 2010.
2. The THLM was attended by tripartite constituent delegates, including Labour Ministers, Senior Labour Ministry officials, Presidents and National Secretaries of Workers’ organizations and senior representatives of Employers’ organizations, from Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Development partners also attended the THLM as observers, including representatives from the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the United Nations, the European Union, AusAID, Japan, NZAID, United States of America and other donor countries, foreign missions and Non-Government Organisations. Also in attendance were several Global Union Federations and the ITUC-AP.
3. The objectives of the THLM were to identify challenges and opportunities for full implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) in International Labour Organisation (ILO) Pacific member States, particularly in light of the Global Economic Crisis and climate change; agree on the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work; and provide inputs to the forthcoming Pacific Conference on ‘The Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis’ and the ILO’s 15th Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting.
4. We thank the Government of Vanuatu for hosting the THLM. The Government of Vanuatu’s generosity, hospitality and efficient organization have contributed to the success of this meeting.

5. We recall that in November 2007 the ILO ‘Tripartite Technical Meeting on Decent Work: Pacific Island Countries’ (2007 meeting) agreed to “pursue a bottom-up approach where national policies and priorities were defined in-country through the development of DWCPs and then put together into a regional framework for the Pacific Island member States.” The 2007 meeting further acknowledged the need for a subsequent “high-level Pacific meeting to gain political commitment and strengthen partnerships for the implementation of the DWCPs and the sub-regional decent work strategy”.
6. We have made significant progress in the development of the Decent Work agenda through the development of DWCPs in eight Pacific member States with three more being finalised. We acknowledge and seek to build on the considerable history of regional cooperation in the Pacific, demonstrated most clearly by the Pacific Island Forum Leaders’ adoption in 2005 of ‘The Pacific Plan’ regional framework, with its aims of ‘enhancing economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security in the Pacific through regional initiatives’ and consider that these DWCPs will contribute to the achievement of sustainable and inclusive development in the region.
7. We recognise the critical need to promote the importance of the Decent Work Agenda in responding to the Global Economic Crisis in the Pacific and seeking to build resilience to similar crises in the future. To this end, we affirm our commitment to the application of the Global Jobs Pact, agreed to by tripartite constituents at the 2009 International Labour Conference, to the Pacific region. We furthermore request that favourable consideration be given to the inclusion of the Pacific region as a priority in the pilot programme of support to the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact.
8. We are convinced that the application of this Statement will not only progress Decent Work in the Pacific but will also contribute to the realization of the goals and objectives set out in:
 - a. the Pacific Plan;
 - b. the Millennium Development Goals; and
 - c. the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Pacific region.
9. We agree to present this Statement to the Pacific Conference on ‘The Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis’ in February 2010 and at the ILO’s 15th Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting in October 2010.

10. We are encouraged by the significant achievement in successfully formulating DWCPs for all eight Pacific Member States in aspiration to strengthen regional cooperation and integration in our collective response to challenges encountered by our people, culture and environment.
11. We acknowledge, however, the challenges to the full implementation of DWCPs including:
 - a. a lack of financial resources, due in part to the impact of the Global Economic Crisis on government revenue, remittances, and ODA;
 - b. capacity constraints to carry out necessary programmes;
 - c. weak tripartite institutions and limited organisational capacity within the social partners; and
 - d. the impact of climate change and climate variability on infrastructure, agriculture and living conditions in vulnerable Pacific islands.
12. We commit to working with the ILO to act nationally and regionally to address these challenges to full DWCP implementation.
13. The Pacific Island Ministers and the social partners commit themselves to ensuring the incorporation of their DWCP into their National Development Plan, including poverty reduction strategies.
14. We further assert our commitment to the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and further development of the DWCPs and recall that effective social dialogue will be critical to this process.
15. To this end we endorse the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work as a regional framework to support the realisation of national DWCP outcomes and priorities. Further that, the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work can be extended to non- ILO members as appropriate and if agreed by those States.
16. We stress that the full and successful implementation of the DWCPs and the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work require our full political commitment to mobilize resources as a national priority.
17. Pacific Island Ministers and social partners further call on the ILO and development partners to support the full implementation of DWCPs and the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work, through technical assistance and mobilization of resources.

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18. We affirm our ultimate goal of achievement of all DWCP outcomes at a national level and where synergies in implementing priorities exist across the Pacific we commit ourselves to supporting activities at a regional level.

The Port Vila Statement on Decent Work was adopted by the tripartite constituents in Port Vila, Vanuatu on this ninth day of February in the year two thousand and ten.



Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work

Introduction

In October 2005, Pacific leaders adopted a regional framework, “The Pacific Plan”, with the aims of enhancing economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security in the Pacific through regional initiatives. In 2006 the 14th Asian Regional Meeting adopted the concept of the ‘Asian Decent Work Decade.’ Subsequently, in November 2007 the ‘Tripartite Technical Meeting on Decent Work: Pacific Island Countries’ (2007 meeting) reviewed progress with regards to the Decent Work agenda in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). Consequently, Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) were formulated for all Pacific Island member States in alignment with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Pacific and National Development Plans. Furthermore, the 2007 meeting called upon the International Labour Organization (ILO) to develop a Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work. This document reflects progress so far and spells out the common priorities for action.

This document does not supercede or replace country specific DWCPs. Rather it addresses the need to examine and resource common issues in a coordinated manner, as well as providing a vehicle for addressing broader issues arising from the GJP, Pacific Plan alongside those contained in DWCPs. The PAP-DW therefore will assist in the effective and efficient mobilizing of resources and assistance to deliver outcomes as appropriate in each country.

At the August 2009 Pacific Island Forum meeting, PICs agreed to the Cairns Compact On Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific and the Recommendations for Progressing the Pacific Plan, with the aims of improving economic opportunities and employment generation in the region. Tripartite agreement on the Pacific Action Plan across ILO PIC member states will further this tradition of Pacific regional cooperation and will contribute to realisation of the objective of PICs, expressed most recently in Cairns, of economic improvement and the creation of decent jobs. Further, at the International Labour Conference in 2009 ILO members adopted the Global Jobs Pact (GJP) as a response to the Global Financial and Economic Crisis. Accordingly, ILO member States are encouraged to give effect to the GJP through national policy and programmes.

The development of a regional framework on Decent Work, however, presents a further opportunity for ILO PIC member States to simultaneously give effect to the GJP and Decent Work priorities at a regional level. The Pacific Action Plan also presents an opportunity for PICs to address challenges presented by critical climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes through the generation of Green Jobs.

An examination of Pacific DWCPs has identified a number of common priorities which in turn are linked to the four pillars of Decent Work. These can be grouped as follows:

1. Improvement of labour market governance;
2. Employment and growth;
3. Expanded scope of social protection; and
4. Capacity building of tripartite partners.

Gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the entire Decent Work agenda including DWCPs and this Pacific Action Plan.

¹ Tripartite Technical Meeting on Decent Work: Pacific Island Countries, Summary Outcomes of the Meeting http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/events/lang--en/docName--WCMS_098981/index.htm, Fiji: 26-28 November 2007.

² Decent Work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives – their aspirations for opportunity and income; rights, voice and recognition; family stability and personal development; and fairness and gender equality. Ultimately these various dimensions of Decent Work underpin peace in communities and society. Decent Work reflects the concerns of governments, workers and employers, who together provide the ILO with its unique tripartite identity.

³ Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (2009): Forum Communiqué, Fortieth Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns, Australia, 5-6 August 2009. See in particular Annex B: Cairns Compact On Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific; Annex C: Recommendations for Progressing the Pacific Plans.

1. Labour market governance and labour law reform

Decent work deficit

A review, revision, or improved implementation of labour legislation and/or improved implementation of International Labour Standards (ILS) is included as a priority in all Pacific DWCPs. Most PICs have only basic labour legislation and the conformity of many of these laws with ILS remains largely unexplored. Six Pacific member States sought technical assistance to support their labour law reform process, as a priority. As a number of PICs are new members of the ILO they are expected to catch up with ratifications of ILS and to consider such ratifications in close consultation with employers and workers.

Outcomes to be realized by 2015

- All PICs have continued progress on ratification of all eight Core Conventions and at least two of the four Governance Conventions;
- All PICs have national laws and practices that are aligned with Core and Governance Conventions;
- All PICs have ratified the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC) and at least 4 PICs have ratified Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised) 2003 (C.185);
- All PICs are encouraged to ratify the Work in Fishing Convention 2007 (C.188); and
- Labour administrations with input from the social partners submit comprehensive and timely reports on the application of ratified Conventions.

Outputs

The following activities are proposed to contribute to the realisation of national DWCP labour market governance priorities:

- Gap analyses, with respect to legislation, policy and practice, on Core and Governance Conventions, as well as the MLC and C.185, in each non-ratifying PIC member State will be undertaken;
- Workshops will be convened on Core and Governance Conventions as well as the MLC and C.185, to promote ratification;
- Technical assistance will be provided to review and amend labour laws consistent with Core, Governance and ratified ILS as well as the MLC and C.185;
- A tripartite knowledge sharing network and platform on good labour market governance established.

2: Employment and growth

Decent work deficit

Across the Pacific region unemployment and underemployment are major challenges, which have been further exacerbated by the Global Financial and Economic Crisis. Currently in the Pacific region the bulk of the population is engaged in industries and sectors where decent work deficits are high. Thus there is a need to improve both the quality and quantity of existing employment in industries through growth and increased job potential.

Outcomes to be realized by 2015

- All PICs have designed and implemented national employment plans with a special emphasis on industries with growth and sustainable job creation potential;
- Tripartite industry development groups in priority industries are established in the region and include major employers, workers' representatives across the supply chains, and governments;
- An analysis of the enabling environments for sustainable enterprises in accordance with the International Labour Conference Conclusions on Sustainable Enterprises, 2007 is undertaken;
- A data collection instrument to produce labour market information and a centralised database developed, in conjunction with other regional institutions, and made available to labour administrations;
- Regional competency standards for technical and vocational training institutions are developed; and
- All migrant workers from PICs receive comprehensive pre-departure training/orientation and a regional database on migration flows across PICs is established.

Outputs

- Analysis of opportunities and constraints for sustainable job creation in key selected industries;
- Tripartite dialogue and participation in the design and implementation of industry focused employment policies and programmes;
- Improved availability of employment and career guidance services for disadvantaged job seekers including youth and the disabled;
- Provision of skills training, business training and improved microfinance opportunities for self employment;
- Reformed training systems through the stronger involvement of social partners, increased market orientation and the development of competency standards and where relevant harmonisation of those standards;

- Awareness raising for tripartite constituents and demonstration projects on opportunities of and policies for green jobs under the climate change response umbrella;
- Strengthening PIC governmental capacity in the collection, storage and production of socioeconomic statistics, with a specific focus on labour market information;
- Strengthening tripartite constituent capacity in LMIA collection, interpretation and analysis;
- Undertaking a cross-country comparison of labour migration policy and legislation in sending and receiving countries;
- Providing technical assistance to develop a regional training program to ensure the quality of; recruitment, pre-departure orientation, information, return, re-integration and re-employment services, including the role of social partners; and
- Greater cooperation on policies, practices and areas of joint action arising from dialogue between the tripartite constituents and the relevant regional organizations working in the Pacific.

3: Expanded scope of social protection

Decent work deficit

Recent research has indicated that traditional welfare structures and formal social protection systems in most PICs do not adequately meet the needs of all Pacific islanders. The gradual development of an inclusive social floor, while it may differ from country to country, is considered indispensable for sustainable economic and social development in the Pacific region.

Another area requiring attention in the Pacific region concerns working conditions and the welfare of maritime workers and port workers. Due to the involvement of a considerable number of workers in foreign flag ships and the fishing industry, all PICs are committed to improving safety and promoting better working conditions and the welfare of workers in the maritime industry.

Outcomes to be realized by 2015

- Inclusive strategies for increasing the level and scope of social protection, such as in the areas of health insurance, workers' compensation, pensions and in the informal economy, as well as the development of a social floor are incorporated into National Development Plans; and
- National HIV/AIDS industry and workplace policies consistent with ILO instruments are developed and implemented in all PIC member States.

Outputs

- Tripartite workshops on social protection and the social floor are convened;
- Providing “Train the Trainer” workshops in PICs to build the capacity of tripartite constituents to assist labour administrators, union members and employers to develop industry and workplace HIV/AIDS policies; and
- ILO programmes to promote occupational health and safety in PICs are implemented.

4: Capacity Building of tripartite constituents

Decent work deficit

The DWCPs of all Pacific member States include capacity building of the tripartite constituents as a priority. While it is agreed that capacity building is necessary across the Pacific region, it is simultaneously clear that current capacity levels of tripartite constituents vary markedly between PIC member States. Capacity building of tripartite constituents and strengthening of tripartite institutions is critical to facilitate the implementation of all outcomes and outputs under this Pacific Action Plan and Pacific DWCPs. Capacity building of the workers’ and employers’ constituents is effected through the Bureaux for workers and employers activities. In particular, the capacity of labour administrations, social partners and tripartite institutions is too weak in many PICs to facilitate active tripartite contribution to necessary law reform processes. Further, social partners commonly expressed the need for their staff to upgrade their skills in organising, leading and managing their organizations to provide better services to their members and to strengthen their capacity as development partners.

Outcomes to be realized by 2015

- A tripartite Decent Work Steering Committee is established in each PIC and these Committees are integrated within a Pacific network to support each other’s effective operation;
- The social partners are strengthened in the provision of meaningful services to their members and to extend the representation of their organizations;
- The number of registered collective agreements across the region increases by 20% on 2010 levels; and
- Tripartite constituents consistently and effectively contribute to law reform processes, policy development and ILS reports.

Outputs

- Capacity assessments will be undertaken and training plans and institutional strengthening programmes will be developed, for tripartite constituents and institutions in each PIC;
- In accordance with training plans, capacity building workshops, in-country training and distance learning tailored to the Pacific situation, will be carried out;
- A regional knowledge sharing platform on tripartite structures, good practices of social dialogue, collective bargaining and dispute settlement will be established; and
- Workshops for Decent Work Steering Committee members will be convened to establish a knowledge sharing and peer support network.



ILO publications & tools

Pacific labour market scenarios: economic crisis, climate change & decent work

Eight ILO Member States are located in the Pacific region. Due to their geographic isolation, small populations and domestic markets, and vulnerability to external shocks, these countries face a number of socio-economic challenges. Against this context, as well as the Global Financial and Economic Crisis (GFEC) and climate change, this report examines possible labour market scenarios and discusses relevant policy responses.

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/meeting-document/wcms_120543.pdf

Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact

Faced with the prospect of a prolonged global increase in unemployment, poverty and inequality and continued distress for enterprises, in June 2009 the International Labour Conference, with the participation of government, employers' and workers' delegates from the ILO's member States, unanimously adopted a "Global Jobs Pact"

http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Officialmeetings/ilc/ILCSessions/98thSession/texts/lang--en/docName--WCMS_115076/index.htm

ILO Decent Work Country Programmes - A GuideBook [Version 2]

Bringing Focus to ILO Country-level Contributions: A Guidebook for Developing and Implementing Decent Work Country Programmes

<http://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/program/download/dwcpv2.pdf>

The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration

Non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration - aims to assist governments, social partners and stakeholders in their efforts to regulate labour migration and protect migrant workers. It provides a comprehensive set of rights-based guidelines and principles so as a global compilation of good practices on labour migration developed by governments and social partners.

http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/multilat_fw_k_en.pdf

Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)

marks the most important renewal of the Organization since adoption of the historic "Declaration of Philadelphia" in 1944. In addition, it marks a significant step forward in respecting, promoting and realizing the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted by the ILO in 1998.

http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/download/dg_announce_en.pdf

Declaration Overview

An overview of the ILO declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_095898.pdf

