



Pacific Growth and Employment Project



Australian Government



International
Labour
Organization

A joint initiative of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Council of Trade Unions
with the support of the Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement (2010-2015)



The Pacific Growth and Employment Project

Unemployment and underemployment, particularly for young people, are great challenges in the Pacific. The Pacific Growth and Employment Project (the Project) is a two year programme that is intended to address these challenges by improving opportunities for sustainable and productive employment growth.

It seeks to draw on the experience of Australian businesses with interests in Pacific island countries to develop strategies that prepare the indigenous youth for employment and create opportunities for

the indigenous workforce. The Project will also work with the peak and sectoral representatives of business, workers and government in the target countries to ensure they are equipped to implement and maintain the development strategies.

In the first stage of the Project, pilot programmes will be conducted in the transport sector in Papua New Guinea, and the tourism sector in Vanuatu, for report by 30 June 2013, after which other countries and industries will be considered.

Joint Statement by Senator the Hon Bob Carr and the Hon Bill Shorten MP



Senator the Hon Bob Carr



The Hon Bill Shorten

Australia has an interest in the stability and prosperity of Pacific island countries and has a strong track record of providing support in the region.

The Australian Government understands that a growing private sector creates jobs which lift people and communities out of poverty. Unemployment and underemployment are key challenges in the Pacific. For these reasons, the Australian Government is very pleased to support the Pacific Growth and Employment Project.

The Project is funded under a Partnership Agreement between the Australian Government and the International Labour Organization (ILO), which supports work and sustainable employment initiatives in Asia and the Pacific.

The Project will bring industry leaders, union and employer organisations together to help grow employment. The first phase of the Project will deliver good jobs for local people in transport in Papua New Guinea and tourism in Vanuatu.

The Australian Government acknowledges the collaboration of the Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu governments with Australian and Pacific Island partners in implementing the Project. These linkages are essential to assisting the region's private sector to drive economic growth and employment.



Peter Anderson

ACCI is very pleased and proud to have a role in this initiative. We believe that Australian industry not only has a responsibility in the region, but is also very well placed to guide the governments and institutions in the preparation of the islands' youth for work, and the growth of the employment opportunities.

Many Australian businesses have commercial interests in the Pacific and are engaged regionally to develop the markets. They recognise that to be sustainable the growth must benefit the local businesses and workforce, and must prepare the new entrants to the workforce. To this end, ACCI will invite those businesses to participate in the development of action plans that will achieve this outcome. It will do this in concert with the islands' governments, business and workers, ensuring the alignment of the priorities of all the interest groups, and the wellbeing of the people in the islands.

Our work will also involve the development of the skills and resources of the islands' Chambers of Commerce, Employers Federations and the Unions and the Government authorities as the essential interface between the agreed strategies and the activities on the ground. We believe a strong Chamber of Commerce and Employer Federation movement can help to ensure the essential link between the requirements of business, and the government's policies for economic and labour market development.

We look forward to reporting back to you the positive contribution of this project to the region.



Ged Kearney

The ACTU has always recognised the central role that fair and sustainable employment has in people's lives and that it is crucial to a cohesive and more equal society.

Unfortunately in many Pacific island countries unemployment, particularly among the youth, is an entrenched problem which in many cases leads to poverty, social unrest and disengagement with community.

The Pacific Growth and Employment Project aim is to grow employment in transport and tourism through engagement and co-operation with industry leaders, governments and industrial bodies. The project will develop industry led action plans that will enhance economic growth and deliver skill development and employment opportunities for youth, and sustainable and decent jobs for local workers.

The ACTU is pleased to partner with ACCI and the ILO in this important project and looks forward to working with Pacific island communities to improve and grow employment.

The Project

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has contracted the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) to manage the Project. The Project will involve industry leaders, union and government representatives in the design and implementation of concrete 'industry-led action plans' for employment growth. Directly tapping into major businesses and the practical experience and perspective of the networks in the region could generate new and realistic insights into how to improve employment outcomes.

The expected outcomes of the project include:

- Increased opportunities for sustainable and productive employment;
- Harmonisation of skills across the Pacific and Australian economies in the transport and tourism sectors;
- Demonstration of the value of industry led action plans to grow employment;
- Strengthened capacity of the representative organisations of employers and workers

The Context

The Project is funded by the Australian Government with the ILO under the Australian Government – ILO Partnership Agreement (2010–2015). The Agreement is one of ways Australia works with the ILO to support the promotion of ILO international labour standards and the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia is committed to delivering an effective aid program which will increase to 0.5 per cent of GNI by 2016-2017.

The Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement funds activities to promote sustainable employment and decent work in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2010-2012 the Australian Government provided AUD\$15 million in funding to support activities including the Better Work programme, the Labour Governance and Migration in the Pacific programme and the Pacific Growth and Employment Project. The Australian Government intends to provide funding to the ILO through the Partnership Agreement through to 2015.

In keeping with the ILO's tripartite structure, the Partnership Agreement was developed in consultation with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Strategy

The immediate objectives of the Project are expected to be achieved by mobilising ACCI and ACTU knowledge and expertise, and linking this capacity with those of governments and the major sectoral partners in tourism and transport in Pacific island countries. Through this approach, the Project will identify and connect growth and employment in the Pacific. The strategy is based on the following elements:

Objective 1

- a. Identifying companies within the tourism and transport industries that are planning to expand and employ Pacific island workers in two countries. Further countries may be involved in subsequent phases of the program.
- b. Work with key employers, governments, chambers of commerce and trade unions and relevant civil society organisations in the Pacific to identify specific opportunities for employment growth; identify barriers to increased employment, and recommend strategies to overcome these.

Objective 2

- c. Establish and support industry taskforces, with equitable representation of men, women and people with disabilities, to realise the opportunities identified and generate employment opportunities.
- d. Implementations recommended in the industry action plans to the extent possible within the timeframe and budget of the project, noting that many elements of the industry action plans are likely to recommend long term solutions requiring political and social change to current employment challenges.

Objective 3

- e. Strengthen the capacity of the chambers of commerce and trade unions and links between two Pacific island countries and Australian colleagues to build capacity to promote industry development and decent work outcomes, via participation in workshops and targeted capacity building support where necessary.

Objective 4

- f. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to underpin the development of evidence concerning the value of industry led action plans for growth in the Pacific context
- g. Evaluate the outcomes of the project after eighteen months, with a view to informing further development and expansion, subject to available funding.

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