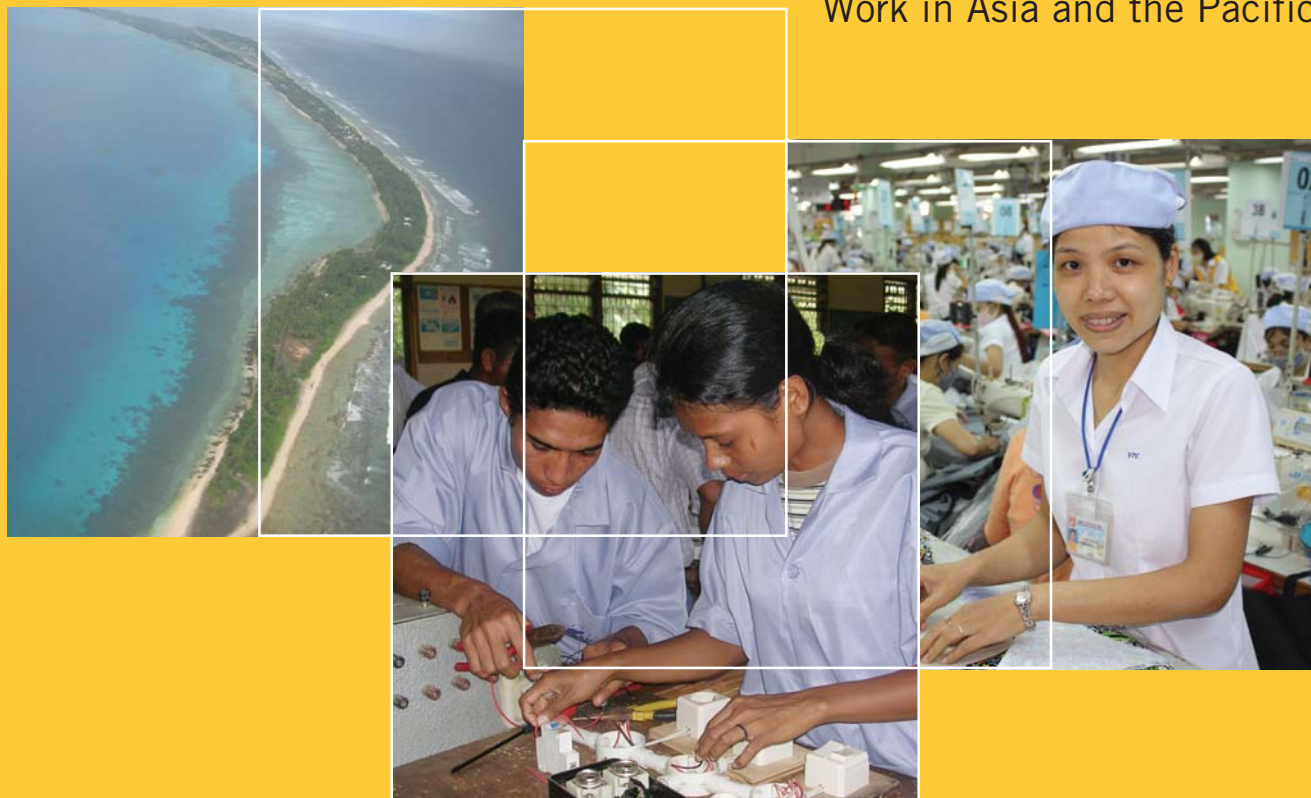


# Australia and the ILO

Partnerships to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through Decent Work in Asia and the Pacific



Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

ASIAN 2006  
DECENT WORK  
DECADE 2015

Australia and the ILO in Asia and the Pacific



## AUSTRALIA AND THE ILO: A PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Australian Government supports the ILO's mandate and objectives in promoting social justice and decent work for all people in Asia, the Pacific and the rest of the world.

In April 2010, the ILO and Australia, a founding member State, entered into an historic five-year Partnership Agreement. Through the Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement (2010-2015), the Australian Government and the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific are working together to help achieve the region's Decent Work Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) also supports a number of other ILO projects in Asia and the Pacific. While these are not implemented within the framework of the Partnership Agreement, they pursue the same fundamental goals.

Australia has demonstrated its commitment to deliver an effective aid program in Asia and the Pacific. As part of this commitment, the Australian Government is increasing its official development assistance contributions to 0.5 per cent of GNI by 2015-2016.



## AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT - ILO PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement (2010 - 2015) aims to reduce poverty by promoting environmentally sustainable employment and decent work opportunities for women and men across the Asia-Pacific region while promoting social dialogue between government, worker and employer organisations.

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

During the first two years of the Partnership Agreement, Australia has supported project work in 13 countries of Asia and the Pacific, with - AUD\$15 million in funding, for initiatives in five thematic areas:



- Better Work programme - a joint initiative of the ILO and International Finance Corporation (IFC - of the World Bank Group)
- Labour Governance and Migration in the Pacific
- Green Jobs in Asia
- Youth Employment Promotion programme
- Pacific Growth and Employment Plan

## WORKING AS PARTNERS WITH ILO CONSTITUENTS

Through the Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement (2010 - 2015), and other ILO projects supported by AusAID, Australia and the ILO are working to support the Decent Work Country Programmes and MDG's of ILO constituents in a total of 18 countries of Asia and the Pacific:

**Bangladesh** (Green Jobs in Asia, Better Work) #

**Cambodia** (Better Factories, TRIANGLE) ^

**Fiji** (Pacific Growth and Employment Plan)

**Indonesia** (Better Work, Green Jobs in Asia)

**Kiribati** (Labour Governance and Migration)

**Lao PDR** (TRIANGLE)

**Malaysia** (TRIANGLE)

**Nepal** (Green Jobs in Asia)

**Papua New Guinea** (Labour Governance and Migration, Pacific Growth and Employment Plan)

**Philippines** (Green Jobs in Asia)

**Samoa** (Labour Governance and Migration, Pacific Growth and Employment Plan)

**Solomon Islands** (Pacific Growth and Employment Plan)

**Sri Lanka** (Green Jobs in Asia, LEED) \*

**Thailand** (TRIANGLE)

**Timor-Leste** (Youth Employment Promotion Programme, TIM Works)

**Tuvalu** (Labour Governance and Migration)

**Vanuatu** (Labour Governance and Migration, Pacific Growth and Employment Plan)

**Viet Nam** (Better Work, TRIANGLE)



^ TRIANGLE: Tripartite Action to Protect Migrants Within and From the Greater Mekong Sub-region Project

\* LEED: Local Empowerment Through Economic Development Project

# Better Work Bangladesh TBC

## THE BETTER WORK PROGRAMME

Labour standards in apparel factories in Asia and the Pacific have come under increasing scrutiny in recent years by the ILO and the international community. Consumers and big name brands are demanding that apparel be produced in conditions of freedom, equity, human security and with respect for the dignity of the workers. The Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement has therefore identified the Better Work programme as a major beneficiary of its resources.

The global Better Work programme was launched in 2006 to improve compliance with labour standards and competitiveness in global supply chains. It is a joint initiative of the ILO and International Finance Corporation (IFC - of the World Bank Group). In Asia and the Pacific the programme is active in Cambodia ('Better Factories'), Indonesia and Viet Nam. Better Work is also conducting scoping initiatives for a possible Better Work programme in Bangladesh.

The Better Work programme aims to improve and maintain both working conditions and productivity in the apparel sector by helping factories meet national and international labour standards. Hundreds of factories have now signed up to the programme, as have buyers for some of the biggest names - including Adidas, GAP, H&M, Nike, Target and Wal-Mart.

Hundreds of thousands of factory workers, mainly women, have benefited from Better Work's factory assessments and monitoring of standards in the workplace. Factory operators find the standardised assessment/monitoring systems convenient as they avoid multiple and often redundant factory assessments from various buyers. Promotion of social dialogue is central to the ILO's mandate. Factory workers and employers form joint-committees to deal with problems and complaints as they arise.

Better Work aims to become self-supporting. It presently offers its initial and follow-up factory assessment reports to buyers for a fee.

Website:

<http://www.betterwork.org/>



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## GREEN JOBS IN ASIA

In order to meet targets for carbon emissions, countries in Asia and the Pacific will need to re-tool some industries and re-train workers to make their outputs more environmentally sustainable. In coordination with the ILO's global Green Jobs initiative, the Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement has supported the implementation of the Green Jobs in Asia project.

Operational in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines and Sri Lanka, the project seeks to deepen ILO constituents' understanding and commitments for the promotion of gender sensitive opportunities for green jobs that are both decent work and environmentally friendly.

National tripartite consultations have been held and regional training for trade unions has been conducted regarding the impact and benefits of the move toward green jobs. Capacity building and the provision of reliable data sets are critical to ensuring the commitment and buy-in of constituents hence the project aims to help constituents identify viable sectors for transition. A survey of 100 companies in Sri Lanka has already been carried out to identify opportunities and challenges to employers regarding the promotion of green jobs. Demonstration projects have also been earmarked to promote the viability of green jobs in sustainable tourism, solid waste management, construction and renewable energy.

By the end of the project, policy makers, employer and worker organisations are expected to be actively engaged in their economies' transitions to decent, sustainable greener jobs.



## LABOUR GOVERNANCE AND MIGRATION

Improving labour market governance requires a fair legal framework that extends the full protection of fundamental human rights. In some Pacific Island countries, labour laws are out-dated and in need of reforms to meet modern-day standards.

The Australian Government - ILO Partnership Agreement places a great emphasis on supporting technical assistance to Pacific Island nations to help create sustainable, decent work opportunities. The labour governance and migration project responds to priorities identified in the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work, which was agreed by the ILO's constituents in February 2010 in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The project is operational in five countries: Kiribati, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Tuvalu.

The project focuses on labour law reform to give effect to ratified ILO conventions; building governments' capacity to ratify, implement and report on the ILO's core and governance conventions; and building the capacity of governments, unions and employers to engage in effective participatory law making.

Remittances from labour migration are an important source of income for many families and communities and are significant factors in Pacific economic growth. The migration component of the project focuses on workers recruited under Australia's Pacific Seasonal Workers Pilot Scheme and New Zealand's Recognized Seasonal Employer Scheme. Building the capacity of governments, unions, businesses and local communities to provide returned migrant workers with effective reintegration services based on their identified needs is a priority. Good practices relating to pre-departure services are also to be identified and promoted.





## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION PROGRAMME

Youth unemployment and under-employment is a major concern across Asia and the Pacific. The Youth Employment Promotion Programme (YEPP), assisted by both the Partnership Agreement and AusAID, is supporting the initiatives of the Government of Timor-Leste to enhance skills training for young people and to expand their employment opportunities as they enter the labour force.

The Programme was designed to assist the Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) in the preparation and implementation of tools and programmes in the areas of training, entrepreneurship development and labour intensive-works to facilitate the productive access of young people to the labour market.

The Programme carries out its work in all 13 Districts of Timor-Leste. Through skills training and entrepreneurial counselling, by the end of the current project, over 90,000 young people of working age will have directly benefitted from this initiative.

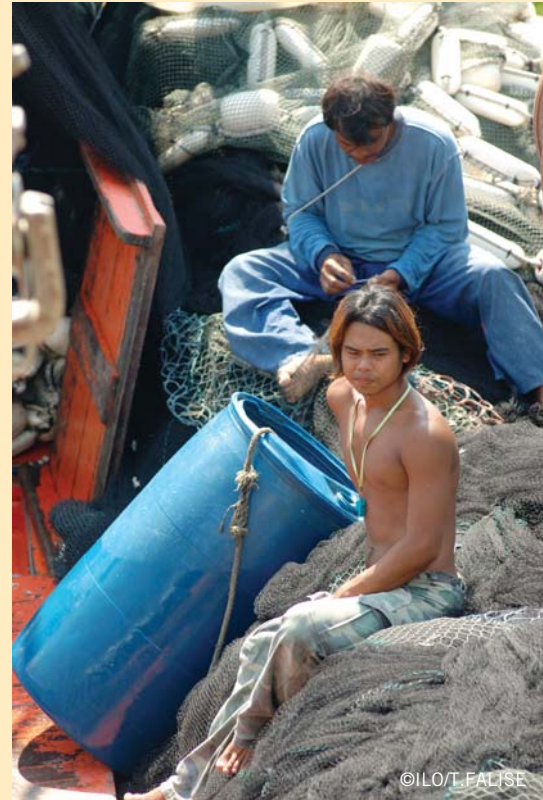


## TRIPARTITE ACTION TO PROTECT MIGRANTS WITHIN AND FROM THE GREATER MEKONG SUB-REGION (TRIANGLE PROJECT)

The ILO is one of the leading multilateral organisations in Asia and the Pacific in the field of protection of migrant workers and their prevention from human trafficking. The regional AusAID-supported TRIANGLE project aims to strengthen the formulation and implementation of recruitment and labour protection policies and practices. It aims to stop migrant workers from being exploited and trafficked in source and in destination countries. The project is operational in five countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam, with activities in China to follow. In each of the countries, governments and social partners are engaged in project objectives.

The TRIANGLE project is on course to reach its targets under the policy, capacity building and outreach objectives. In several countries, the project is responding to specific requests related to strengthening policy and legislation. Assistance in the development of tools and the delivery of training has also been requested by ministries of labour, trade unions, employers' organisations, recruitment agencies and various civil society organisations. This creates a shared understanding about the economic and social value of migrant workers and how to better protect them.

Agreements are in place with government and non-government partners to deliver direct assistance to migrants and potential migrants. Information, counselling and legal assistance is being provided to migrants in Thailand and Malaysia. Information on safe and legal migration is being disseminated through Migrant Worker Resource Centres, as well as outreach activities, radio programmes and film. A multi-media campaign was launched in mid-2011 to promote a positive image of migrant workers in Thailand - a major destination country for migrant workers.



## INVESTMENT BUDGET EXECUTION SUPPORT FOR RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION (TIM WORKS)

TIM Works supports the initiatives of the Government of Timor-Leste to enhance employment opportunities in rural road infrastructure investments.

The project, supported by AusAID, assists the Government's efforts to expand employment generation, poverty reduction, economic growth and peace building through the rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads using cost effective labour-based (equipment supported) work methods.

As of September 2011, TIM Works has rehabilitated almost 300 km of rural roads and maintained over 2,000km of roads. This has generated more than 1.3 million work days for almost 32,000 beneficiaries - around half of whom are youth and 30% women. It also builds capacity within government and the private sector to plan and implement such work.



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More than 150 community contracts have been issued for routine maintenance and 19 local companies trained in road rehabilitation. The work has resulted in a cash injection of nearly three million (USD) into rural communities.

## LOCAL EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LEED PROJECT)

The LEED Project, funded by AusAID, focuses on empowering people at the grass roots level with sustainable employment and livelihoods.

The project provides support to local enterprises and growth sectors, establishes market linkages with the private sector and cooperatives in particular. It also provides linkages to essential banking and financial services and facilitates job placements.

These interventions are being implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations, and are targeted at conflict-affected communities in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. Special attention is given to the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as female headed households, people with disabilities and unemployed youth.

For purposes of capacity building and coordination, an emphasis is placed on supporting employers. Partnerships with employers' organisations and the local Chambers of Commerce have been established.

In addition, the project advocates capacity building, value chain analysis, women's empowerment and local economic development to strengthen locally-driven, participatory development processes.



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A better world starts here.