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Special coverage

ILO Disaster Preparedness and Response: Cyclone PAM causes devastating impact on employment and livelihoods (see liftout)

Photo by UNICEF / Gaelle Sevenier

Message from Mr. David Lamotte Director ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries

Dear friends,

In recent months, much has happened in the Pacific Islands Countries in our collective pursuit to create decent work for all. A number of these developments are highlighted in this latest edition of our regular newsletter.

As I travel and work across the Pacific, I am continually impressed by the modern day relevance of ILO's mandates and the commitment of constituents to address such challenges, as addressing youth unemployment, eliminating child labour, and building robust, fair and fully functioning tripartite industrial relations systems.

These challenges are not unique to the Pacific Islands. However, these challenges are further compounded by the impact and variability of climate change, natural hazard risks, and economic shocks. The devastation recently wreaked by Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and the typhoon that recently carved its way through the north Pacific graphically demonstrates these vulnerabilities.

Our thoughts are with those who have had their homes, businesses, and sources of employment and income devastated by these disasters.

The magnitude, pervasiveness and alarming upward trend in these types of natural disasters, demands a special focus in terms of preparing and responding to these event from all of us. The ILO as a member of the United Nations family has an important role to play; about which you can read in this newsletter.

We hope you will find this newsletter informative and useful, and as always, we appreciate and welcome feedback and queries.

Yours sincerely,
David Lamotte

Kiribati Parliament considers new labour legislation

Two Bills to establish standards for occupational safety and health and to establish more comprehensive minimum terms and conditions of employment were introduced in the Kiribati Parliament this month.

The Occupational Safety and Health Bill will, for the first time establish a framework for occupational safety and health across workplaces in Kiribati. It passed its first reading in April.

In addition, the Employment and Industrial Relations Bill, to substantially modernise and update the existing labour law framework also passed its first reading in April.

The Bill will improve consistency with Fundamental ILO standards ratified by Kiribati and introduce, for the first time new measures to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. The Bill will repeal three existing labour laws that have not been substantially updated for a number of years.

The Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development recently hosted two workshops with MPs to discuss the content of the Bills. The ILO also contributed sessions at the workshop and has provided technical assistance to the Government in the preparation of the Employment and Industrial Relations Bill.

ILO welcomes Fiji tripartite agreement on labour relations



from left to right: Mr. Guy Ryder - ILO Director-General , Mr . Nesbitt Hazelman - CEO Fiji's Commerce & Employers Federation, Mr. Jioji Konrote, Minister for Employment Productivity & Industrial Relations, Mr. Felix Anthony - General-Secretary Fiji Trade Union Congress.

GENEVA – The International Labour Organization (ILO) has welcomed an agreement signed by Fiji’s tripartite constituents to use the Employment Relations Promulgation (ERP) as the primary basis for labour management relations in the country.

The agreement was signed, in March 2015, by the Minister for Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations, Jioji K. Konrote, the Chief Executive Officer of Fiji’s Commerce & Employers Federation, Nesbitt D. F. Hazelman, and General-Secretary of Fiji’s Trade Union Congress, Felix Anthony.

Fiji has been the focus of attention by the ILO Governing Body over the past years

regarding allegations of breaches of ILO Convention 87.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder welcomed the agreement, saying that “the joint efforts of the government, employers and workers to solve social conflict have proven their value in more than 90 years of ILO history – I am confident that the values of such tripartite social dialogue will also benefit Fiji now.”

Following the tripartite agreement, the ILO Governing Body – in session until 27 March – decided to defer the decision to consider the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry to its next session in November 2015.

South to South agency cooperation

A delegation from the Papua New Guinea Department of Labour and Industrial Relations (DLIR) visited the Fiji Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) office in Lautoka, Fiji, to discuss and learn more about the processes and good practices to set up and operationalizing a Child Labour Unit.

Issues discussed during the delegations visit included child labour provisions in the legislation, role of labour officers and inspectors in regards to child labour, and the Fiji National Employment Centre as an avenue for assisting children over the minimum age of employment with further training.

The issue of child labour is a priority for the Government of Papua New Guinea, who

would like to institutionalize a Child Labour Unit within the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations (DLIR).

Fiji is currently the only country in the region to have established a Child Labour Unit, database and conduct child labour inspections, and is also the only country in the region with successful prosecutions of child labour and child trafficking cases. The MEPIR has become an important resource hub for other Labour Ministries and government departments in the region.

Mr. Kornet Sapulai, Executive Manager, International Relations & International Cooperation (DLIR) said “South to South cooperation between Fiji and PNG has helped us (PNG) a lot in terms of our social reforms, the usefulness of the information that we have gathered from



The visiting delegation from PNG in Lautoka, Fiji.

the forum and our discussions with the Fiji government is invaluable, and we hope that this collaboration and sharing of information, especially on child labour issues will continue well into the future.”

Mr. Sapulai stated that it was their hope that the two Ministries would be able to sign an agreement on child labour collaboration, which could be discussed further when PNG officials meet with their Fiji counterparts for the next OSH signing.

Youth Employment priority for East New Britain, PNG

The East New Britain Province of Papua New Guinea will soon have a Provincial Youth Employment Strategy that aligns entrepreneurship development and expansion as a priority for its people.

A model provincial youth employment strategy has been developed in close collaboration with the East New Britain provincial government and the International Labour Organization. With the possibility national government will replicate the strategy in all the twenty two provinces of PNG from 2016 onwards.

A document of collaboration is expected to be signed between all the concerned parties and the Model Provincial Youth Employment Strategy handed over to the East New Britain Provincial Government before the annual budgetary processes in July 2015.

Labour inspectors sharpen skills



Samoa labour inspectors taking part in group discussions.

Labour inspectors from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL) have taken part in a training organized in partnership with the International Labour Organization in March 2015.

The training course focused on enhancing Inspectors foundation skills relating to their core functions under the Labour and Employment Relations Act 2013 and Occupational Safety and Health Act 2002.

The Assistant CEO of MCIL, Ms. Helen Uiese acknowledged the continued support from ILO and said: "This training is part of our capacity building for the labour inspectors in Samoa. The opportunity will equip the team in executing our core functions, particularly in the areas of reporting, strengthening data collection and sharing best practises to promote and enforce our mandated functions. Ideally, the information from this training will help us develop robust policies and proper procedural guidelines to implement the legislations."

Launch of ILO project signals Samoa's commitment to Youth Employment



from left to right: Ms. Rachel Nunn - ILO Samoa, Mr. Tomasi Peni - ILO Samoa, Mr. Satoshi Sasaki - ILO Specialist on strategies for decent work, Hon. Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa, Ms. Cherele Jackson - ILO Samoa.

Apia - Youth employment is a key priority in the development of Samoa, this is according to Youth Minister, Hon. Tolofuaivalelei Falemoe Leiatua, Minister of Women, Community and Social Development for Samoa.

He thanked the Government of Samoa for being a key partner in implementing the project, and in turn the Minister commended the work of the ILO in promoting decent work for youth.

Stakeholders identify key priorities

Sustainable decent job opportunities for youth was identified as one of the key priorities to be addressed in the Samoa National Action Plan on Youth Employment by stakeholders from across all sectors.

"We don't need just any jobs for young people, we need sustainable decent jobs that are desired by young people," said Maulolo Tavita, the Director of Samoa Cultural Center, a training facility for out of school youth on traditional skills.

The other priorities identified during a inception workshop for the SNAP on YE project, which brought together over 60 key stakeholders in youth employment, included strengthening education and training sector to ensure that a jobs-skills match, the strengthening of employment services and focusing on the gap in the transition from school to work.

A common theme discussed in all priorities was culture and how it impacts youth engagement in the workforce.

"The case of youth unemployment in Samoa must always consider cultural factors, because it does have a very strong influence on the lives of young people, so we have to respect the role of the Samoan culture and how it affects youth employment," said Lagipoiva Cherele Jackson, National Project Coordinator for SNAP on YE.

The Government of Samoa showed high level support at the launch of the Samoa National Action Plan on Youth Employment Project (SNAP on YE) with the presence of the Prime Minister Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Lufesoliai Malielegaoi at the event. "The Government of Samoa continues to support the development of our young people through various programs and activities," Tolofuaivalelei said.

Well over 200 stakeholders including youth groups, private sector partners, workers representatives, Government and NGO representatives took part in the launch on the 6th March 2015.

"We continue to mainstream employment creation and opportunities for young people in its Strategy for Development (2012-2016). It is also a policy priority in the National Youth Policy (2011-2015) with the main focus on youth entrepreneurship, employment creation and pathways, skills development and youth in the informal economy," said Tolofuaivalelei.

ILO was represented by Mr. Satoshi Sasaki, Decent Work Specialist for the Pacific.

"Currently, youth unemployment rate is estimated around 16% and underemployment remain critical development challenges for Samoa. A key challenge in Samoa is its young unskilled and unqualified workforce. 40% of young people left school without graduating, the majority falling out of the school system during secondary education," Sasaki said.



Photo by Dave Hunt / Reuters

Cyclone PAM causes devastating impact on employment and livelihoods

Port Vila - Cyclone Pam, one of the most powerful cyclones to hit the Pacific, left not just a trail of visible destruction in the region, but caused tremendous devastation to livelihoods and employment of affected Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

“Cyclone Pam has affected directly and indirectly the livelihoods of about 40,800 households and 195,000 people that live across the four disaster-affected provinces, accumulating in a total of 269,301 lost work days and VT\$6,02 billion Vatu of personal income losses,” said Mr Lionel Kaluat, Commissioner of Labour and Chair of the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (TLAC).

With the technical support from the ILO, the Vanuatu Department of Labour and partners were able to map out the personal income loss as part of the Post Disaster Needs Assessment. This makes it one of the first assessment in the Pacific on losses in employment and income post-Disaster.

“Typically after a disaster, we read about losses to crops and livestock, or damages to roads and bridges. Of course, these are very important, but understanding how the disaster affects working women and men who must rebuild their livelihoods and enterprises is essential, if we are to implement high impact recovery programmes,” said David Lamotte, ILO Director for Pacific Island Countries.

An ILO team were deployed to Vanuatu shortly after Cyclone Pam to assist the Government, workers and employers representative organizations, and other development partners, to set-up

employment programmes that not only focus on the immediate crisis response but also contribute to long-term creation of decent work for all.

This team has established a 3 months presence in the Department of Labour (DoL) to provide effective and efficient technical assistance to ILO tripartite partners and contribute efforts towards efforts of the UN and International agencies.

The ILO team have also undertaken an assessment and finalised the report on Employment, Livelihoods & Social Protection (ELSP) as part of the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA). They have also developed recommendations for Emergency Employment Services (EES) based on ELSP assessment findings and needs of ILO constituents to support the recovery stage.

The ILO team has also contributed to the UN Joint Programme with UNDP, UN Women and UN Habitat to jointly deliver EES programmes to support the recovery stage and also contribute to medium to long term outcomes.

ILO will continue to support Vanuatu as part of the disaster mitigation and recovery global initiatives.

Learn more at: <http://www.ilo.org/suva/areas-of-work/disaster-mitigation-and-recovery/lang-en/index.htm>

Upcoming ILO support work in Vanuatu

1. Launch the Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) to improve employment opportunities through the use of labour based technology in the rehabilitation and maintenance of roads and public infrastructure in Tanna. This programme is delivered in collaboration with the Public Works Department (PWD) and Australian funded Roads for Development Programme (R4D).

2. Establish the Emergency Employment Service Center (EESC) in the Department of Labour (DoL) to support formal sector workers who have lost their jobs or on reduced hours as a result of the cyclone. This programme will be delivered through the DoL in partnership with the Vanuatu

3. Council of Trade Unions (VCTU), Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI), Vanuatu National Provident Fund (VNPF) and various national training providers. Organise a national dialogue on "Designing and Implementing Emergency Employment & Livelihoods Programmes".

The objective will be to work with government and ILO social partners establish better coordination and local relevance of programmes leading to the establishment of the Early Recovery Working Group. ILO tools, methodologies, lessons and best practices will be shared in this dialogue.

4. Organise a national dialogue on "Socially Responsible Enterprise Restructuring". The objective will be to make redundancies as the last resort by employers, during this recovery phase.

5. Deliver a training on "Disaster Risk Reduction for Micro & Small Enterprises (MSE)". Based on the ELSP assessment, many MSE lost income as a result of number of days lost. The training will target local business trainers with the aim of incorporating the DRR for MSE's into their training curriculum so small local entrepreneurs and enterprises can benefit by being better prepared.

6. Provide high level technical assistance to UNDP in delivering Cash for Work (CfW) programme.

Disaster preparedness and response

The people in the Pacific Islands are amongst the most prone to disaster and climate risks, such as tsunami, earthquakes, cyclone, landslides, flood and even droughts. These natural calamities have devastating impact on livelihoods, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable people. The magnitude, pervasiveness and alarming upward trend of natural disasters in the Pacific Islands countries, demands a special ILO focus, both in terms of preparing and responding to these events.

Disaster preparedness

Post-disaster recovery and resilience can be greatly helped if robust social protection systems already in place. In addition, investments in disaster risk reduction and disaster management can result in massive savings to governments, communities and businesses.

In supporting disaster preparedness, the ILO can:

- Support small and medium enterprises to develop business continuity plans
- Support small-scale and community contractors in building and maintaining public infrastructure resilient to natural disasters.

Disaster response

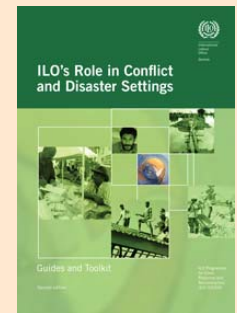
After any disaster, rebuilding communities and the livelihoods of vulnerable people becomes a top priority of the Government.

In supporting disaster response, the ILO supports the recovery process with alternative job and income creation:

- Jointly assess the impact of disasters in terms of employment and livelihood losses and needs.
- Launch emergency employment promotion programmes, which provide alternative income to the affected people and contribute to clean-up and repair of public infrastructure. (Cash for Work)
- Establish community contractors or groups to be involved in the reconstruction efforts, working with key partners like Public Works Department and the donors/financial institutions. (Employment Intensive Investment Programme)
- Assist trade unions in supporting their members who lost jobs to find alternative sources of income.
- Assist Employer organizations to support their members to re-establish their operations.
- Promote business response to crisis that minimize the lose of employment.

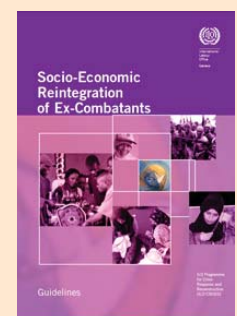
All of ILO employment and enterprise programmes introduce decent work practices and raise awareness for good working practices, workers' protection and occupation safety and health. Compliance with national labour laws is essential.

Key ILO Resources on Disaster preparedness and response



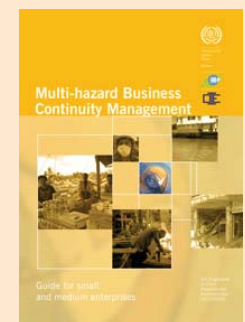
ILO's Role in Conflict and Disaster Settings

http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_141275/lang--en/index.htm



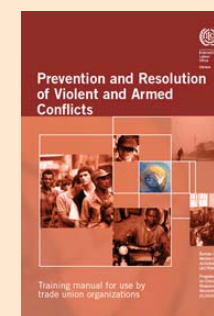
Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-combatants

http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_141276/lang--en/index.htm



Multi - hazard Business Continuity Management

http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_140959/lang--en/index.htm



Prevention and resolution of violent and armed conflicts

http://www.ilo.org/suva/areas-of-work/disaster-mitigation-and-recovery/WCMS_202135/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Social Partners sharing knowledge on Child Labour in the Pacific



Participants share knowledge on Child Labour.

The ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries successfully concluded a four day forum in Nadi on 16th of April, 2015 with commitments made by tripartite stakeholders to collaborate and work on the child labour issues in their respective countries. Organized by the Tackling Child Labour through Education (TACKLE II) project and funded by the European Union in Fiji, the Sub-regional Forum on Child Labour and Trafficking brought together tripartite stakeholders plus the media from five countries, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

With the intention of sharing knowledge and innovative approaches to combating child labour in the Pacific, the forum also looked at the role of the media in raising awareness on the issue of child labour and trafficking and developing country and regional level strategies for combating child labour and trafficking. Some of the best practices shared through the forum were the direct intervention strategies, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, awareness raising strategies, development of resource materials, conducting training and development of National Action Plans to combat child labour from 2008 to 2014.

Direct intervention strategies have included prevention approaches undertaken by the Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) through provision of assistance to children, families and schools to keep at risk children in school whilst a Bridging Programme was also piloted through the Peoples Community Network (PCN) for out of school children.

The Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) also highlighted resources developed through collaboration with the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) for employers to eliminate child labour in the workplace. These actions also highlighted the complicated nature of the problem and the challenges faced when trying to eradicate child labour.

The setting up of a dedicated Child Labour Unit at the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) has been a key milestone for Fiji. Mr. Atish Kumar from the Child Labour Unit has been involved in training of labour inspectors in Kiribati on child labour as a follow up activity to the Rapid Assessment report for Kiribati. Mr. Kumar discussed the complex nature of dealing with cases of child labour and the challenges faced by labour inspectors.

One of the issues highlighted was the rise in the worst forms of child labour, especially through trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) within the region. TACKLE II also focusses on CSEC issues and addressing these through collaborative approaches with tripartite partners and other stakeholders and improving practices currently in place with the intension of sharing these with the region through South to South agency cooperation.

How the Pacific celebrated 2015 World Day for Safety and Health at Work



Labour inspectors conducting OSH inspection in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

On the occasion of World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the **ILO calls for urgent action to build a culture of prevention on occupational safety and health.** Raising awareness and knowledge of occupational hazards and risks and how to prevent and control them is key for this process.

In the Pacific, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa and Papua New Guinea observed ILO's new Safe Day Campaign with various activities.

The Fiji sub-committee of the National OHS Advisory Board (NOHSAB) conducted workplace audits nation wide, a total of 84 companies took part in the audit. Awards were presented to the most improved and best practise workplaces.

In Samoa the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour and the National University of Samoa organised an awareness raising forum specifically to focus on the National OSH Act and regulations. The participants at the forum were OHS officers, focal points from government ministries and the private sector.

The PNG Department of Labour and Industrial Relations delegation where in Fiji to extend their bilateral relations by signing a MOU on Occupational Health and Safety. Fiji will continue to provide technical assistance in the field of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) to Papua New Guinea as part of a technical cooperation programme, with a focus till 2016 on legislative reform.

Vanuatu is currently in the recovery stage of 'Cyclone Pam', so the Vanuatu Department of Labour and the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (TLAC), have taken the opportunity to raise awareness via local media, emphasising employment and livelihoods programmes designed and implemented by government, local, NGO's and international agencies, must adhere to International and National Labour Standards.

Upcoming events

Training of Trainers Workshop on Start Your Business to support People with Disabilities

27th April to 1st May, 2015, Nadi, Fiji

Freedom of Association, Decent Work and the state of the Unions Meeting

6th May 2015, Honiara, Solomon Islands

"Good Practice" Tripartism seminar

7th to 8th May, Honiara, Solomon Islands

International Labour Standards training on reporting obligations

19th to 20th May, Koror, Palau

26th to 27th May, Majuro, Marshall Islands

Foreign Employment Research and Promotion Training

27-29 May, Suva, Fiji

World Day Against Child Labour June 12 2015

The World Day is an opportunity to raise your voice against child labour and a call for all children to have a right to education.

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DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.

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