

# Tackling Child Labour through Education (TACKLE)

## Fiji Highlights of Key Result 2

Strengthening institutional capacity leading to improved ability to formulate and implement child labour strategies



Government of  
Fiji

**Presentation by the Honorable Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment, Mr. Jone Usamate, to the Final Evaluation Workshop of the Tackling Child Labour through Education (TACKLE) project, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013- Brussels**

**FIJI HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY RESULT 2: Strengthened institutional capacity leading to improved ability to formulate and implement child labour strategies**

**Talking Points**

- The TACKLE project is the first comprehensive project for addressing child labour in the Pacific region.
- Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity and mainstreaming systems and structures into the functions of relevant government agencies, employers and union bodies and civil society groups, has been a strategic and significant project objective for Fiji.
- The highlights for Fiji under this project objective include:
  - Establishing the Child Labour Unit in 2011 by the **Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment**, through which, Fiji has:
    - Strengthened child labour provisions in labour legislation, education and child welfare laws
    - Regulated the Fiji List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited to Children
    - Implemented a centralised database and a system of child labour referrals, inspection and processes which has been fully integrated into the Labour Standards and Compliance Services
    - Improved Fiji's fair-trade status through establishing a child labour monitoring and reporting system with the Fiji Sugar Corporation, Fiji Sugarcane Growers Council and the Cane Producers Association and farmers
    - Established district child labour monitoring committees which includes an Inter-Agency reporting system and process
    - Conducted a school-based survey with the Ministry of Education to establish data of working school children.
  - As a result of the inspection systems and processes established by the Child Labour Unit, the Ministry has been able to:
    - Withdraw forty (40) children from child labour and reintegrating into schools
    - Prevent one hundred and seven (107) children from dropping out of school and engaging in child labour through counselling and monitoring
    - Charge three (3) employers for employing children in the hazardous work. These cases are before the Employment Relations Tribunal for adjudication.
  - The recent US Department of State TIP report has recognised and commended the work of the Trafficking Units of the Police and Immigration Departments, and the Child Labour Unit for their efforts on training stakeholders on trafficking and collaborating to bring traffickers to justice. Officers from all three units have benefitted from trafficking training through TACKLE.
  - Fiji is currently in the process of finalising the National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour in Fiji, targeted to be presented to cabinet for endorsement in August, 2013

- The Fiji **Ministry of Education** has focused on improving the quality of formal education curriculum through introducing two new enterprise education courses into the TVET Basic Skills Employment Training programme for all secondary school students in Fiji. These are the ILO **Know About Business** training modules and **Start Your Own Business** training modules.
- Through TACKLE and in collaboration with civil society organisations, the MOE has:
  - Assisted schools develop school-based child protection policies to reduce risks and vulnerabilities that lead to drop-out and exploitation of children
  - Supported the piloting of a non-formal education (NFE) bridging programme for out of school children in child labour and at risk
  - Currently, the Fiji Strategy for Alternative Education for Out-of-School Children in Child Labour or At-Risk has been drafted to be presented for endorsement.
- A key highlight has also been the integration of a Child Labour Module into Fiji's Labour Force Survey (2010) led by the **Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics** and incorporating child labour indicators in the Agricultural Census (2009)
- The ILO Social Partners- **the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) and Fiji Trades Union Congress and Teachers Union** have focused on mainstreaming child labour concerns into the work of the Federation and the Unions through the appointment of Child Labour Focal Points, strengthening of workplace-based policies, and training of more than 500 workers and employer representatives
- The employers federation have promoted Corporate social responsibility programmes to support children's education, reviewed Child Labour Employers Guide Books to be locally adapted and produced, and incorporated child labour as an area of concern to be tackled by the Human Resource Committee of the Federation
- The Fiji Trades Union Congress and Fiji Teachers Union are implementing a direct action programme preventing 450 children at-risk from engaging in child labour by providing them with educational and counselling support. They have established 30 school-based child labour monitoring systems and conducted community outreach campaigns.
- In addition, the Fiji Teachers Confederation has recently launched a joint action plan to eliminate child labour.

## **Conclusion**

The TACKLE project has played a key role in coordinating cross-cutting strategic action, building knowledge on child labour and education, and promoting tri-partite dialogue. I would like to take this opportunity to briefly address the future needs and directions. Having carefully reviewed the draft evaluation report, I note that:

Firstly the report suggests that we should all "look into the possibilities of continued efforts in tackling child labour in ACP countries." (Recommendation I, page 63). We agree with this recommendation based on what we read in the report and what we know about the work that has been successfully completed in Fiji. We all have put in place

the needed legal and institutional frameworks and developed relevant action programmes. This work lays an important foundation for even more significant and high impact policies and programmes.

Secondly, we note that the recommendations concerning decentralizing the management of the project to the regional level (Recommendation 5.2 (b), page 69). In the Pacific we strongly believe this is the way forward because we have similar challenges, institutions, culture, history and experiences.

Already Fiji has been providing technical assistance to Pacific Island Countries building on the technical expertise and lessons learnt in Fiji and PNG. This has involved, for example, coordinating child labour Rapid Assessments (research) for PNG, Tuvalu and Kiribati and providing guidance to labour law reform on child labour provisions in these countries.

The Fiji Government through its tripartite partners recommend highly for a second phase to the TACKLE project in the ACP region to build on the experiences and knowledge gained by TACKLE, coordinated through regional hubs or centres of excellence. We have developed a concept note in this regard which we want to and share with you in this meeting.

We are hopeful that this approach is considered and that this meeting addresses firstly how to maintain the current momentum and secondly how we can make a smooth transition to a more efficient and higher impact regional approach for eliminating the child labour and trafficking in all our countries and regions.

In closing, I wish to thank the European Commission and ACP Secretariat for making this funding available and also acknowledge the ILO's coordinating role of the TACKLE project and the support and guidance of the TACKLE Chief Technical Adviser Mr. Ozirmak and the TACKLE team. We assure you that the Fiji Government is committed to this effort of eliminating child labour. Thank you for your kind attention today and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we develop this regional approach.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY RESULT AREA 2: Strengthened institutional capacity leading to improved ability to formulate and implement child labour strategies**

Overall Progress against indicators of achievement: Rating key: 1=Low 2=Average 3=Good 4=Very Good

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b><u>Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established the Child Labour Unit</li> <li>Strengthened child labour provisions in labour legislation and regulated the first hazardous child labour list, gazetted the Fiji List of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited to Children on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.</li> <li>Drafted the National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour in Fiji, which will be taken for stakeholder consultation in July 2013 before submission to Cabinet for endorsement in late July, 2013.</li> <li>Developed and implemented a centralised database and a system of child labour referrals, inspection and processes which has been successfully integrated into the Labour Standards and Compliance Services. Each District Labour Office is required under the new system and process to provide weekly reports on child labour incidents. Currently a total of one hundred and forty six (146) cases of Child Labour are recorded in the Child Labour database, which is accessed by district Labour officers around Fiji</li> <li>Withdrawn forty (40) children from child labour, including the worst forms, putting these children back in to school, and registering children over the minimum legal age with the National Employment Centre of the MLIRE.</li> <li>Prevented one hundred and seven (107) children from dropping out of school and engaging in child labour through counselling and monitoring</li> <li>Charged three (3) employers for employing children in the hazardous work. The cases are before the Employment Relations Tribunal for adjudication.</li> <li>Conducted a school-based survey with the Ministry of Education to establish data of working school children</li> <li>Trained a total of 600 stakeholders- labour officers, police officers, immigration officers, teachers sugar cane farmers and unions on child labour legislation and inspection</li> <li>Improved Fiji's fair-trade status through training of eighty (80) officers from the Fiji Sugar Corporation, Fiji Sugarcane Growers Council and the Cane Producers Association and establishing a child labour monitoring and reporting system from the sugarcane farms to the Labour Offices</li> <li>Established district child labour monitoring committees which includes an Inter-Agency reporting system and process</li> <li>Since 2012, coordinated the national World Day Against Child Labour awareness campaigns with communities, schools and through the media.</li> </ul>	4	<i>The focus has been on mainstreaming child labour strategies in to the core functions of the Ministry. The Ministry has shared with the PNG DLIR inspection forms developed by its Child Labour Unit.</i>

<p><b><u>Ministry of Education</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved the quality of education through introducing two new enterprise education courses on <u>Know About Business</u> and <u>Start Your Own Business</u> into the TVET Basic Skills Employment Training programme for all secondary school students in Fiji.</li> <li>With TACKLE and Save the Children, trained teachers to develop school-based child protection policies to reduce risks and vulnerabilities that lead to drop-out and exploitation of children</li> <li>Supported the piloting of a non-formal education (NFE) bridging programme for out of school children in child labour and at risk and working with the CLU to draft a child labour module for formal education curriculum</li> </ul>	3	<p><i>The Fiji Strategy for Alternative Education for Out-of-School Children in Child Labour or At-Risk has been drafted.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporated a Child Labour Module into Fiji's Labour Force Survey (2010) led by the Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics and child labour indicators in the Agricultural Census (2009) and provided technical assistance to complete five (5) Fiji Child Labour research studies</li> </ul>	4	<p><i>Indicator of achievement in pro-doc under project objective</i></p>
<p><b><u>Social Partners</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><u>Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) and Fiji Trades Union Congress and Teachers Union</u></b> have focused on mainstreaming child labour concerns into the work of the Federation and the Unions through the appointment of Child Labour Focal Points, strengthening of workplace-based policies, and training of more than 500 workers and employer representatives</li> <li>The FCEF have promoted Corporate social responsibility programmes to support children's education, reviewed Child Labour Employers Guide Books to be locally adapted and produced, and incorporated child labour as an area of concern to be tackled by the FCEF Human Resource Committee</li> <li>The Fiji Trades Union Congress and Fiji Teachers Union implemented a direct action programme preventing 450 children at-risk from engaging in child labour by providing them with educational and counselling support. They established 30 school-based child labour monitoring systems, trained parents to understand labour and education laws and links, conducted outreach programmes to raise awareness and a national poster competition to raise awareness about child labour issues.</li> </ul>	4	<p><i>The focus has been on sensitising members and mainstreaming child labour issues into the programmes of the employers' federation and workers unions.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Building the Capacity of Tri-partite partners, including civil society, community based organisations, media and academia</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Child labour research studies designed and implemented, with five coordinating research teams as a result of Child Labour Research training for government authorities, social partners, civil society, media</li> <li>Framework for National to District level child labour monitoring systems designed by Labour Inspectors, Labour &amp; OSH Officers, divisional Welfare Officers, Education &amp; Statistics officers and workers and employers representatives and civil society</li> </ul>	4	<p><i>National partners have also benefitted from child labour training courses conducted at the ILO- International Training Centre in Turin on trafficking, inspection,</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child Labour and Development Course for Post-Graduate University Students designed and undertaken with the University of the South Pacific as a development studies special topic course.</li> </ul>		<i>policies etc.</i>
<p><b><u>Providing technical assistance to regional countries:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training workshops on child labour ratification, reporting and social dialogue conducted for tri-partite partners and trade unions from ILO member states in the region</li> <li>▪ Coordinated Mini programmes implemented by the Samoa Council of Trade Unions and Vanuatu Council of Trade Unions in 2011</li> <li>▪ Coordinated child labour Rapid Assessment (research) for Tuvalu and Kiribati</li> <li>▪ Currently completing Rapid Assessment on trafficking and child domestic work and other forms of child labour in PNG</li> </ul>	4	<i>Technical assistance provided on request by tri-partite partners from member countries to the ILO</i>