



Fiji

Annual Pathfinder Progress Report
May 2020–April 2021

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Introduction

Pathfinder countries are those that commit to going further and faster to achieve the objectives of Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. They are committed to accelerating efforts and willing to try new approaches from which others can learn to support Target 8.7's urgent deadlines. Pathfinder status is open to any country, regardless of development level.

As of April 2021, 25 countries globally have pathfinder status. Out of these 13 have established detailed roadmaps identifying priorities for action to achieve target 8.7.

To record pathfinder progress against established national roadmap priorities, the Alliance 8.7 SDG monitoring working group structured a voluntary reporting process for the Pathfinder countries. Through their 'Alliance 8.7 national focal points' pathfinder countries can respond to a set of 12 questions related to the implementation of their roadmaps.

This report provides the overview of Fiji's responses to these questions. It is divided in 4 sections:

1. **Annual progress against roadmap priorities:** The first section looks into the national priorities to eliminate Child Labour, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking and the next steps outlined in last year's pathfinder country report. Pathfinder countries provide a short progress report on each of their stated priorities and next steps and to report on challenges including but not limited to the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. **Evidence of achieved progress:** This second section allows reporting on the evidence of the achieved progress. It allows Pathfinder countries to provide insights into how the progress between May 2020 and April 2021 was assessed.
3. **Value of the Pathfinder process:** The third section provides the opportunity to reflect upon the Pathfinder process and help putting the results reported into context. This section allows countries to report on how the Pathfinder process may have helped them progressing towards their national priorities between May 2020 and April 2021.
4. **Way Forward:** This section allows to have an outlook on the next steps on a 12 months horizon towards the achievement of the country's priorities and to indicate whether the roadmap requires to be revised.

Annual progress against pathfinder priorities

Pathfinder countries were asked to provide a short progress report on each of their stated priorities and next steps and to report on challenges including - and not limited to - the Covid-19 pandemic.

Question 1: What progress against the national roadmap priorities since May 2020?

Priority 1:

Outcome 1 of Alliance 8.7 Roadmap on Child Labour: Stronger national legislation, policies and compliance mechanisms to protect all children from child labour, in particular the WFCL:

1.1. Conduct training on relevant legislation and policies on CL in target sectors – police judiciary agricultural stakeholders for example.

The Compliance section of the Ministry has conducted 2400 Labour inspections at workplaces throughout Fiji.

The Interagency Training programs and meetings have been conducted to the benefit of all relevant stakeholders including Fiji Police Force from August 2020 to February 2021

Priority 2

Outcome 2 of Alliance 8.7 Roadmap on Child Labour: efficient data management and coordination mechanisms

2.2 Establish a steering committee on Alliance 8.7 and technical working groups, and organize regular meetings for Alliance 8.7 and technical working groups

Progress

The Alliance 8.7 Employment Relations Advisory Committee has been established on 20 October 2020.

The Consultation workshop under the MAP16 project was conducted on 14 and 15 December 2020 on Fiji National Child Labour Policy, List of Light Work, list of Artistic Performance and Entertainment Industry, list of Hazardous Occupation Prohibition to Children less than 18 years order of 2013.

Priority 3

Outcome 3 of Alliance 8.7 Roadmap on Child Labour: Expanded social protection, livelihood and employment programmes to benefit the most vulnerable

3.1 Conduct thematic discussions and/or study on how to strengthen existing family support programmes to prevent child labour

Progress

The Ministry with ILO and interagency partners have conducted the awareness training program on 21 January 2021 at a community settlement at Qauia Village Lami, Suva.

Priority 4

Outcome 4 of Alliance 8.7 Roadmap on Child Labour: Targeted policies and actions to combat the worst forms of child labour

4.1 Review, update and conduct a national baseline research on the worst forms of child labour referencing the 2009 research findings as baseline data and integrating right-based and gender-based approach and analysis

4.2 Provide specialised and comprehensive training on WFCL including trauma training for all frontline workers, including authorities, social workers, teachers, school counsellors, community, youth and religious leaders and develop training curriculum and resources – this will complement and scale up 3 training conducted under MAP 16 project for community members, religious leaders, police and teachers

4.3 Develop awareness programmes between universities and national authorities on drug trafficking and other illicit activities and FL, and CL

4.4 Introduce a module on WFCL into primary school curriculum

Progress

On 4.2: The inter-agency training on worst forms for child labour was conducted through the assistance of the ILO Map 16 project on 29 march 2021 which included the government, employers, trade union and civil society organizations.

Priority 5

Outcome 5: Alliance 8.7 promoted across the Pacific region and sharing of experiences for Pacific countries

5.1 Organise a platform/or workshop for Pacific countries on Alliance 8.7 to promote Pathfinder country and share experiences and lessons learnt

5.2 Sharing of experiences of Fiji as a Pathfinder country and disseminate Alliance 8.7 tools and Pathfinder countries roadmaps in the Pacific region

Progress

The Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations is happy to share its good practice on Alliance 8.7 with other regions in the Pacific.

Question 2: What progress against the next steps identified for May 2020-April 2021?

The next step is the formulation of National Action Plan on Child Labour including the enforcement and compliance plans on the Child Labour eradication programs at Districts and Divisional Level. The Child Labour reporting process will also be revamped with the implementation of Labor Inspection Management System

The draft National Action plan on child labour 2021-2025 has been prepared through the assistance of ILO Consultant and is currently being discussed by the stakeholders.

Review on the list of Hazardous Occupations Prohibited to Children under 18 Years of Age Order of 2013 and introducing the discussion on the draft Work in the Artistic, Performing and Entertainment Industries.

Question 3: What main successes can be highlighted for Fiji between May 2020-April 2021?

The Fiji government through the Ministry of Employment, Productivity & IR (MEPIR) has been coordinating with all relevant governmental agencies and non-governmental stakeholders to achieve SDG Target 8.7. It has been currently working in collaboration with the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries (PIC's) under the MAP-16 Project (The Measurement, awareness-raising and policy engagement project to accelerate action against child labour and forced labour) which is a global project funded by the US Department of Labour (USDOL) that aims to increase the knowledge base, raise awareness, strengthen capacity and conduct policy engagement in support of international efforts to achieve SDG Target 8.7. Some of the main successes include:

- a. The IAG were first signed on 17 December 2015 and reviewed in 2020 by the implementing partners being Ministry of Women, Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Education Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Employment Productivity and Industrial Relations, Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs (Implementing Partners.)
- b. The IAG's outline the procedures for responding to child protection cases, including the worst forms of child labour, and the roles and responsibilities of agencies. Fijian Government has made major progress in the area of eradication of Child Labour forced Labour and Human Trafficking to ensure that we meet our set goals.
- c. The Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations has conducted a total of 3250 on spot Labour Inspections during the period under review to investigate any possible case of child with awareness created on business and workers to ensure to abide by the provision of the Employment Relations Act 2007.

[Question 3.2] Would you like to mention other meaningful successes and opportunities toward the achievement of the target 8.7 that are not part of the main roadmap priorities (e.g. laws enacted, events, partnership arrangements, additional resources)?

The MEPIR has also developed a robust labour inspection system through implementation of ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS) which ensures that proper standards are followed throughout Fiji while conducting Labour Inspections. This QMS ensures proper screening of all Child Labour cases and encompasses a system of children withdrawn from Child Labour and returned to school. This is indeed the primary goal of the Child Labour monitoring system on Labour Inspections. Through its progressive labour reforms, Fiji has also domesticated the fundamental principles and rights of the ratified Conventions into its new labour laws, particularly under the Employment Relations Act 2007 (ERA 2007).

The Interagency Ministries and Departments have conducted meetings and trainings at the villages and community levels to ensure greater protection and awareness towards all issues related to children is taken at the grass roots level. The Interagency Committee has also conducted some awareness on child abuse and child labour issues on communities and

settlement around Fiji in Suva, Nausori, Navua, Tailevu, Sigatoka, Nadi, Lautoka, Ba, Labasa, Savusavu and Taveuni regular labour inspection and awareness program.

Question 4: What challenges did Fiji face in the implementation of its roadmap ? (Covid-19)

▶ **How did COVID-19 impact the implementation of Fiji's roadmap priorities?**

The labour Inspection programs on child labour have been affected due to the closure of business during this COVID 19 period, including the awareness activities that needs to be conducted for child labour, forced labour and Human Trafficking.

Question 5: What other challenges did Fiji face in the implementation of its roadmap ?

▶ **What other challenges did Fiji face to implement the Pathfinder Country roadmap priorities?**

The Current COVID19 situation has impacted the conducting of Labour Inspection at workplaces..

Evidence of achieved progress

This second section allows reporting on the evidence of the achieved progress. It allows Pathfinder countries to provide insights into how the progress between May 2020 and April 2021 was assessed.

Question 6: What evidence is there of achieved progress?

a. Formal evaluation process

If 1 = a: What evaluation tools where utilized to determine success/failure of the national priorities identified?

The Implementation of the Employment Relations Act 2007 and its regulations and conducting Labour inspections at workplaces.

d. Was a multi-stakholder approach taken to assess progress against the national priorities identified in the Pathfinder roadmap priorities?

a. Yes- through the Interagency Committee approach.

If 7=a Which government agencies/Social partners/civil society organizations/law enforcement were involved in assessing the progress (please specify)

b. National partners

- i. Employers/private sector/Government
- ii. Statistical office [Fiji Bureau of Statics]
- iii. Ministry of Women Children and Poverty Alleviation
- iv. Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts
- v. Ministry of Health and Medical Services
- vi. Fiji Police Force

- vii. Ministry of Itaukei Affairs
- c. International partners (specify)**
 - i. International Labour Organization
 - ii. UNICEF

Question 7: What stakeholders were involved in assessing progress against the national Pathfinder roadmap priorities?

- a. National partners**
 - i. Employers/private sector/Government
 - ii. Statistical office [Fiji Bureau of Statics]
 - iii. Ministry of Women Children and Poverty Alleviation
 - iv. Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts
 - v. Ministry of Health and Medical Services
 - vi. Fiji Police Force
 - vii. Ministry of Itaukei Affairs
- b. International partners (specify)**
 - i. International Labour Organization
 - ii. UNICEF

Value of the Pathfinder process

The third section provides the opportunity to reflect upon the Pathfinder process and help putting the results reported into context. This section allows Pathfinder countries to report how the Pathfinder process may have helped them progressing towards their national priorities between May 2020 and April 2021.

Question 8: What were the main highlights around the pathfinder process?

Increased collaboration on SDG 8.7 with international partners
Increased collaboration on SDG 8.7 with domestic partners
Increased capacity of institutional support services

[Question 8.1] With which international partners did Fiji collaborate to achieve its priorities?

The Ministry has been working closely with the ILO (MAP-16 project) on the implementation of SDG goals

[Question 8.2] Has Fiji supported sub-regional/regional/global initiatives outside of the country on the elimination of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking? [Y/N]

Yes, through ILO Suva Office

[Question 8.3] With which domestic partners did [Fiji] collaborate to achieve its priorities?

The Ministry has been working closely with the Employer and Worker organizations, Civil Society Organizations on the implementation of the SDG 8.7 through various training and consultation programs.

(i) Employers/private sector

(ii) Employer organization(s)

[Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation (FCEF) - FCEF provides a wide range of support services to employers including training, advice and advocacy].

(iii) Worker organization(s)

Fiji Teachers Union has a valuable existing platform for the dissemination of information via union member's settlements worst forms of child labour.

(iv) Statistical office provides data on child labour activities.

(v) The Inter-agency guidelines on child abuse & neglect have provided the following roles and responsibilities of the agencies.

1. Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

The Department of Social Welfare is the lead agency responsible for managing cases of children in need of care and protection. All children suspected of being in need of care and protection must be referred as soon as possible to the Department.

2. Ministry of Health & Medical Services

The role of the Ministry of Health & Medical Services (MHMS) is to ensure that all healthcare workers understand MHMS Child Protection Guideline and are able to identify and respond appropriately to children in need of care and protection. It is mandatory for health care workers to report child abuse and neglect, even if abuse is only suspected.

3. Fiji Police Force

The primary responsibility of Fiji Police Force is to prevent any form of violence, abuse and exploitation of children. It is mandatory for the Fiji Police Force to investigate any allegation of crime against children and to initiate appropriate criminal action.

4. Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts

The role of the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts (MEHA) is to assist the identification of children in need of care and protection and to provide preventative programmes which aims to help students protect themselves and to develop positive respectful relationships. The Policy Unit, under the Corporate Services Section is the Child Protection Unit and is mandated to oversee the implementation, review and evaluation of the MEHA Child Protection Policy in schools.

5. Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations

The Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) enforces the Employment Relations Act 2007 which has provision for prevention of child labour and worse forms of child labour through effective labour inspections and complains investigations

process. The Fijian Government has ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182 on worst forms of child labour and Convention 138 on minimum age. The conventions have been embedded in the Act. The MEPIR also maintains the child labour database and case management programmes where all cases are recorded and investigated.

6. Ministry of Itaukei Affairs

The Ministry of Itaukei Affairs and Itaukei Affairs Board are important partners in mobilizing, families, communities and community leaders in child protection.

7. Other Government Agencies

In line with the Government's integrated approach to child protection, other Government agencies will also be involved in planning, implementing and reviewing child protection awareness and advocacy policies, and may also provide support to the six primary Agencies in prevention and response.

Other Government agencies will:

- a) Develop their own child safeguarding policy and code of conduct, and ensure all workers are aware of their personal responsibilities under the policy and of relevant child protection policies, procedures and legislation.
- b) Participate in organized trainings, workshops, seminars and meetings on child protection.
- c) Support local and international bodies with the running of community-based programs and projects addressing child protection; and
- d) Monitor and evaluate child protection programs/projects and submit necessary reports to concerned authorities.
- e) Develop internal Child Protection and Child Safeguarding policies for the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs.

8. NGOs, FBOs and Other Civil Society Organizations

NGOs and FBOs provide a range of services for children and families, including trauma counselling, legal advice, survivor advocacy, family and relationship counselling, vocational training / income generation support, and children's home / safe shelter. As such, they can be important partners in the delivery of support services to children in need of care and protection and their families.

9. Community Leaders and Informal Support Networks

Extended family members, community leaders, church network and other community helpers are often the first line of support for Fijian children. This informal support network can play an important network in strengthening families and keeping children safe by providing parenting support and advice, mentoring, financial / in-kind support to struggling families and family based alternative care.

10. Private Sector Organizations

The Private Sector engages with children in many sectors, including child care, education and health centers. Employees and organizations operating in the private sector and dealing with children are also bound by the same child related legislation and moral obligation as in the public sector.

[Question 8.4] What institutional support services were increased?

Labour Inspection and Compliance Enforcement; The Ministry has conducted internal on the job training programs to its enforcement and compliance staff members.

Way forward

This section allows to have an outlook on the next steps on a 12 months horizon towards the achievement of the country's priorities and to indicate whether the roadmap requires to be revised. These next steps will be used for the pathfinder report next year.

Question 9: Is there a need to revise the Pathfinder Country roadmap priorities for Fiji?

Is there a need to revise the Pathfinder Country roadmap priorities?

- a. Is there a need to revise the PATHFINDER COUNTRY roadmap priorities? [Y/N]
 - a. Yes,
 - i. Need to update the priorities
 - ii. Need to update roadmap goals/targets

Question 10: What next steps is Fiji planning to undertake until April 2022?

Next step 1

1 - What is the title of next step ?

Conducting of Child Labour inspections at workplaces and ensuring child labour awareness programs are taken at the District and Divisional level.

1 - Under which work area does this next step fall? (multiple answers possible)

Child Labour

Next step 2

2 - What is the title of next step ?

Discussing with the stakeholders the Draft National Action Plan for the eradication of child labour.

2 - Under which work area does this next step fall? (multiple answers possible)

Child Labour

Question 11: In which areas would Fiji need support to reach its own roadmap priorities?

[Question 11] In which areas would Vietnam need support to reach its own roadmap priorities?

Increase funding to the Ministry for the purpose of Child Labour programs.

Question 12: What is Fiji's 2021 Action pledge for the Elimination of Child Labour?

Name of action pledge

Finalize the national child labour policy

Short description of Action Pledge

The Fijian Government has pledged on the following:

- a. Finalisation of the National Child Labour Policy;
- b. Review of the Current National Employment Policy (Priority No. 9);
- c. Implementation of the National Occupational Health Services Strategic Plan and;
- d. Formulation of Paperless Labour Inspection Program.

Fiji's Action Pledge can be found [here](#).