



Fiji

Annual Pathfinder Progress Report

May 2021-April 2022

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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 2022, 29 countries globally have manifested interest to become pathfinder countries. Out of these 18 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 2021 and April 2022 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 2021 and April 2022.
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's roadmap priorities

The first section looks at both 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 are asked to provide short feedback on all their stated priorities and next steps. Moreover, this section allows Pathfinder Countries to report upon challenges they have encountered over the past 12 months.

Question 1.a: What progress has been made against the national roadmap priorities since May 2021?

- ▶ **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, and agricultural stakeholders for example.**

Progress

Fiji's commitment towards the Elimination of Child Labour is fully enunciated in the law under Part 10 of the Employment Relations Act 2007 which defines the issues of the worst forms of Child Labour, minimum age of employment, the rights of a child, conditions on restricting the employment of children, and hours and type of work that a child can perform if he or she is above the age of 15 years, the minimum employment age in Fiji.

The following trainings were conducted to key stakeholders on the Child labour laws including policies on child labour;

- 17, 19, and 30 August 2021 – Training on Combating child labor in Fiji on elimination of child labor and its worst forms for worker organizations represented by the Fiji Trade Union Congress (FTUC), employer groups represented by the Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation, civil society organization such as Save the Children, Homes of Hope, and other key stakeholders Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji Police Force etc.
- 8 & 9 September 2021 – Training on Combating child labor in Fiji Awareness on elimination of child labor and its worst forms for labor officers
- 22 November-10 December 2021 – Training on the Joint Child Labour Inspections Protocol for Worst Forms of Child labour in the Western

The training for the stakeholder partners was also to equip them with the knowledge in relation to the identification of child labour and the processes to be carried out in addressing child labour.

Challenges

-Budgetary Constraints

- ▶ **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 Fijian Government through the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty alleviation has implemented a comprehensive guideline for Interagency on Child Abuse and Neglect which came into effect on 17 December 2015 and had revised edition -2020 consists of the following six (6) government agencies:

1. Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation;
2. Fiji Police Force;
3. Ministry of Education, Heritage, and Arts;
4. Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations;
5. Ministry of Health and Medical Services; and
6. Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs.

The guideline is the operational framework of the interagency committee. It outlines the roles and responsibilities, commitment, and collaborative actions of the implementing agencies to work together to ensure a timely and holistic response to children in need of protection which includes child labour. This also ensures a robust and systematic approach in withdrawing children from child labour and returning them to school and other educational institutes.

Through the interagency committee and technical support from the ILO Country Office, the committee is currently developing a Joint Child Labour Inspections Protocol and have held trainings and consultations on this from 22 November-10 December 2021 in the Central, Western and Northern divisions for labour inspectorates, social welfare officers, teachers, local authority enforcement officers, health inspectors, Ministry of I-Taukei officers, and Police officers.

Through these trainings we have managed to set up seven (7) District Interagency Committees that have assisted in the areas of child protection including child labour,

reporting of cases, and ensuring that a stronger network is built at the District and Divisional level.

Challenges

NA

- ▶ **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 Department of Social Welfare (DoSW) has the statutory responsibility for the Care and Protection of children under the Juveniles Act Cap.56 along with the Fiji Police Force who also has the powers of intervening when they consider a child to need care and protection.

The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation provides the following programmes for the welfare, safety, and protection of the children in Fiji:

1. Care and Protection Allowance – the state provides the child with adequate care and protection when parents charged with that responsibility fail to do so.
2. Community Child Protection Programs - works cooperatively with governments and non-government organization in Fiji to increase family, community responsibility for children’s rights to protection from abuse and neglect, focusing on prevention strategies.

The Fiji Police Force has a ‘Blue Light Program’ which provides training and awareness to the communities for children and young person at risk, leadership, and life-skills training. The program effectively uses strength based and participatory approached that recognizes traditional systems and methods of learning and engaging communities and children;

3. National Coordinating Committee on Children (NCCC) - responsible for coordinating the implementation of the ‘UN Convention on the Rights of a Child’ (UNCRC (UN Convention on the Rights of a Child)) into Fiji’s laws and procedures. The role of the NCCC is to improve the systems, services and collaboration between agencies that deal with children who are victims and survivors of child abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation including child labour in addition to improving community awareness on child protection issues.

The six (6) primary agencies who are members of the NCCC include: Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations. Other non-governmental organizations who are also members of the NCCC include Save the Children, Empower Pacific, Medical Services Pacific (MSP), Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Furthermore, there are government initiatives which ensures that we provide the best possible care and protection to all our children and ensure that we provide the much-needed assistance so that no child is forced into child labour by providing free education, free textbooks per child to our children and establishing technical and vocational training programs including scholarships which has benefitted our children.

Challenges

NA

► **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 specialized and comprehensive training on WFCL (Worst Forms of Child Labour) 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

1. The Labour Standard Services of the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations has been working closely with other Government Inter-Agency departments in providing the statistics on the area of Child Labour. The Ministry has conducted a total of 2,519 labour inspection including Child Labour

inspection and investigation of 12 Child Labour cases from May 2021 to May 2022.

2. The Ministry under the Map-16 project and with the assistance of the International Labour Organization Suva office has been working on the training for joint protocol for worst forms of child labour in informal sector, inspection referral system with agencies like Fiji Police Force and Ministry of Women, Children & Poverty Alleviation etc. The training was conducted on 19/11/2021 and 22/11/2021 in Suva; 24/11/2021 in Sigatoka; 25/11/2021 in Nadi and 26/11/2021 in Lautoka. These training were for the frontline workers like Labour Inspectors, Welfare Officer, Education officers, Police Officers and the Ministry of iTaukei Officers.
3. The Ministry has created awareness programs for Child Labour through radio broadcast programs to ensure that we reach the maximum coverage. During the reporting period, the Ministry have been able to participate in six (6) Radio Talkback shows and this is an ongoing program.
4. As part of the World Day against Child Labour celebration, the Ministry is working closely with Ministry of Education to provide training programs to School Teachers and children on areas of Child Labour and worst forms of child labour.

Challenges

Due to COVID 19 restrictions, we were not able to conduct many face-to-face programs, however, our outreach programs using mass media have continued.

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

5.1 Organize 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

1. Through coordinated meetings with International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Alliance 8.7 Committee, the platform for Pathfinder country was established. During the National Strategic Planning Forum to Develop a Joint Road-map for Fiji as a Pathfinder Country to Achieve SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Target 8.7 in August 2019, the Interagency Committee on Alliance 8.7 was formed and through this platform, six (6) governmental agencies Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and

Arts, Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relation continued to work towards all issues of child protection and held Districts Interagency meetings in line with the Inter-agency Guideline.

2. The establishment of the Inter-Agency guideline and six Ministries working together to combat child labour in Fiji is a major achievement that has been shared with other countries. The robust labour inspection program through the Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations in areas of Child Labour to eliminate child labour and worst forms of child labour and ensure greater awareness is done to Employers and Workers.

► **Priority 6: On forced labour:**

- Ratification of P.29, 2014
- Legal review of national legislation on FL
- Study of the situation in practice on FL, and MS in Fiji
- Policy guideline, 'Procedures on FL' for Labour inspectors and FL case management system
- Investigation of FL cases through Paperless Labour Inspection system (developed currently with the ILO support)
- Trainings for Labour Inspectors, Police, Immigration
- General Employment Relations Awareness raising on all employment related matters which includes forced labour and child labour.

Progress

The Fijian Government has not ratified the ILO P. 29, 2014.

Currently the Fijian Government is working with International Labour Organisation through a project to review regulations on the areas of Child Labour. We are currently working in terms of the review process.

Policy guideline "Procedures on Forced labour' for labour inspectors and Forced Labour Cases management system" this has been addressed through the paperless inspections system currently being undertaken through an ILO project. The Paperless Labour Inspection application is expected to strengthen the capacity and efficiency of Fiji's Labour inspectorate to carry out and follow up on inspections at all levels; improve the quality of workplace compliance monitoring; analyze, collect data through the system for strategic planning; generate periodic reports

automatically; improve performance management of inspection system and inspectors; enhance communication within the labour inspectorate at the Ministry and divisional levels or between relevant institutions. The project is at its final stage of completion.

Investigation of FL cases through Paperless Labour Inspection system (developed currently with the ILO support) - as explained above.

The Ministry has conducted trainings for Labour Inspectors, Fiji Police Force, Department of Immigration on areas related to forced labour.

Through proactive labour inspection and awareness programs conducted through radio broadcast system and in person training, employers, trade unions and members of public have been advised on the child labour laws including forced labour. The Fijian government is the second country in the world to ratify ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment on 25 June 2020.

Challenges

During the period under review, majority of the face-to-face trainings were not conducted due to the restrictions placed on COVID 19.

Question 1.b: What progress has been made against the next steps that Fiji identified for the period May 2021-April 2022?

- ▶ **Next steps 1: Conducting of Child Labour inspections at workplaces and ensuring child labour awareness programs are taken at the District and Divisional level.**

Achieved

Please comment on the progress made during last year

Through the compliance monthly reports, the Labour Compliance Unit of the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations have conducted **2,519 labour inspections** and child labour awareness at the District and Divisional level during the period under review. These inspections and child labour awareness ensured that no child is employed during school hours and any child that is in employment, the employer will have to follow the provisions of the Employment Relations Act 2007

- ▶ **Next step 2: Discussing with the stakeholders the Draft National Action Plan for the eradication of child labour.**

Achieved

Please comment on the progress made during last year

The **draft national action plan on eradication of child labour** has been completed through the ILO Map 16 project and will follow the due process of completion.

Question 2: Overall, looking at the progress made vis-à-vis your roadmap priorities, how would you classify your progress over the past 12 months?

We have made **great progress** towards our roadmap priorities including 2,519 labour inspections in child labour and general labour compliance. Our outreach programmes with stakeholders on the areas of child labour through mass media programs including the Radio Talkback shows our commitment to maximize our outreach to all Fijians.

Most of our roadmap priorities were affected due the COVID-19 restrictions.

Question 3: Looking at your progress regarding your national priorities and next steps, what are the main successes between May 2021 and April 2022 you would like to highlight?

The implementation of the **Paperless Inspections system** which is on the final stages of completion. This program will ensure a robust child labour inspections system being implemented at the ground level to ensure accurate data being submitted.

Question 4: 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 Fijian Government pledged the following:

- (1) Finalization of National Labour Policy;
- (2) Review of current National Employment Policy;
- (3) Implementation of the National Occupational Health Services Strategic Plan; and
- (4) Formulation of Paperless Labour Inspection Program.

Question 5: What challenges, including COVID-19 if relevant, did you face to implement the Pathfinder Country roadmap priorities?

Due to the national lockdowns, there were no labour inspections conducted and awareness for a few months on the implementation of the Pathfinder Country roadmap priorities.

How were challenges overcome? What are the lessons learned?

We held most of our meetings virtually and trainings conducted virtually to ensure we reach out to the members of the public on the areas of child labour and worst forms of child labour.

Evidence of achieved progress

The second section allows reporting on the evidence of the achieved progress. It will allow Fiji to provide insights into how the progress that occurred between May 2021 and April 2022 was assessed.

Question 6: How have you examined the progress against the national priorities identified in the Pathfinder country roadmap priorities?

Formal evaluation process

What formal evaluation tools were utilized to determine success/failure of the national priorities identified?

Other evaluation tools used to determine success/failure include the effective implementation of the Employment Relations Act 2007 and its regulations through proactive labour inspection including the collaborative joint child labour inspection conducted by the Inter-agency committee members (Ministry of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, and Fiji Police Force) on targeted hot-spot areas where child labour is prevalent. This was conducted in September and October 2021 targeting six (6) locations within the capital of Suva city.

What other formal evaluation tools have been used?

Inter- Agency training programs, face to face meeting with key interagency partners which includes the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs.

Question 7: Were any other stakeholders like government agencies/ social partners/ civil society organisations involved in assessing progress?

Yes, the International Labour Organization provided technical support in assessing the progress.

Please specify who and how other stakeholders were involved in assessing progress.

The progress was assessed during meetings, workshops, and training programs with key stakeholders from the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs with the support of ILO.

Value of the Pathfinder process

The third section provides you with the opportunity to reflect upon the Pathfinder process and help put the results you reported upon into context. This section allows Fiji to report how the Pathfinder process may have helped them progress towards their national priorities between May 2021 and April 2022.

Question 8: What are the main highlights around the pathfinder process for Fiji?

Increased collaboration on SDG 8.7 with international partner from the International Labour Organization. Through ILO Map-16 project, many training programs were organized at the community level to create awareness on areas of child labour.

Increased collaboration on SDG 8.7 with domestic partners from Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, and Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs.

Has Fiji supported sub-regional/regional/global initiatives on the elimination of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking?

Yes

Please clarify how Fiji supported sub-regional/regional/global initiatives on the elimination of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking

Sponsoring, convening or chairing initiatives and events to accelerate action is done through ILO Map-16 Project with the ILO office for the South Pacific Island countries;

Participating in one or more of the Alliance 8.7 action groups: Fiji participated in the Asia Regional Conference on Reaching SDG Target 8.7 on Eradicating Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Child Labour in Kathmandu, Nepal from 20-22 November 2019. The main objectives of the conference were to:

- Promote comprehensive approaches to eliminating all forms of child labour and forced labour in the context of Alliance 8.7,
- Setting country-specific targets for SDG Target 8.7;
- Advance ratification & application of ILO Protocol 29, sharing the experience of those countries that have ratified the Forced Labour Protocol or have taken initial steps leading towards ratification;
- Showcase innovative approaches to tackling forced labour, child labour and human trafficking; and
- Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue on child labour and forced labour in the region.

The Fijian Government has also given 4 pledges.

With which domestic partners did Fiji collaborate to achieve its priorities?

The Ministry has been able to achieve its priorities through multi-stakeholder collaboration with employers through employer organization(s) such as the Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation, worker organization(s) represented by the Fiji Trade Union Congress, civil society organization(s) which includes Save the Children, Empower Pacific, Medical Services Pacific (MSP), Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS), Fiji Bureau of Statistics office and the key interagency partners; Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Art.

Please specify the name and how you collaborated with employers/private sector on a domestic level?

On 19 August 2021, the Ministry has conducted training to the employers/private sector represented by the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federations on the areas of Combatting Child Labour and its Worst Forms.

Please specify the name and how you collaborated with worker organization(s) on a domestic level?

On 17 August 2021, the Ministry has conducted trainings to worker organization through the Fiji Trade Union Congress on areas of Combating Child Labour and its Worst Forms.

Please specify the name and how you collaborated with civil society organization(s) on a domestic level?

On 30 August 2021, the Ministry has been able to conduct awareness and training for civil society organizations such as the Homes of Hope, Fiji Council of Social Services, Save the Children etc. on areas of Child Labour.

Please specify the name and how you collaborated with the statistical office on a domestic level?

The Ministry continually engages with the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBOS) through awareness, training on areas related to Child labour including data collation on Child labour.

Please specify the name and how you collaborated with other ministries on a domestic level?

The Ministry has been able to collaboratively working with other agencies through the implementation of the Inter-agency Guideline and child protection programs with the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Police Force, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs.

Future /Now what ?

This section allows pathfinder countries to indicate whether the roadmap requires to be revised and to have an outlook on the next steps to achieve your priorities on a 12-month horizon. Please note that the next steps will be used for the pathfinder report next year.

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

No

Question 10: What next steps are you planning to undertake until April 2023?

3 next steps.

▶ **Next step 1: Full Implementation of the Paperless Inspections Program on the area of labour inspection and child labour**

What are your targets until April 2023 for this next step?

Conducting of 3500 labour inspections and child labour inspections at industry and community levels.

Based on what evidence will you be able to determine that you achieved this step?

Through planning of this current reporting year.

Under which work area does this next step fall?

Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking

▶ **Next step 2: Community Awareness**

What are your targets until April 2023 for this next step?

The Ministry is targeting 10 community awareness on the areas of child labour.

Based on what evidence will you be able to determine that you achieved this step?

Based on the current reporting year plans.

Under which work area does this next step fall?

Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking.

▶ **Next step 3: Child Labour training for Labour Inspectors**

What are your targets until April 2023 for this next step?

Conduct 3 Child Labour Trainings for Labour Inspectors at District and Divisional levels.

Based on what evidence will you be able to determine that you achieved this step?

This is through the planning process for the next reporting year. The training programs, information and attendance will be our evidence

Under which work area does this next step fall?

Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking

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

Labour Inspection system and community awareness through the ILO Country Office.

Question 12: 2021 was the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour. Please, in a few lines, describe the major outcomes from your action pledge.

Title of Pledge: "Finalize the national child labour policy"

Currently, the National Occupational Health and Safety Services strategic plan has been implemented and the formulation of the paperless labour inspection program is in the final stages.

The National Child labour policy is also being drafted and under review process.

Pledge page see [here](#).