Building Better Government-
Private Sector Policy Dialogue in Vanuatu

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The importance of policy dialogue for private sector

‘Reform priorities for enhancing Pacific links [include] maintaining political stability and ensuring stakeholder participation’

Naoyuki Yoshino, Dean, ADBI,
Launch of Pacific Opportunities: Leveraging Asia’s Growth, 2015 Pacific Update Conference
VCCI Report to the National Sustainable Development Plan Working Group (VCCI NSDP Report)

### Most important policy priorities

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<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Port Vila and surrounds</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; = Health</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Good governance</td>
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<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; = Education</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Health</td>
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<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; = Good governance</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Competitively priced infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; = Environmental protection</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Education</td>
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<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Sustainable resource management</td>
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### Least important policy priorities

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<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Traditional economy promotion</td>
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<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Macroeconomic stability &amp; equitable growth</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; = Climate change action</td>
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<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; = Private sector development &amp; employment creation</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Protection of biodiversity</td>
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<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; = Primary sector development</td>
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<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Green growth</td>
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VCCI NSDP Report: Problems for businesses (1 no problem; 2 minor problem; 3 major problem)

**Biggest problems (>2.5)**

- Political instability
- High costs of transport within Vanuatu
- Lack of infrastructure
- Inefficient govt service delivery
- High govt taxes, fees and levies
- Inconsistent govt taxes, levies etc.

**Smallest problems (<2)**

- Telecom. /internet costs
- Secure access to land
- Limited access to finance
- Lack of support services for business development
- High costs to import business inputs
Building better dialogue
ILO Tripartite Approach to Employment Policy

• Declaration on Social Justice for Fair Globalization 2008
  – C 144 tripartite consultation

• Pacific ILO Members
  – Fiji (joined in 1974);
  – Papua New Guinea (joined in 1976);
  – Solomon Islands (joined in 1984);
  – Kiribati (joined in 2000);
  – Vanuatu (joined in 2004);
  – Samoa (joined in 2005);
  – The Republic of Marshall Islands (joined in July 2007);
  – Tuvalu (joined in May 2008);
  – The Republic of Palau (joined in May 2012);
  – Cook Islands (joined in June 2015); and
  – Kingdom of Tonga (joined in February 2016)
Adoption of ILO Tripartite Approach in the Pacific

– Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs)

– More laws (either new structures or updating existing structures)
  • Kiribati Employment & IR Code 2015
  • Samoa Labour and Employment Relations Act 2013
  • Solomon Islands Labour Rules 2012
  • Vanuatu Employment Amendment Act 2010
  • Fiji Employment Relations Promulgation 2007
  • PNG Employment Relations Amendment Act 1991 (amend. 1998)
Vanuatu’s legal evolution

**Labour Advisory Board 1983**
- Board of up to 15 members
  - 5 public servants
  - Equal number employer & worker reps
- Simply defined functions (provide advice on any matter affecting employment & labour relations)
- To determine its own rules of procedure

**Tripartite Labour Advisory Council 2010**
- 10 member Council
  - Commissioner of Labour (Chair)
  - 3 members from govt, employers and workers
- More detailed statement of objectives and functions
- To determine its own rules of procedure
A success?

• ILO Press Release 1 May 2011

For the first time since independence in 1980 government, workers and employers have formally joined forces to create a tripartite advisory body to help guide Vanuatu’s development of new labour and employment policies...

Strengthening the governance of the labour market is expected to result in a variety of direct and indirect benefits to workers and employers...

The new council has been acclaimed by both workers’ and employers’ organizations.
Ideal vs Reality?

Informal/subsistence/non-unionised workers

Stable base
Gaps between concept & practice

• Processes
  – Minute taking
  – Advance notice of agendas/papers
  – Pre-meeting preparation
  – Consultations with constituencies to ensure acting as representatives

• Inequalities in capacity of social partners
  – Govt reps as employees or policy advisors?
  – Overambitious work programmes

• Determining the policy agenda

• Communications between TLAC & Minister
Narrowing the gap: Legal fixes

• Laws
  – Samoa (and others as well):
    • section 6, meetings at least 2 x every 6 months, plus can be called
  – PNG:
    • section 9F 6 weeks notice of meetings;
    • 9H effect of recommendations;
    • 9I –J secretariat
Narrowing the gap: practical fixes

• ILO already building employer & worker organisation capacity
  – Organisational culture around meetings
  – Organisational culture around acting in a representative manner

• Govt capacity being addressed?
  – How to act as govt policy representative
  – How to provide secretariat support
    • Resource issues
    • Organisational culture around meetings
Moving forward

• Academic
  – Comparative study of operation of tripartite labour bodies in Pacific

• Practical
  – Developing organisational culture
    • PICPA?
    • ADB?