



APAC TVET Forum 2022 'Fiji Industry'

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INTRODUCTION

- Thank Lesley and the Team for inviting me to speak on the **FIJI Industry** experience on the skills problem that FIJI is facing and what are the corrective actions that are being undertaken.
- I will speak on:
 - The current situation;
 - The challenges;
 - The solutions; and
 - The future plans;



CURRENT SITUATION

- The focus on TVET was not a priority in the recent past by Employers and TVET providers.
- The realization of this oversight came to the fore with the start of skills migration in 2015 as a result of some bilateral agreements between Governments.
- As a result, the private sector in collaboration with the UN wrote to Government to form a Skills and Apprenticeship Council to address this issue.
- Martin Draper and Professor Hitendra Pillay wrote papers to support our submission with the intention to scale up the supply of skilled workers since skills migration will not stop.
- Fiji is not alone since other Pacific Islands are experiencing the same.
- Surprisingly, some unemployed citizens of working age refuse to respond to vacancies.

CHALLENGES

- Skills shortage in FIJI as a result of the skills migration.
- Difficult to find unskilled workers too since the opportunity to work as an expatriate is attractive for Pacific Islanders.
- There is a new initiative by the Australian Government to attract 3,000 Pacific Islanders to relocate to Australia on a PR with their families from 2023 onwards.
- The UK is looking at opening the same.
- This is exacerbated by the increased flow of Tourists into FIJI resulting in the recruitment & selection of more Fijians in the Hospitality Industry.
- This is further exacerbated by an increased interest in Fiji as a BPO Industry resulting in more workers needed.
- Because the focus in the last 10 years was not on TVET, the speed with which to recover is slow.



SOLUTIONS

- Formalise the Skills Council and the Apprenticeship Council.
 - The Paper has been submitted to Cabinet for consideration.
 - With the assistance and collaboration of APTC, the private sector is providing feedback to FHEC on what the specific skills are needed.
 - Initially, these two councils will sit under FHEC until it has sufficient “wind” to venture out on its own.
 - The Chairperson on this Council will be from the private sector.
- Work on scaling up the supply of skilled graduates.
- There needs to be a lot of collaboration and good will between all parties.



FUTURE PLANS

- Work closely with NEC to provide a job matching mechanism, using the digital platform where NEC will host the platform and invite unemployed citizens to register their interests, and employers registering the vacancies that they find hard to fill.
- The system should be able to collate the registered interests of the workers and that of the employers and match both parties so that the recruitment & selection process may start.





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