

USAID/IRPP July 2011 monthly report

In early July, a review workshop on the existing industrial relations textbook being used course was organized at University of Labor and Social Affairs (ULSA) in order to incorporate changes into the new textbook being developed. A total of 25 participants including members of ULSA's IR faculty and students provided feedback on this textbook which had been used as teaching material for several years. Overall, the participants believed that despite some positive aspects in the current textbook, there should be substantial improvements and changes incorporated into the textbook being developed so that it could be more effective resource and reference book for both students and lecturers. After this workshop, ULSA will continue to work with other two stakeholders to compile and completed the chapters and prepare for an evaluation phase.

In the middle of July, Jeff Wheeler, a US DOL Labor Inspection specialist traveled to Vietnam for the fourth time to follow up on the technical assistance work for MOLISA Labor Inspectorate. Prior to his trip, three tripartite committees each with a different area of focus, education materials, training and information management system, were officially established, based on Jeff's recommendations from previous trips. During this current trip, two workshops on promotion of enterprise self-assessment practices through a pilot regional labor inspectorate model and two pilot training workshops on handling labor complaints were organized in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Jeff Wheeler was the resource person for these trainings and workshops in which he shared relevant experiences from the U.S and other countries on handling labor complaints and self assessment models. Development of an online system in Vietnam was one of the areas that the specialist recommended for improving the performance and efficiency of enterprise self assessment. As a DOL representative, he also mentioned the possibility of another project phase funded by the USDOL after the first phase and six month extension period, to focus on enhancing capacity of labor inspectorate, collective bargaining and the roles of trade unions officials at all levels. In addition he met with different stakeholders including MOLISA and different universities to propose the idea of forming a chapter of the International Labor and Employment Relations Association (ILERA) in Vietnam. This would be a good opportunity for IR researchers and practitioners in Vietnam to network with their counterparts in other countries.

At end of the month, one training on collective bargaining was organized for VCCI in Hanoi using IR specialist from Penn State University, Mark Anner. This training was part of a tripartite CBA capacity building program for all partners. The specialist was able to build on the curricula used by other trainers to design one specifically for the VCCI and incorporate elements on corporate social responsibility, multi-employer bargaining, three step negotiations, and comparative wages patterns from other competing countries. Mark Anner also worked with the project to find ways to utilize existing (but unused) raw data from the 2010-11 VNCCI survey targeting FDIs to develop some baseline inform on industrial relations that could be used by the LWD. In addition, he worked with the project to give insights and recommendations on the IR textbook activity and agreed to be both an outside reviewer when the drafts are finalized and to develop accompanying case material (i.e. source book) in the coming months for the project.

During the month, the project office finalized a quarterly report, a six-month report and a project assessment report - all sent the project owner for the purpose of reporting and preparation for a project management unit meeting in August to discuss about the project outcomes and a possibility of project extension.

Upcoming activities in August

Victor Narro from UCLA Labor Center, a legal advisory services specialist will travel to Vietnam for one week from 01 to 06 August to conduct a planning workshop for VCCI's legal advisory services for employers and a training workshop on promotion of trade union legal advisory services as well as to continue to work with VGCL in terms of finalizing the content of a handbook for legal advisory centers and offices

Follow up activities with the following counterparts will be carried out:

- VCCI: follow up on the development of VCCI's labor arbitration center and labor arbitration training program offered by Cornell University as well as recommendations stemming from Victor Narro training.
- VGCL: A signing ceremony of the pilot CBA to be organized in Binh Duong province as well as follow up on LAC and LAO work, including identification of national consultant
- LWD: follow up planning on PIRC development activities as well as planning for continuing IR strategy work and eventual in-depth survey
- Universities: follow up on the textbook project
- Labor Inspectorate: preparation for the implementation of the pilot assessment activity, follow up on planning.
- Legal Department: finalization of the outstanding work
- Project extension: paperwork on assessment of the project to be completed