

USAID/IRPP September 2011 monthly report

During the two first weeks of September, Project Office had various meetings with Labor Inspectorate (which is the Project Owner and head of the Steering Committee) to further discuss the Project's upcoming activities, including the proposed extension period and detailed plan to carry out the pilot enterprises self-assessment process. Work on this proposed project extension consumed much of the Project Office time during the month as the project had both USAID and MoLISA procedures to address. The Project Office worked with both the International Cooperation Department (ICD) of MoLISA and Labor Inspectorate the extension procedures including budget clarification to be completed for an approval. By the end of the month, all the administrative procedures had been completed and the project extension approved.

In the middle of the month, COP and Deputy Chief of Party met with an ILO consultant, Prof. Greg Bamber from Monash University (Australia) to discuss comparative IR models. Prof. Bamber also comments and specific recommendations on IR model in Vietnam, and development of national strategies. In addition, IRPP and ILO together discussed the ILERA's role in promoting sound industrial relations in Vietnam and creating a national chapter of ILERA (Intl. Labor Education and Research Association).

In the third week of the month, Project staff traveled to HCMC and Binh Duong to for various activities. In HCMC, Project staff had meetings with partners in HCMC, including DoLISA (to follow up on the Provincial IR Committee Model) and Ton Duc Than (TDT) University and attended a forum on Corporate Social Responsibility. Project staff followed up with the TDT University on the textbook project including discussion on the contents of "Labor Disputes" chapter had already submitted as a draft and the necessary modifications based on comments of national and international consultants. Discussions also focused on preparation of two representatives of TDT University taking part in the International Voluntary Visitor program to the US next November.

The main purpose of this trip was to observe the pilot multi-employer CBA textile signing ceremony in Binh Duong on 24 September. Also attending the ceremony was Mr. Howard Handler from the USAID General Development Office. During the ceremony, representatives of Binh Duong Textile and Garment Business Association Executive Committee and Binh Duong Textile & Garment Sector Trade Union Executive Committee gave presentations. They also offered flowers to USAID and Project representatives to recognize their contributions to the success of the negotiating and signing process. There were total nine in number of enterprises signing this model CBA, which will hopefully be the basis of better labor relations. This in turn has the potential to attract more enterprises in Binh Duong Garment Industry to join the CBA.

Throughout the month, project office work on preparations for the IVV program focusing on labor education in conjunction with the Public Affairs Office of the Department of State and the labor centers at UCLA and CUNY which developed the original proposal and would co-hosts in the US. Project staff worked with the five participating organizations to nominate two participants each and then collected and translated various bio forms for the Public Affairs Office's consideration. The project office also helped

disseminate information among participants, such as information about IVV program and regulations, the schedule of the 10-day tour and the potential flight information.

Coordinating and facilitating the preparation for the VOLVIS program - Instructing and collecting personal documents of participants; - Contacting US Embassy to deal with nomination changes from MOLISA; - Facilitating participants to get passports, dipnotes, airtickets, etc.

Upcoming activities in October

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

- VCCI: will follow up with a workshop on development of both legal services and assist with development of a labor arbitration center and labor arbitration-training program offered by Cornell University.
- VGCL: follow up on LAC and LAO handbook development 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 and the US-based comparative IR specialist on developing supplemental materials.
- Labor Inspectorate: initiated the work on the pilot self-assessment program and lined up US DOL consultant to come in December
- Legal Department: planned activities around labor law education
- Pilot CBA: lined up the US based specialist for late November to conduct trainings