

USAID/IRPP February 2012 Monthly Report

Although, the first week of the February was still part of the Tet holiday period, the Project Office began scheduled project activities as soon as the Vietnamese counterparts resumed normal operation. In February, the Project Office conducted 05 workshops/meetings/trainings and several consultations for a total of 270 participants from tripartite stakeholders/counterparts.

Apart from being directly involved in preparing and implementing these activities, the COP and PO staff also arranged the technical assistance of Mr. Michael Tacosky – US IT Specialist and Ms. Van Nguyen – US Education Partnership Consultant and Dr. Nguyen Huu Dung, National IR Strategy Consultant to share experiences and introduce/train locals in advanced approaches on (i) compliance to labor inspection related international standards, (ii) online labor law self assessment scheme model; (iii) Sound IR strategy roadmap recommendations; and (iv) and IR education needs of Vietnamese partner educational institutions;

Labor inspection/ILSs compliance/Automation adaptation

In the 2nd week, the COP and PO staff had a series of meetings/consultations with ICD and LI leaders (the Project owner and the PMU head) to update project progress and plan out the support activities in March. Also, the COP met LWD leaders to discuss the IR baseline survey findings and sound IR strategy recommendation paper which would be launched in a National Workshop in March.

Furthermore, the COP attended the MOLISA workshop on Labor Inspection compliance with related International Labor Standards and presented impacts of the Project's supports in implementing the international labor inspection standards, namely the ratified ILO C.81 on labor inspection and to be considered C. 129 and C.150 and the on - going Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPPs).

At the National Workshop on Labor Law Compliance Online Self Assessment Scheme where chief national, regional and provincial labor inspectors from 35 provinces gathered, under facilitation of COP, the US IT Consultant introduced a pilot online self assessment software (OSAS) which is tailored for labor inspection work. The OSAS model is to be efficient and a multipurpose automation vehicle/tool for Vietnamese labor inspectors to (i) develop relevant database; (ii) quickly update labor law compliance status; (iii) handling macro/micro labor emerging issues responsively, promptly and accurately at the fact of labor inspectors' chronically outnumbering versus enterprises' immensely increasing in numbers.

To that end, at PO's arrangement and facilitation, the US IT Consultant conducted several intensive OSAS trainings/technology transferring sessions to the members of LI's Managing Information System Committee in Ho Chi Minh city and Hanoi to adapt the software further into Vietnamese labor inspection practices.

Sound IR Strategy Development

The DCOP coordinated with LWD to host 02 consultative meetings and a National Workshop on NIRC's 2 year Operation Review in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City with tripartite participation. In relation to these activities, the PO supported IR baseline survey findings and a draft Sound IR Development Strategy were presented for discussions and would be finalized in the upcoming IR National Conference chaired by the MoLISA Vice-minister in Ho Chi Minh City;

IR Education needs assessments

To prompt the IR education needs assessment process, the COP, PO staff and the US IR Education Consultant met leaders of VGCL and the 03 universities to design a US Vietnam IR and trade union faculty exchange program. This is the follow up to the VOLVIS labor study tour to US which were arranged by the PO last November.

Additional, the PO has been coordinating with relevant counterparts to finalize handbooks draft for LACs/LAOs Operation and labor inspection visits as well as IR syllabus and glossary for labor end-users.

Arbitration/Dispute Resolution

To strengthen employers' capacity in labor arbitration/alternative dispute resolution services, the PO also assisted the VCCI/BEA in liaising with Mr. Richard Fincher - Cornell University Adjunct Professor and ADR consultant to continue to develop a labor arbitration program as part of the VCCI-Cornell partnership.

ILO/IRPP Coordination/USAID Gender integration

The COP give a briefing with members of the ILO Labor Inspection Assessment Team, focusing on project work, on information sharing and coordination for future work on labor inspection systems in Vietnam.

The PO staff also joined with other USAID partners to attend a Gender Briefing and took note of subsequently integrating gender issues in project planning out and reviewing work as required by the USAID's policy.

Technical Assistance Compilation/Closing down activities

As the Project will be closing down, the PO staff has begun to compiled TA materials which are considered as valuable materials for Vietnamese stakeholder's use and began to arrange inbound project wrap-up visit of Ms. Sarah Lehman. For that purpose, the COP has been compiling and drafting the Final Evaluation Report for submission to USAID and MOLISA.

Lastly, the PO has focused the resources to set up work agenda and administrative arrangements for inbound mission visits, namely:

- Mr. Jeff Wheeler, USDOL Specialist for International Labor Affairs (tentative);
- Jan Sunoo, IR Specialist (tentative)
- Ms. Nguyen Van, IR Education Development Specialist (tentative)
- Ms. Sara Lehman, DAI Program Manger (March 18-31)

Tentative upcoming Projects activities in March 2012:

1. Arrangements for STTA mission of Jeff Wheeler the MOLISA's National Workshop on Labor Inspection Strategy and 14th National OSH Week in Dong Nai, 13 – 18 March 2012 (tentative)
2. National Workshop on Labor Inspection Strategies March 14, 2012
3. Preparation for work agenda and schedule of Sandra Lehman's closedown mission, March 18-31 (or April 2012 tentatively);
4. Final Evaluation Workshop, March 13, 2012, Hanoi (or week of March 19)
5. National Workshop on IR Strategy Development, March 8 – 9 2012, Ho Chi Minh City;
6. Support to host the National Conference on Reviewing PM's Directive No. 1129 on Sound IR (tentative – last week in March)
7. Attending the 14th National OSH Week, March 15 – 19 2012, Dong Nai
8. IR textbook and material appraisal workshop, March 23 (tentative date)
9. Final Project Review finalization and submission;
10. Closing down work