



BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR AFFAIRS United States Department of Labor

Division of Trade Agreement Administration and Technical Cooperation (TAATC)

Trade Agreement Administration and Technical Cooperation

The U.S. Department of Labor plays a role in all bilateral free trade agreements signed by the United States through an interagency coordination process with the State Department, U.S. Trade Representative, the Commission for Labor Cooperation (Mexico and Canada) and other contact points on international labor issues. The division of Trade Agreement Administration and Technical Cooperation (TAATC) coordinates public submissions containing specific allegations that a party has failed to meet its commitments or obligations arising under the labor chapter of the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (NAALC) under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). TAATC also tracks potential submissions that may be filed with other FTA countries, which include Australia, Bahrain, Chile, Morocco, Singapore, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement with the Dominican Republic (CAFTA-DR).

Technical Cooperation

Technical Cooperation projects are funded and managed by TAATC primarily in support of the free trade agenda, focusing on:

- Increasing compliance with National Labor Laws and International Labor Standards;
- Reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS;
- Expanding economic opportunity; and
- Improving labor management relations.

Since 2000, under this technical cooperation program, TAATC has assisted 72 countries through \$173 million in project funding. In providing assistance, TAATC partners with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), for-profit firms, and international organizations such as the International Labor Organization. TAATC taps into the expertise of other DOL agencies to help in the implementation of its projects related to labor law compliance, including occupational safety and health, mine safety health, workforce development, and labor management relations.



Afghanistan Micro-enterprise: 96% of trainees reported improved economic and social well-being six months after end of training.



Ukraine Mine Safety: After installation of equipment, the percentage of non-combustible material found in the exposed areas that had been rock dusted increased by 84.8%.



Romania – Disability Employment: Employment centers were made accessible and employment specialists were trained resulting in 124 disabled job seekers hired through the centers.

Project Examples

Central America – Dominican Republic (CAFTA): Through an interagency process, TAATC has received State Department funding to launch projects in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic. Implementation includes strengthening inspection and mediation systems, increasing public awareness of national labor laws, reducing gender discrimination, worker support centers, labor justice training, improving compliance in the agricultural sector, and strengthening the civil service.

- **Achievements:** Examples include electronic case management systems for inspectors and mediators installed – 30,000 cases administered by new system; 13% increase in programmed inspections; website with information on labor laws developed – 1.7 million hits received (www.levlaboral.com).

Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI): Working with the Department of State, TAATC has funded activities in Morocco, Oman, Bahrain, and most recently Egypt. MEPI focuses on promoting free association and collective bargaining, promoting social dialogue, promoting free trade policies and practices in Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) countries, assisting FTA countries to meet the labor requirements of their labor chapters, promote the development of employable skills, and promote gender equity in the workplace.

- **Achievements:** Examples include TAATC support of a Labor Dialogue in Oman for Morocco, Bahrain and Jordan to share their experiences with Middle Eastern TIFA countries considering signing free trade agreements with the U.S. Labor ministers participated from Jordan, the UAE, Bahrain, Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt, Yemen and Oman. Technical assistance provided to Oman has resulted in a commitment to train labor inspectors, which requires monitoring worksites to ensure that health and safety standards are observed.

HIV/AIDS Workplace Education: Launched in February 2000, TAATC has managed the workplace program in over 30 countries primarily in partnership with the International Labor Organization. TAATC works closely with the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC), which manages the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and has received support from OGAC for workplace programs in Haiti, Vietnam, Nigeria, Guyana, India, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland. The funding is used in combination with, or to extend existing programs in these countries.

- **Achievements:** Examples include over 15,000 trained on HIV/AIDS prevention and discrimination; over 640 enterprises working with the project implemented policies, training, and programs; approximately 2.9 million workers and family members reached through the program.

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