

ATTACHMENT 1

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES
(SOO)**

ILAB/OTLA 2012 CONTRACT RESEARCH PROGRAM

**ILAB/OTLA
Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20210**

27 March 2012

ILAB-OTLA Contract Research Program 2012:
Research Supporting Worker Rights, Worker Livelihoods and Vulnerable Populations in Developing Countries

Statement of Objectives

1. Background

The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) leads the U.S. Department of Labor's efforts to ensure that workers around the world are treated fairly and are able to share in the benefits of the global economy. ILAB's mission is to use all available international channels to improve working conditions, raise living standards, protect workers' ability to exercise their rights, and address the workplace exploitation of children and other vulnerable populations

2. Program Objective

The objective of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) contract research program is to acquire the services of multiple contractors to produce methodologically-rigorous and high-caliber research papers in the following topic areas: monitoring and expanding labor rights for contract labor; or involving targets of employment programs in program design.

The research findings generated will:

- (1) Inform the design of technical assistance and cooperative activities undertaken by ILAB;
- (2) Inform the development of sound policies for improving international employment, livelihoods and worker rights;
- (3) Further the knowledge base on livelihoods, worker rights, and poverty reduction.

3. Management Objective

This SOO presents the Government an opportunity to assess the offeror's understanding of all aspects of the effort to be performed, by eliminating the 'how to' instructions to accomplish the required effort. The objective is to allow the contractor maximum flexibility in determining the approach deemed most appropriate to ensure the ILAB program office is successful in achieving its stated objectives within budget, on schedule, and with low risk impact to the overall program's mission. A second management objective is to provide little to no oversight during contract performance while maintaining clear government visibility into program cost, schedule, technical performance, and risk associated with not achieving the program's objectives. The number of projects awarded is contingent upon the following:

- Total number of questions proposed for research
- Proposed amounts to complete research projects
- Proposed duration to complete research projects

The Government intends to make one or more awards under this SOO. It is anticipated that individual awards will fall within the range of \$27,000 to \$92,000.

4. Contract Objective

Proposals must address a specific research question (defined by the offeror) that falls under one of the two general research areas described below. Offerors seeking to propose work in more than one research area must submit separate proposals for each area. Proposals to extend existing research projects are welcome and encouraged.

Topic A: Expanding Labor Rights for Contract Labor

ILAB is interested in the ability of labor monitoring programs to capture the treatment and working conditions of contract laborers working off-site. Since labor monitoring and certification programs typically conduct inspections *within* factories, they often do not observe or have access to workers performing tasks under contract in *outside* workshops and through home-based work. But the practice of off-site work, in particular home-based contracting, is believed to be prevalent, particularly in the supply chain for apparel manufacturing, and case study research indicates there is reason to be concerned about the treatment of such contract labor.

Off-site contract labor can take several forms. It can be most precarious perhaps for home-based workers. These workers generally do not have direct employment relationships with the primary factories and are frequently left off factory payrolls. Consequently, they are difficult to track. Because of their relative isolation, they may also face difficulties organizing for collective bargaining and other collective action with their employers. In some cases, the workers do not know the identity of the producer or brand for whom they are producing, complicating any efforts to seek recourse for labor violations, e.g., back wages for work performed. Further, the general lack of a direct employment relationship also means that, in most cases, the primary factories are not obligated to pay into pensions or other social assistance for the workers. Instead, the workers' direct employers, often contractors with little funding or capital and often informal and unregistered in any government oversight-related database, are responsible for making such payments. As a result, the payments are often not made, compounding the economic insecurity faced by these off-site contract laborers.

ILAB seeks research that identifies and evaluates practical strategies for monitoring and expanding labor rights protection to off-site and other home-based contract laborers, with a particular focus on the apparel manufacturing supply chain.

Topic B: Involving Targets of Employment Policies and Programs in Policy and Program Design

Current international development policies envision a model where target beneficiaries are involved in the design of programs in which they participate. In September 2010, a White House fact sheet on U.S. Global Development Policy underscored the need to encourage in-country ownership of, and responsibility for, development programming. A variety of institutions that seek a sustainable livelihoods approach to development drill down deeper. They believe that unless grass-roots participants help design the intervention, participants' understanding, commitment and ability to sustain the intervention cannot be ensured.

ILAB seeks original and rigorous research to identify modes of effective stakeholder participation in the design of, and continued support for, policies and programs that improve the livelihoods of workers and vulnerable populations in developing countries. A specific policy emphasis for ILAB is the promotion of youth employment. ILAB would benefit from research that provides guidance on whether and when involving youth in the design of programs and policies in which they are the target beneficiaries leads to more successful program outcomes.

Individual research projects may consider:

- The level of participation (e.g., can higher level groups effectively speak for the grass root participants?);
- The degree of participation (e.g., how frequently and with what intensity do participants need to be involved?);
- The structure of participation (e.g., statistical survey, one-off or repeated focus groups); **and/or**,
- Common factors that affect how level, degree and structure of participation are shaped by local and situational circumstances.

A proposal may be limited to assessing youth employment policy and programs, should sufficient relevant experience and information be available to analyze. Alternatively proposed research may examine other programs targeted to youth, or more general or other-targeted employment promotion policies and programs, so long as the proposal demonstrates why the work is expected to contain lessons relevant to the promotion of youth employment. Proposals should indicate plans to consult with ILAB to ensure that the lessons of this work translate into guidance relevant to ILAB programming needs, budget and procurement requirements.

Research projects must propose a methodology such as:

- Meta-analysis that succinctly synthesizes a large body of existing evidence, or
- An approach that identifies a causal relationship between the way target beneficiaries are included and the impact on outcomes they experience.

5. Contractor Requirements:

5.1 Conference Call with COR: Within one (1) week of the effective date of the contract, the Contractor shall arrange an initial conference call with the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) to clarify the scope of work and delivery schedule, delineate roles and responsibilities, and establish communication protocols.

5.2 Bibliography and Literature Review: Complete a bibliography and literature review of work related to the research to be undertaken. The literature review is a stand alone document that provides the non-expert reader with the state of existing research (e.g., by whom and how it has been conducted; gaps; what are the current consensus/conflict areas of findings). It demonstrates how the current project will contribute to that literature by explaining the need to take it in a new direction, to make refinements in the way certain issues had been treated or viewed previously, and/or by weighing in favor of one side or another of an unsettled issue with a new line of rigorous argument. The bibliography includes all work cited in the literature review as well as studies the researcher expects to draw from over the course of the project. It should be formatted using a standard and consistent format. Upon request, copies of articles included in the bibliography and/or literature review will be provided to ILAB.

5.3 Conduct Original Research: Conduct original empirical, synthetic or theoretical research on the specific research question proposed by the contractor and accepted by USDOL.

The Offeror must identify any additional travel (in addition to the trip to Washington DC for the final presentation) to be funded through this project and provide a not-to-exceed amount for each trip. It should be noted that travel will be reimbursed on an expense basis up to the amount agreed by the United States Government and is subject to the Federal Travel Regulations. Additional approved travel to be funded through this project is reimbursable up to \$4,200 for each not-to-exceed travel CLIN.

5.4 Produce and Submit Draft Research Paper: Produce a draft research paper and submit it to ILAB researchers for peer review and to serve as a basis of consultation with ILAB policy and program officials. The draft research paper will present the research conducted and preliminary results and conclusions. It shall be well-written, in English. ILAB staff must be allotted at least one month to review and comment on draft reports.

The draft research paper shall include, at a minimum:

- Introduction, overview of key issues, and motivation for study
- Literature review
- Conceptual model or framework
- If paper is an empirical study, a description of data collection, data, and analytic strategy
- Preliminary Results
- Preliminary Policy implications

- Caveats and limitations
- Preliminary Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Appendices

5.5 Consultations with ILAB: Conduct virtual or in-person consultations with ILAB policy and program officials to identify recommendations that follow from the research and will aid ILAB in its work. The contractor will work with the COR to determine at what stage the consultations should take place. For some work, consultations should occur prior to preparation of the first draft; for other work, they may come after ILAB acceptance of the draft report.

5.6 Produce Final Research Paper: The Contractor will prepare a final research paper taking on board relevant comments from ILAB peer review and consultations. The paper will be complete, well-written, and well organized. The final paper must be of a caliber equal to an article in a peer-reviewed economic journal such as those listed in *Econlit*. The paper will be written in English. ILAB staff must be allotted at least two weeks to review and accept the final report. The final research paper shall include, at a minimum:

- Introduction, overview of key issues, and motivation for study
- Literature review
- Conceptual model or framework
- If paper is an empirical study, a description of data collection, data, and analytic strategy
- Results
- Policy implications
- Caveats and limitations
- Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Appendices

The researcher will provide an electronic copy of the research paper and any non-proprietary data used in the analysis to USDOL. The data will be delivered in an electronic format readable by Stata, SPSS or SAS. The data will be cleaned of personal identifiers to protect the privacy of study participants. Codebooks and/or survey instruments used to collect the data shall also be provided.

5.7 Presentation of Research The contractor shall give an in-person presentation of the final research paper to ILAB and other interested parties invited by ILAB. Presentation to ILAB must be given in Washington, DC. The presentation will take place after ILAB-approval of the draft research paper. The presentation will take place at the U.S. Department of Labor, Frances Perkins Building in Washington DC. It is anticipated to take place during September 2013. The Contractor shall coordinate with the Contracting Officer's Representative to establish the presentation date and time.

6. Deliverables

The deliverables required under this project are listed in Technical Exhibit 1.

7. Place of Performance

The primary location of the work will be the contractor's site(s) or the sites of its subcontractors. The contractor will be required to make one (1) trip to Washington, D.C. to present the research study and final results. Travel originating outside a 50-mile radius of 200 Constitution Ave NW, Washington DC will be reimbursable up to \$2,335.00, and is subject to the Federal Travel Regulations. Additional approved travel to be funded through this project is reimbursable up to \$4,200. The total amount of approved travel is therefore reimbursable up to \$6,535.00, as reflected

in the Price Schedule for each not-to-exceed travel CLIN. Approval from the COR must be obtained prior to travel.

8. Additional Information

8.1 Special Conditions of Contract.

8.1.1 USDOL distribution rights: U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), at its discretion, may make the completed paper available to the public via its web site, publication, or other format.

8.1.2 USDOL rights to data used in analysis: In addition to hardcopy submission of draft and final products, the researcher will provide an electronic copy of the research paper and any data used in the analysis. Unless explicitly negotiated otherwise, data shall be provided without limitation on its subsequent use by USDOL. The Government shall have the full right to use the data for its purposes without compensation or approval on the part of the contractor. The government shall have access to and the right to make copies of the abovementioned items. All proprietary data shall be indicated as such in individual proposals.

8.1.3 Recognition of USDOL support of work: The contractor may seek publication of the completed paper in professional journals or other outlets; however, whether the U.S. Government, USDOL and/or ILAB support for the work is to be noted will be determined at the sole discretion of ILAB at the conclusion of the contract. Contractor must notify ILAB before publication.

8.1.4 Application of disclaimer: All publications and presentations that show U.S. Government, USDOL and/or ILAB support for the work must include the following disclaimer: The views expressed here are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views or official positions of the U.S. Government or the U.S. Department of Labor.