



# Independent evaluation of ILO's strategy and actions for strengthening labour inspection systems, 2010-2015

(October 2015)

Labour inspection is critical to ensuring decent work. It is directly related to enhancing productivity and economic development by contributing to the reduction of costs resulting from occupational accidents and illnesses, absenteeism, abuse of workers and labour conflict. This evaluation examines how the ILO bolsters national efforts to build, foster and maintain sound labour inspection systems, and bring them into line with international standards. Accomplishing this goal is largely related to the ratification and effective implementation of Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) and Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129). In addition to reviewing the global scope of ILO's work with labour inspection systems, this evaluation includes case studies for Albania, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia, South Africa and Viet Nam.

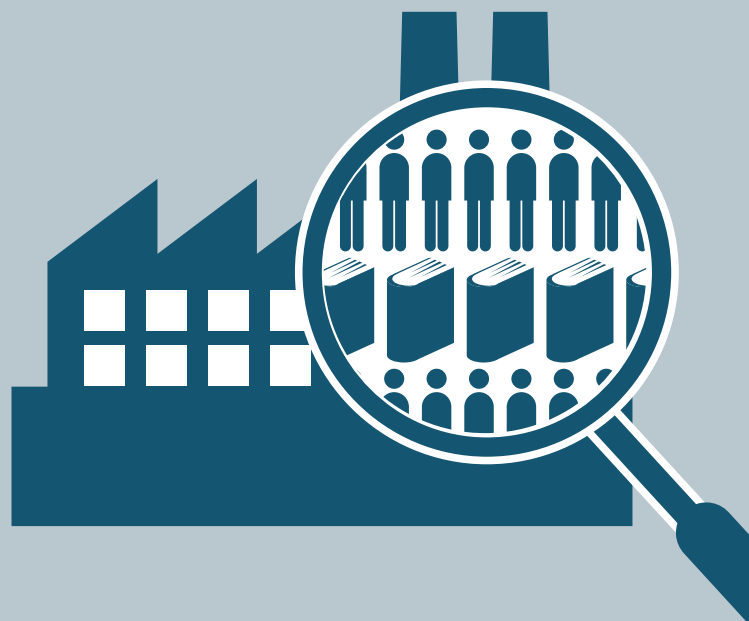
## Some key findings from the evaluation

- **ILO's assistance should focus on assisting labour inspectorates to perform and enforce the law.** Future strategies should address the limited capacity of courts to adjudicate cases; the lack of effective mechanisms for collecting penalties; the lack of robust case-management systems, and the provision of more reliable labour inspection statistics.
  - **ILO strategy and actions have been logical and consistent.** The ILO strategy needs to explore and clarify the role of a central authority in federal or decentralized systems, the number of labour inspectors needed, as well as the type of "advice" and the degree of discretion exercised by inspectors for non-compliance. The nature and magnitude of sanctions needed to dissuade enterprises from violating the law should also be examined, as well as the notion of enforcement and the reliance on courts to impose sanctions.
  - **In general, the ILO has carried out activities and produced outputs consistent with stated plans.** Outputs have been generally well received by constituents. The capacity of labour inspectorates to fulfil missions was strengthened by more robust legal frameworks; an increased number and skills of labour inspectors; the adoption of new labour inspection procedures; and to greater collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations.
- Strengthen the role of LABADMIN/OSH as lead technical unit and further develop its labour inspection expertise.
- **The Office operated in an efficient manner but data limitations preclude rigorous analysis.** The Office established the Labour Administration and Inspection Unit in 2009 to lead work in this field and merged it with SafeWork in 2013 to create the LABADMIN/OSH Branch in late 2013. As the lead technical entities, LABADMIN and LABADMIN/OSH have principal responsibility for building capacity of labour inspectorates, working in conjunction with other technical units that focus on particular subjects of inspection, such as child labour, forced labour, freedom of association, collective bargaining, discrimination, etc.

## Recommendations from the evaluation

- In the current and future strategic policy frameworks (SPFs), **emphasize the importance of strengthening labour inspectorates to achieve compliance.**
- **Strengthen the role of LABADMIN/OSH as the lead technical unit and include labour inspection expertise.**
- **Move towards comprehensive technical assistance**, addressing capacity constraints in national labour inspectorates and related public institutions in an integrated manner.
- **Place greater emphasis on development of strategies and operating plans for labour inspectorates.**
- **Improve and place greater emphasis on training labour inspectors and other government officials** in close coordination with other public institutions.
- **Formulate an ILO action plan to support development and implementation of case-management systems.**
- **Improve access to labour inspection statistics** as required by Convention No. 81, which is essential for internal and external research.

Clarify ILO strategy regarding the role of member States' labour authorities in issues related to labour inspection.



- **Review the Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS) platform** to improve accessible tracking on financial resources dedicated to labour inspection.

### THE WIDE MANDATE OF LABADMIN/OSH

A survey of ILO staff revealed a need to improve coordinated support to national labour inspection activities as many projects have cross-cutting institutional reform implications that would benefit from technical expertise in labour inspection. LABADMIN/OSH is currently responsible for global coordination of: preparing studies, position papers and technical and legal memoranda on labour inspection; providing advice on strengthening and sustaining labour inspectorates; the status and independence of labour inspectors, including the right of inspectors to free entry into workplaces, and the freedom to carry out inspections; and sanctions in the event of non-compliance.

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