



*Fair, safe and productive workplaces*

# Labour



FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUPS OF THE  
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**Working Group 2 – Panel 1: Labour Cooperation and  
its contribution to institutional strengthening**

**CANADA'S LABOUR COOPERATION**

# Labour

## CONTEXT

- Canada's labour cooperation and international commitments: increased steadily in number and complexity over the past decade.
- Canada is pursuing an ambitious and expanding trade agenda.
- Trade is not without its challenges: impacts directly on working conditions and respect for workers' rights.

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## CONTEXT

- Canada believes: promotion of economic growth while respecting workers' rights requires action at the international level.
- Provision of technical assistance that supports capacity-building projects.
- Technical assistance: to help partner countries modernize labour policy and administration in order to foster
  - better enforcement of national labour laws; and
  - greater respect for internationally-recognized core labour standards.

# Labour

## A BIT OF HISTORY

### ■ 2004

- The *International Trade and Labour Program* (ITLP).
  - Developed in order to support commitments in the context of the negotiations of Labour Cooperation Agreements (LCAs).

### ■ 2009

- The *International Program for Professional Labour Administration* (IPPLA).
  - Direct response to the Fourth Summit of the Americas held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 2005.
  - Fourth Summit of the Americas: key role of labour ministries in the region.

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## A BIT OF HISTORY

### ▪ 2012

- The *Labour Funding Program* (LFP)
  - Assistance to partner countries to assist them in respecting the commitments set out in LCAs.
- The *Canada-Americas Trade-Related Technical Assistance* (CATRTA)
  - Funded by CIDA and managed by the CBoC.
  - Designed to meet the priority needs of Canada and its FTA partner countries and sub-regions in the Americas.
  - Our Department acts as a strategic advisor within CATRTA and plays a key role in developing and assessing all labour-related proposals.

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## CONCRETE ACTIONS FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

- Through grants and contribution agreements to international organizations, regional and local non-governmental organizations, having recognized experience in the field of labour.
  - International Labour Organization
  - Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL).
- Mobilization of qualified Canadian labour experts, as well as labour experts from countries in the Americas, with the aim of building capacity through the sharing of labour experience and best practices.

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## AREAS OF WORK

- The areas in which our Department provides cooperation are identified in different ways:
  - Ministerial-level meetings under our LCAs
  - On-site missions
  - Exchanges between officials
- Our Department emphasizes the importance of consultations to ensure buy-in and common understanding of areas of work, project objectives and expected results.
- The potential for measurable, tangible, demonstrable and sustainable results is also essential when assessing the most suitable areas of work.

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## AREAS OF WORK

- It includes:
  - modernization of labour administration (through improvements in the functioning of labour ministries);
  - social dialogue (on labour rights and policies),
  - occupational health and safety (to promote safer and healthier working environments), and
  - enforcement of national labour legislation (including the improvement of labour inspection systems).

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## OPTIMIZING RESOURCES

- Political will; still some deficiencies; labour does not enjoy much assistance.
- Pressing challenge: to ensure that the assistance provided concretely meets identified needs and achieves lasting results.
- Cooperation resources of the Labour Program: not intended to solve all the labour-related issues.
- To produce realistic and measurable outcomes: get buy-in of all key players in the labour area.

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## OPTIMIZING RESOURCES

- Continuous dialogue with recipient countries : common understanding, and jointly examine ways of improvement.
- In December 2011: informally surveyed various Labour Ministries and Departments.
- General finding: labour ministries welcome the close collaboration established between our respective ministries.
  - More specifically: contribution to the training of Ministry's human resources; produced materials constitute an important source of information; flexibility and openness; Government authorities are actively involved; high degree of ownership to ensure viability of projects.

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## CONCLUSION

- Open to constructive criticism: to jointly find ways to maximise the positive effect of labour cooperation on institutional strengthening.
- Our objective for the future: to reinforce the participatory approach in the development of projects to achieve not only excellent project results, but also and above all **sustainable project results**.
- That is our challenge!

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**THANK YOU!**