

International cooperation on labour matters

Jamaica's Perspective

Management of labor cooperation in the Ministry of Labor and Social Security

坛 No specific unit established in the Ministry to manage labour cooperation,

坛 The Chief Technical Director is the focal point. Over the years, the focus has primarily been the Industrial Relations Division as it operates as the secretariat for the Labour Advisory Council and the Minimum Wage Advisory Commission; both advisory bodies to the Minister. More recently, this role has expanded

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- 坛 The International Labour Agencies/Information Unit assists in communicating with external agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization of American States (OAS), other UN Agencies as well as with CARICOM;
- 坛 This Unit also provides reports to these agencies in keeping with our international obligations and works closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in the country.

Challenges faced by the Ministry in building capacity (institutional strengthening) through international cooperation

坛 Yes.

- 坛 When opportunities are offered abroad, but due to costs associated with travel and subsistence, the offers cannot be accepted;
- 坛 Where funding is available/provided, every effort is made to provide exposure to build the capacity of the Ministry.

The importance of labor cooperation in the Ministry (both financially and related to south-south efforts and knowledge sharing). The main areas in which the Ministry has requested/received and offered/provided cooperation?

坛 The Ministry has accommodated countries in observing areas such as our Labour Market Information Systems including Public Employment Services, Overseas Recruitment Programmes and Industrial Relations Systems including our Public Arbitration process.

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坛 We have sought to improve areas such as our Labour Market Information System including the Public Employment Services, our Conciliation and our Labour Inspection processes.

坛 Labour cooperation within the region is important since there are some similarities in our cultures and practices and migration within the region, particularly within CARICOM allows countries to benefit from the knowledge of migrants.

坛 The health of the BIAI Cooperation Fund is

The impact of labor cooperation on the institutional strengthening in the Ministry, how labor cooperation has improved program management in Ministry, as well as capacity/ability to deliver your institutional mandate

- 坛 Enabled the Ministry to observe best practices of other countries e.g. visit to Mexico by LMIS team in 2013.
- 坛 Allowed us to increase our efficiencies;
- 坛 Improves service delivery to our clients; and
- 坛 Exposure of Officers to impart their experiences to others thereby strengthening the capacity of the Ministry without necessity of re-inventing the wheel.

Measures being undertaken by the Ministry, in addition to labor inspection, to promote the enforcement of labor laws and effective exercise of FPRW?

坛 The Ministry for some time has embarked on an OUTREACH PROGRAMME to educate the populace on labour laws and good labour relations practices. This along with labour inspections has played a role in maintaining the harmonious industrial relations climate that now exists in the country. The Ministry has also instituted Town Hall Meetings, which allows for the public to meet with the Hon. Minister to discuss labour and social security issues.

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坛 As it relates to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), there are voluntary compliance programmes (VCP) that allow the Ministry and private organizations/corporations the opportunity to implement standards for OSH in the workplace pending the passage of a new OSH Act. The VCP assists workplaces to plan improvement programmes and allows for the certification of competence to workers and management to administer and manage OSH in the workplace, among other things.

Measures being undertaken to strengthen labor inspection systems (including ongoing training and professionalization, among others).

Lessons learnt and recommendations drawn.
坛 In an effort to strengthen Labour Inspectors within the Ministry, we have embarked on regular in-house training which includes role play and simulations. The lessons learnt have enabled the Inspectors to better understand their roles and function when dealing with the public. The Inspectors have found that employers are more receptive when they are patient and the reasons for the inspections are explained. We have also found that where employers are knowledgeable in respect of the labour laws, the Inspectors are better able to

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坛 The Occupational Safety and Health Department is embarking on three (3) mechanisms for change:-

- The use of technology to improve workplace evaluation and the ability to communicate and correspond with workplaces.
- The training and upgrading of Inspectors with new competences to transit from Factory Inspection to Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- The strengthening of the structure and capacity of the OSH Department to expand its scope of

Particular innovations in labor inspection that Jamaica is currently implementing

The progress on preventative measures as a complement for sanctions

坛 There are no new innovations as it relates to industrial relations; however the Ministry has embarked on increasing the number of visits to employers in breach and have also warned the employers of the sanction if they fail to correct these breaches. This has significantly reduced the number of sanctions being brought against employers as well as the number of cases that are reported to the Ministry.

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坛 There are innovations in OSH inspections at the Ministry. The OSH department is currently implementing a programme in SMEs located in commercial districts in the main towns that is called “**Snap Shot**”. This intervention was designed to disseminate information on OSH legislation and practices to commercial enterprises.

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坛 Progress made on preventative measures as a substitute for sanctions include the recommendations by Inspectors. However, since the review of the sanctions in 2012 there have been some improvements in the application of preventative methods. It has allowed for collaboration and increased dialogue in implementing preventative methods.