



International  
Labour  
Organization



**2010-2011**

# Success stories in the Americas

**PARDEV**

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## SUCCESS STORIES IN THE AMERICAS

### 1. The Caribbean: Fostering a culture of safety and health

**(CPO: SPS152) SPF 2010-15 - Outcome 6: Workers and enterprises benefit from improved safety and health conditions at work.**

In almost all Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) occupational safety and health (OSH) laws and regulations in force need to be updated and harmonized in response to the realities of the modern workplace, and to help build the social floor for an integrated region. This was one of the findings of a needs assessment conducted by the ILO in 2009.

Since February 2011, the **RBSA**-funded Programme on Occupational Safety and Health and Environment (OSHE), supports governments, employers' and workers' organizations in their efforts to improve occupational safety and health and to contribute to environmental sustainability. This is a major issue given the potentially damaging impact of climate change on key sectors of Caribbean economies. The Programme draws on expertise available in the region and externally in the delivery of its capacity-building training workshops and advisory services.

In 2011 five CARICOM members (**Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**) have either started or accelerated the process of drawing up OSH legislation and labour codes that contain provisions on OSH. They will also be developing accompanying regulations that draw on relevant international labour Conventions and Recommendations as well as ILO codes of practice and guides.

To date some forty OSHE training activities are being implemented in Caribbean countries with the aim of fostering a culture of safety and health through advocacy and capacity building, as well as promoting the adoption of new OSHE-related legislation and regulations. By the end of November 2011 some 1200 labour inspectors, workers' and employers' representatives and OSH committee members will have been trained, and a network of OSHE resource persons will have been established.

**The OSHE Programme contributed to increased awareness of OSH:** The commemoration of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April and the hosting of national Safety and Health Week activities helped to give focus to OSH among constituents and the wider public. In **Barbados**, for example, the theme for the week of activities was "Promoting the attainment and maintenance of desirable standards of OSH practices in Barbados." In **Trinidad and Tobago** the OSH Agency and the ILO collaborated to host public events on the occasion of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, at the end of which some 250 decision-makers and officials from institutions and ministries benefited from the presentations made and the overview of the situation with respect to OSHE in the country. The webpage of the OSHE Programme was launched at these public events. Similar tripartite events were organized with the support of the ILO OSHE programme in **the Bahamas** and in **Antigua and Barbuda**, all of which attracted media attention.



Commemoration of the World Day for Safety and Health 2011 in Trinidad



Street Fair Commemorating World Day 2011 in Antigua and Barbuda

## 2. Chile: New national policy on occupational safety and health at work

**(CPO: CHL127) SPF 2010-15 - Outcome 6: Workers and enterprises benefit from improved safety and health conditions at work.**

After the collapse of the San José mine in Chile on 5 August 2010 and the subsequent rescue of the 33 miners trapped for 70 days at a depth of 700 meters, the Government of Chile needed to revise and improve the occupational safety and health system. The ILO – with **RBSA** funding – provided technical assistance for its redesign and implementation.

As part of project activities, members of the Decent Work Team based in Santiago and SECTOR and NORMES specialists participated in the discussion to assess safety conditions in the country. Based on this diagnosis, regulatory reforms to improve hygiene, safety and working conditions were proposed to ensure the right to a safe job. The employers' and workers' organizations also participated in the process.

As part of its new orientation, the President signed the Decree promulgating the ILO's Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) on 14 July 2011.



President Sebastián Piñera signs the draft act to ratify ILO Convention No.187 in the presence of ILO Director-General Juan Somavia, and the Minister of Labour, Camila Merino.

For its implementation, progress has been made on the following points:

### 1) Modification of the constitution of the Social Security Superintendency and creation of the Labour Security Administration

- Inclusion in the functions of the Superintendency of the ability to systematize and propose the standardization of OSH regulations. This will increase the income of the Superintendency and allow it to engage extra staff.
- Establishment of the management and maintenance functions of a National OSH Information System. This will make it possible to design, evaluate and improve policies and programmes; it will centralize data on reported accidents and occupational diseases, diagnoses of occupational diseases, exams and assessments, descriptions of accidents, disease prevention and supervisory activities.

### 2) Creation of the OSH Constitutive Council

The Council will be a permanent advisory body of the President on OSH, analysing and advising on national and sectoral OSH policy and regulatory and legal changes in this area, and requesting opinions from employers' and workers' organizations on changes in the law and regulations. It will have five members appointed by the President: one belonging to the employers' organization and one belonging to the workers' organization; the three others will be professionals with proven expertise and experience in the OSH field.

### 3) Creation of the OSH Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers will advise the President on the formulation of OSH guidelines and policies.

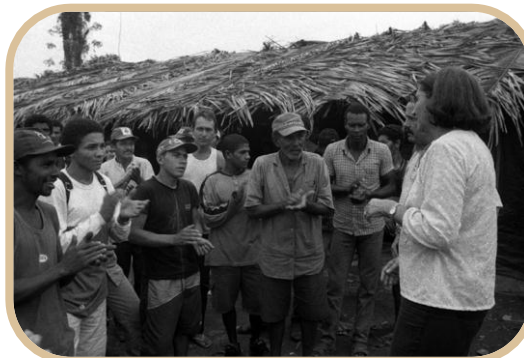
### 3. Brazil: Fighting forced labour

**(CPO: BRA125) SPF 2010-15 - Outcome 15: Forced Labour is eliminated.**

The ILO is working in Brazil together with constituents in a joint effort to eliminate forced labour. Since 2008-2009, **RBSA** funding has been supporting technical assistance in this area due to the encouraging results achieved and the explicit demand of the Brazilian federal government and several state governments.

During the period 2008 to 2010, through its Mobile Inspection Groups, Brazil's Government conducted 457 operations allowing the rescue 9,413 workers from slavery. Through legal intervention the government also succeeded to obtain the payment of more than 23 million Reais (about US\$ 15 million) in workers' benefits.

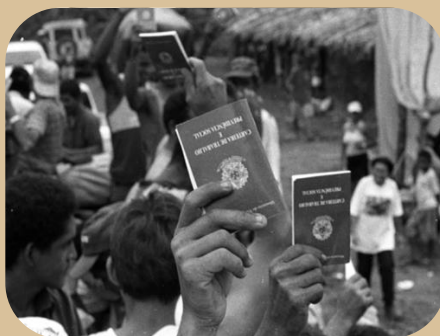
The institutional structures that facilitated the achievement of these results are the seven **State Committees against Slave Labour** (COETRAES) located in Rio de Janeiro, Mato Grosso, Bahia, Pará, Maranhão, Piauí and Tocantins. Among other activities the committees coordinate training for labour judges. The training materials are developed by the ILO.



**Rescued workers receive information on their rights**

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was presented to Congress and laid the foundations for the **Second National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking**.

Since 2010 programmes in Mato Grosso **to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims** are being implemented as part of a public policy adopted by the State. Recently some 25 forced labour victims were reinserted into the formal labour market in the preparatory work for the football World Cup to be held in 2014. The ILO has provided technical assistance throughout this process and has begun working with other states to promote this strategy. The Office collaborates in the public consultation processes to identify other proposals to support victims of forced labour.



**Rescued workers receive work permits and social security from the Ministry of Labour**

**Photos: João Roberto Ripper and Sérgio Carvalho.**



#### 4. Mexico: Labour modernization in the Mexican sugar industry

**(CPO: MEX102) SPF 2010-15 - Outcome 2: Skills development increases the employability of workers, the competitiveness of enterprises, and the inclusiveness of growth.**

In 2008 Mexico's outdated sugar industry faced the opening of agricultural markets to international competition in the framework of NAFTA. At stake were 440 thousand jobs and the incomes of 2 million people in Mexico. The risk of increasing economic and social problems and violence in rural Mexico was high. Social dialogue was non-existent and industrial strife was the norm, with 80 sectoral strikes over the past 70 years. The industry had high levels of workplace injury, alcoholism and chronic disease; training was more the exception than the rule; productivity and wages were low.

In this context the ILO supported the employers and the sectoral union in a labour modernization plan, based on Decent Work principles, which was part of the sectorial collective bargaining agreement of 2008. Later, with **RBSA** funds, the ILO focused its activities on twelve of the 57 sugar mills, generating showcase practices for social dialogue and competency-based training, using the System for Integrated Measurement and Advance of Productivity (SIMAPRO). This was complemented by OHS risk mapping, and programmes of prevention of stress and addiction. The ILO's SAFEWORK Programme provided the related materials. The activities were performed in coordination with the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin, and with the CINTERFOR (Montevideo), especially regarding the preparation of self-training guides and the training of trainers.

**The main results of this intervention strategy are –**

- **Reduction of labour disputes and improved working climate.** Social dialogue has intensified since 2007, and no further strikes have taken place. SIMAPRO established permanent communication and dialogue channels between operational workers, and middle and higher management. The sugar mills participating in the project showed an increase of 11% in their working climate index, with peaks under items of compensation (21% plus) and gender equality (16% plus).
- **Increase in training and employability.** A total of 1,100 production workers and middle management staff have been certified in core competencies, basically in health, safety and ecology. Training hours per worker have increased from close to zero before, to an average of 15 hours now. In a collaborative way, 17 competency-based Self Training and Assessment Guides have been developed, based on the criteria of sustainable enterprises and decent work.
- **Increased labour productivity and wages.** Each worker trained with a Self Training Guide generated on average one improvement proposal, with a 65% implementation rate. A new competency-based compensation model was designed, reducing categories ("broad banding") and increasing wages, with integral career planning for production workers.
- **Fewer workplace injuries.** The sugar mills participating in the project have reduced their workplace accidents three times faster than those not involved.
- **Prevention of addiction.** With the ILO SOLVE methodology, prevention programmes on stress, alcoholism and drugs have been implemented, addressing family integration and sport activities.



**Employment creation: implementation of the Self-Training and Assessment Guide**



**Weekly SIMAPRO feedback session for workers and managers on the results of integral productivity measurement**