

**Ethiopia**

## **Technical Memorandum**

**Ethiopia Labour Inspection Audit**

**LAB/ADMIN**

**Labour Administration  
and Inspection Programme**

---

**Social Dialogue Sector**

---

**International Labour Office - Geneva**



---

## CONTENTS

Foreword .....	v
1. Social, economic and political background .....	1
2. Legislative framework for labour inspection .....	2
2.1. Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003.....	2
2.2. Occupational Safety and Health Directive 2008.....	2
2.3. Compensation for workers having industrial accidents.....	3
2.4. ILO Conventions ratified by Ethiopia.....	3
2.5. Comments by the ILO Committee of Experts .....	4
3. Labour administration and social dialogue: organization and modernization .....	4
3.1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA).....	4
3.2. Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSAs) and City Administrations.....	5
3.3. Tripartite Labour Advisory Board .....	5
3.4. Role of Social Partners .....	5
3.5. Civil Service reforms and Business Process Re- engineering .....	6
4. HIV/AIDS policies and programmes .....	6
4.1. Labour Inspection Services support for the HIV/AIDS Programme. ....	7
4.2. Key outcomes of the HIV/AIDS programme. ....	8
5. Labour Inspection Services: organization, functions and resources .....	8
5.1. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED).....	9
5.2. The Occupational Safety and Health Unit, the Federal Civil Service Agency .....	10
5.3. Labour inspection in the Regions and City administrations .....	10
5.4. The functions of the labour inspection services.....	10
5.5. Staff resources and training .....	11
6. Labour Inspection Services: Key issues.....	12
6.1. Policy and direction .....	12
6.2. Planning and reports, data collection and analysis .....	13
6.3. Inspection visits .....	13
6.4. Sanctions and enforcement .....	14
6.5. Involvement with the media and high profile activities.....	15
6.6. Cross-regional collaboration.....	15
6.7. Working with other stakeholders .....	15
6.8. Staff recruitment .....	15
6.9. Staff training .....	16
6.10. Standards of ethical behaviour.....	17

---

6.11. Non-staff resources: offices, transport, personal protective equipment and scientific equipment .....	17
7. Findings and recommendations.....	18
7.1. National commitment, policy and direction.....	18
7.2. Improving the legislative base and its enforcement.....	18
7.3. Organization and communications .....	19
7.4. Developing national and regional and inspection programmes .....	20
7.5. Awareness-raising campaigns.....	21
7.6. HIV/AIDS and labour inspection.....	21
7.7. Staff resources, career development, safety and health and ethical behaviour .....	22
7.8. Training and information for inspectors .....	22
7.9. Office facilities, transport and scientific monitoring equipment .....	23
8. Conclusions and next steps .....	24
Annex I.....	25

---

## Foreword

Effective labour inspection is vital for good governance and economic progress. It helps to improve working conditions and safety and health of workers, making Decent Work a reality at the enterprise level, and thus enhances employment and productivity, contributing to sustainable economic development. It is therefore highly relevant for a country such as Ethiopia.

This audit of the labour inspection services in Ethiopia was undertaken at the request of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), and took place over a period of 10 days in late February/early March 2009. It was particularly timely as the Civil Service was already undergoing some reforms as a result of a Business Process Re-engineering exercise, and it is hoped that the audit team's recommendations will be considered in the context of these broader reforms at both Federal and Regional levels.

The overall aim of the audit was thus to help Ethiopia improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its labour inspection services and draw up a national action plan for implementing such improvements. Using a methodology developed by the ILO that has been tried and tested elsewhere, the audit team interviewed many representatives from MOLSA and other Federal Ministries, from Regional Bureaus and zonal offices and from the Ethiopian Employers' Federation and the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions.

This report contains a number of recommendations for consideration by MOLSA and their social partners. These recommendations relate to several broad themes, such as the need for a national policy on labour inspection, better communications and data collection, organization and planning, human and material resources and training. A particular focus of this audit was the role of labour inspectors in helping to combat HIV/AIDS, supporting the aims of the SIDA project "HIV/AIDS prevention and impact mitigation in the world of work in Sub-Saharan Africa".

The Labour Administration and Inspection Programme (LAB/ADMIN) of the ILO takes this opportunity to thank the Ethiopian government and their social partners for the strong support given to the audit team, in particular, Mr. Malcolm Gifford and Mr. Alagandram Sivananthiram. We are also grateful to Mr. Zerihun Gezahegne, Director of the Occupational Safety and Health and Working Environment Department in MOLSA and to Mr. Franklin Muchiri, Senior Occupational Safety and Health Specialist in the ILO Sub-Regional Office for Eastern Africa for the logistical support and guidance that they provided to the labour inspection team.



---

## 1. Social, economic and political background

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is Africa's second most populous country with an estimated population of about 74.1 million (July 2008). It covers an area of about 1,100,000 square kilometres and borders Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, Kenya to the south, Somalia to the east and Djibouti to the north-east. There is a significant movement of people into and out of Ethiopia. Amharic is the principal language of the country, though the main ethnic groups have their own languages too.

In 1994, the country drafted a new Constitution, which gave it a Federal parliamentary government, based in Addis Ababa, and nine ethnically based Regional States, each with a fair degree of autonomy<sup>1</sup>. In more recent years, Addis Ababa has become a capital city of some importance in Africa, as it now hosts the African or regional headquarters of several international organisations, including the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the International Labour Office.

Poverty is still a very significant issue for Ethiopia, and its GDP per capita is one of the lowest in the continent. Almost 50 per cent of the country's GDP comes from agriculture, mainly coffee, oil seed, lentils and floriculture<sup>2</sup>, with nearly 80 per cent of the labour force working in this sector. Thus the global economic crisis and falling commodity prices have affected Ethiopia greatly<sup>3</sup>. Other key industries include food processing, beverages, textiles and garments, leather, chemicals, metal processing and cement.

The country has an estimated labour force of about 31.4 million, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) currently has about 24,513 establishments officially registered. However, there is a lack of reliable data here, a matter being addressed by the on-going Civil Service reform, discussed further below. Unemployment and underemployment are also major social and economic issues for the country.

The Ethiopian Employers Federation (EEF) has about 200 corporate members and about 500 associate members<sup>4</sup>. The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) is an alliance of trade unions and as of December 2007, this confederation believes that it has over 300,500 members and has entered into 523 collective agreements. The CETU is affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions.

---

1 The States of Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somalia, Benshangul/Gumuz, and the States of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, of the Gambela Peoples and of the Harari People.

2 See Ethiopian Herald "Intensifying investments in agriculture" 25-2-09

3 See capital newspaper "Coffee trade grinds down" March 1st 2009

4 Briefing provided by Ethiopian Employers Federation on 23-2-09

---

## **2. Legislative framework for labour inspection**

Ethiopia's Constitution contains a full chapter on fundamental rights and freedoms, which includes the right to equality without discrimination, the rights of women and children, the right to access to justice, and economic, social and cultural rights. It also covers the "Rights of labour", including the rights of workers to form associations to improve their conditions of employment and economic well-being, the reasonable limitation of working hours, to remuneration for public holidays and to a healthy and safe working environment. The structure and division of powers between Federal and State governments are also covered by the Constitution.

### **2.1. Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003**

The Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 is the principal national legislation on labour issues. The Proclamation covers all establishments with one or more worker and addresses a wide range of issues such as employment relations and contracts, obligations of employers and workers, wages and working time, working conditions and occupational safety and health, occupational injuries, labour disputes and conciliation. It also sets out provisions for the labour inspection service, giving inspectors wide-ranging duties and enforcement powers and prohibiting obstruction of inspectors in performing their duties. The Proclamation was amended in 2006 to give workers the right to severance pay where their employment contracts are terminated because of HIV/AIDS.

The Proclamation is therefore an important basis for employer and trade union participation in all labour matters. It also introduces a simpler system of collective bargaining and labour dispute settlement, with specified time limits to speed up the resolution of conflict. As far as labour inspection is concerned, the law mirrors most of the provisions in the Labour Inspection Convention 1947 (No. 81), which has not yet been ratified by Ethiopia.

MOLSA is currently updating the Labour Proclamation to take account of changes in modern labour markets and in response to comments by the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (see below).

### **2.2. Occupational Safety and Health Directive 2008**

The other significant piece of recent legislation in this area is the Occupational Safety and Health Directive, which was adopted in July 2008. This is also very wide-ranging in its application, covering all employment sectors but with specific provisions for the manufacturing and construction sectors. Without prejudice to the Labour Proclamation, this Directive lays down general duties of employers and the duties and rights of workers, and the need for certain organizational measures such as a safety and health policy and arrangements, and for personal protective equipment. It also specifies measures for controlling a wide range of risks, such as those from chemicals, noise, radiation, machinery, working at heights, boilers and



---

lifting equipment. There are also specific provisions for the recording and notifying of occupational accidents and diseases.

### **2.3. Compensation for workers having industrial accidents**

We understood that Workmen's Compensation Policy is not compulsory in Ethiopia. However, one public and few private insurance companies' provide Workmen's Compensation and Group Personal Accident Insurance Schemes for various undertakings that have arrangements for such coverage. Workmen's Compensation cover provides for death or bodily injury of workers/employees inflicted by an accident or occupational diseases arising from the workplace during the time of work. In general, the benefits payable include the following:

- Death- Minimum of Five years salary.
- Permanent Total Disablement- Percentage of Five years salary.
- Temporary Total Disablement- Monthly payment of salary up to 12 months.
- Permanent Partial Disablement- Percentage of Five years salary.

Although the law states that MOLSA shall prepare the national list of occupational diseases and schedules of degrees of disablement, due to lack of capacity, this has not been achieved till now.

### **2.4. ILO Conventions ratified by Ethiopia**

Ethiopia has ratified 21 ILO Conventions, as shown in Annex 1. It was understood that its ratification of the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention 1976 (No. 144) is in its final stages.

The implementation of these Conventions rides to a significant degree on the capacities of the labour inspection services. For example, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1958 (No. 111), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention 1981 (No. 155) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (No. 182) all depend on the labour inspection services for their enforcement at the enterprise level.

Ethiopia has not ratified either of the two principal ILO Conventions on labour inspection, namely the Labour Inspection Convention 1947 (No. 81) or the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention 1969 (No. 129). These Conventions contain comprehensive provisions for labour inspection, and the enforcement of other legislation should be improved if Ethiopia were to ratify these two Conventions as well. In fact, such ratification should also not be overly onerous, since the country already has the necessary legal framework and infrastructure for it.

---

## 2.5. Comments by the ILO Committee of Experts<sup>5</sup>

The above Committee has made a number of comments and recommendations concerning Ethiopia's application of ILO Conventions. In particular, it has requested the Government to amend the Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 (section 14(1)(f)) with a view to explicitly providing that workers and candidates for employment, including non-citizens, are also protected from discrimination, so as to fully implement Convention No.111. This The Committee also made earlier comments on the status of the draft Occupational Safety and Health Directive, which implements ILO Convention 155; as noted above, this Directive was adopted in 2008. MOLSA is also developing a national occupational safety and health policy, in line with Convention 155.

The Committee has also made several recommendations on the application of two 'Core Conventions', namely the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention 1949 (No. 98). The recommendations were, in summary:

- That teachers and civil service staff should be granted the right to form unions of their own choosing;
- To delete the categories of air transport officials and urban bus drivers from the essential services list where strike action is prohibited;
- Recourse to arbitration should be allowed when both parties request this;
- More time than the existing mandatory three months period should be given for negotiating collective agreements;
- To lower the quorum from two thirds to a lesser figure for union strikes ballots.

## 3. Labour administration and social dialogue: organization and modernization

### 3.1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA)

The mission of MOLSA is to promote effective, healthy and peaceful industrial relations through promoting social dialogue and to ensure good labour administration, with occupational safety and health services at both national and regional levels<sup>6</sup>.

---

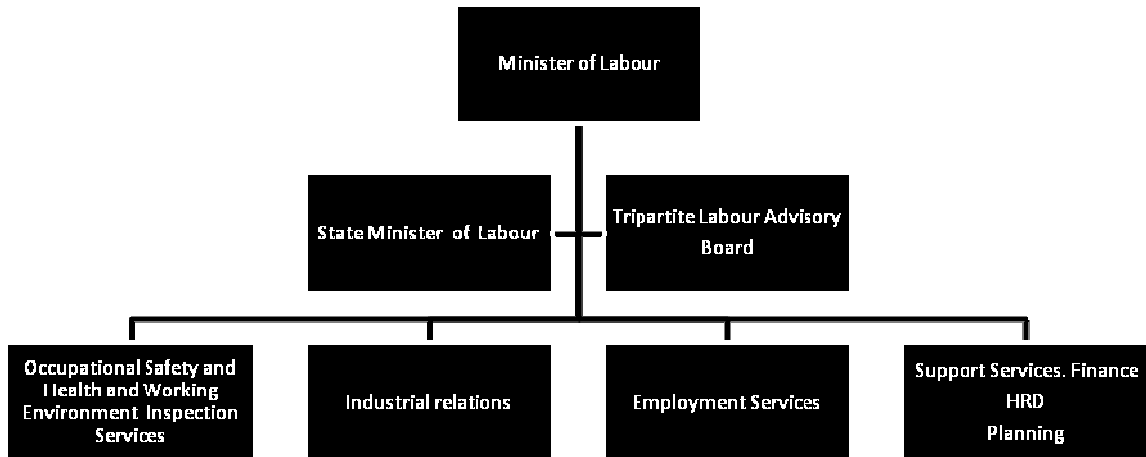
<sup>5</sup> ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR)

<sup>6</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Profile for Ethiopia, MOLSA, Oct. 2006, page 19

---

It thus has several Departments and a broad mandate, including responsibility for labour inspection. MOLSA has an organizational structure as shown in Figure 1 below.

*Figure 1: Structure of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA).*



### **3.2. Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSAs) and City Administrations**

At the Regional level, labour administration is undertaken by Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSAs), and by the two City Administrations in Addis Ababa and Dere Dawa. These organizations are responsible for labour inspection within each Region or City. Like MOLSA, the BOLSAs are also responsible for labour inspection, a task which is often delegated to Zonal and District offices.

### **3.3. Tripartite Labour Advisory Board**

The need for a Tripartite Labour Advisory Board within MOLSA is specified by the Labour Proclamation 377/2003 to promote tripartite consultation. The Board should have various committees to address labour issues such as labour inspection and industrial relations. Currently the Board is not functioning as its secretariat has not yet been established with necessary staff and resources, so there are as yet no committees on labour inspection or on other topics. Tripartism needs to be strengthened throughout the country and especially at Regional levels, with BOLSAs consulting social partners on labour inspection matters that specifically relate to their Regions.

### **3.4. Role of Social Partners**

We met senior representatives from the Ethiopia Employers' Federation (EEF) and the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), both of which organizations collaborated with MOLSA on relevant topics. They both wanted to see an effective labour inspection system throughout Ethiopia, and consequently

---

emphasized the importance of inspector training and competence. Both social partners were committed to working together with MOLSA and BOLSAs to achieve these ends. The CETU emphasized the valuable role that its 9 federations and over 350,000 members played in engaging with employers over issues of non-compliance and also in alerting the labour inspection services to such irregularities.

Although the Tripartite Labour Advisory Board has not yet been established, as noted above, there have been informal consultations between social partners and MOLSA about the review of labour law and the on-going work in formulating an occupational safety and health policy, both mentioned above. The experience gained in the implementation of HIV/AIDS workplace policy was cited as a 'good practice' which could provide the foundation for a broader partnership with labour inspection services at both Federal and Regional levels.

### **3.5. Civil Service reforms and Business Process Re-engineering**

In recent years, the Federal and Regional Civil Service as a whole has been undergoing some structural reforms to help modernize the public administration system. Using Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) methods, the overall aim of these reforms has been to promote good governance within the Civil Service so as to deliver high quality and efficient public services to customers. Within this process, the labour administration/labour inspection system is regarded as key in improving the country's efforts towards achieving the national development goals of generating employment, alleviating poverty and ensuring that the opportunities and benefits of globalization benefit the nation.

For MOLSA, the BPR exercise has entailed 2 processes – one on the employment front including Labour Market Information and the other involving labour inspection services and industrial relations. As far as labour inspection is concerned, the BPR concluded that their services were too reactive and not sufficiently preventive in approach, with excessive reliance on administrative procedures and covered the formal sector exclusively. At the Regional level, in BOLSAs, the reforms have led to all technical heads of services being made "Process Owners".

It is hoped that the current labour inspection audit, with its recommendations, will both facilitate the above modernization process and complement it.

## **4. HIV/AIDS policies and programmes**

Ethiopia joined other UN Member States in June 2006 as signatories to a Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, which included a commitment to move towards the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. The Ethiopian government has thus launched a "Millennium AIDS Campaign" that has catalyzed quicker scale-up of key prevention and treatment programs. According to our MOLSA sources, the National HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 2.2 per cent in 2008, with urban prevalence at 7.8 per cent and rural at 0.9 per cent. In 2008, 1.1 million citizens were believed to be HIV positive, there were 58,000 AIDS-related deaths and 25,000 new infections.

---

A Demographic and Health Survey of 2005 indicated that the epidemic may be less severe, less generalized and more heterogeneous than previously believed. Nevertheless, the epidemic affects the supply of labour and skills, increases labour costs, undermines human rights and decent work principles, erodes industrial peace and threatens employment security. Recent ILO estimates showed that the Ethiopian economy lost over \$234 US million (7% national GDP) annually from 1992-2002 because of workers lost to HIV/AIDS<sup>7</sup>. Thus, MOLSA has developed its own programme and policies for promoting HIV/AIDS awareness at work, engaging and training labour inspectors on relevant issues.

#### **4.1. Labour Inspection Services support for the HIV/AIDS Programme.**

HIV/AIDS projects have provided an excellent opportunity for the inspectorate to work with social partners and other stakeholders, such as the Federal Civil Service Agency, the Federal Micro and Small Scale Agency, UN Agencies, NGOs and other organizations engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The key strategy here has been to encourage employers and workers to collaborate in developing HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes, and to implement practical action as outlined in the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. Some of the key activities undertaken by the inspectorate can be summed up as follows:

- Promoting and implementing the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, and initiating and scaling up HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes;
- Mobilizing and building of capacity of social partners and other stakeholders;
- Raising awareness of the social, economic and development impact of AIDS through its effects on labour and employment;
- Advocating legal and legislative framework review in line with the HIV/AIDS epidemic trends.

A positive move by MOLSA in 2004 was the formation of a Task force on HIV/AIDS, chaired by the Minister of State, to plan and coordinate the activities. This was reinforced by the appointment of a focal point from the labour inspectorate designated to coordinate, follow up and implement of the Ministry's HIV/AIDS programme. By the end of 2008, 106 public and 181 medium enterprises had developed HIV/AIDS policies and programs. In addition, 74 enterprises are in the process of including some HIV/AIDS components into the collective agreements.

---

<sup>7</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Profile for Ethiopia, MOLSA, Oct. 2006.

---

## **4.2. Key outcomes of the HIV/AIDS programme.**

The Occupational Safety and Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED) within MOLSA and the Regional labour inspection service have so far achieved the following under this particular programme:

- 1) Educational forums on increasing awareness on basic HIV/AIDS issues and the importance of starting HIV/AIDS Workplace Programmes among middle management, workers and trade unions representatives.
- 2) The ILO “Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work” and the ILO “Handbook on HIV/AIDS for labour and factory inspectors” have both been translated into Amharic and one other Regional language.
- 3) OSHWED conducted a Training of trainers’ workshop for 35 inspectors (24 males and 11 Females) on HIV/AIDS and labour inspection.
- 4) A manual to encourage employers and trade unions for promoting HIV/AIDS within collective agreements has been prepared.
- 5) OSHWED also prepared a check list to guide inspectors on HIV/AIDS and labour inspection.

The Occupational Safety and Health unit within the Federal Civil Service Agency, which has labour inspection functions for the Civil Service, has also developed HIV/AIDS workplace guideline for civil servants, which incorporate the 10 key principles of the ILO Code of Practice. With the assistance of the ILO projects on HIV/AIDS, 29 large enterprises one cooperative center have developed HIV/AIDS workplace polices and initiated workplace programs where a total of 26,104 workers were employed. During the audit, it appeared that greater efforts need to be put into documenting good practices on HIV/AIDS and learning lessons in working together with employers and workers on this crucial issue.

## **5. Labour Inspection Services: organization, functions and resources**

With the Federal Structure of Government, labour inspection services are also organized through Federal and Regional offices. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED) is responsible for labour inspection at the Federal level, and the Regional Bureaus of Social and Labour Affairs (BOLSAs) and City Administrations responsible for it elsewhere. The BOLSAs and City Administrations also have Zonal offices staffed by inspectors and District (Kebele) offices staffed by labour officers.

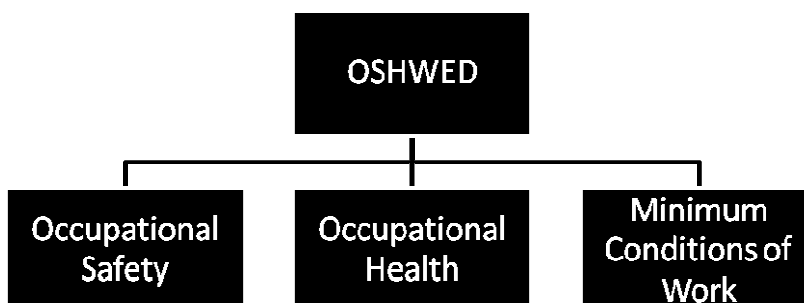
---

## 5.1. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED)

At the Ministry level, OSHWED has policy making functions and also responsibilities for the inspection of 106 publicly owned enterprises in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa, two autonomous city administrations that report to the Federal Government. According the EEF, OSHWED has continued to improve its services over the last 2 years,<sup>8</sup> after its status within MOLSA was increased and various administrative changes were made. However, OSHWED is still understaffed with only 8 of its 12 permanent posts filled, and it needs more capacity building to fulfill its large remit satisfactorily.

OSHWED comprises 3 teams covering Occupational Safety, Occupational Health and Minimum Labour Conditions, each of which is responsible for labour inspection matters in their specific subject areas.

*Figure 2: Organizational chart of the Occupational Safety and Health and Working Environment Department (OSHWED)*



At least in theory, OSHWED is expected to compile national statistics from reports sent from BOLSAs and to hold a national register of occupational injuries. OSHWED is also expected to undertake environmental monitoring in the public sector enterprises in Addis Ababa and Dere Dawa, but it is very difficult to fulfill all these obligations because of a lack of capacity and a lack of proper monitoring equipment<sup>9</sup>. OSHWED is also expected to undertake some impact assessment studies of labour policies, to help formulate better national standards and guidelines.

The fact that the Department is so understaffed means that it is very constrained in what it can achieve overall, especially in policy making, in collecting and analyzing data and in giving greater direction for labour inspection and occupational safety and health overall.

Two other key agencies in the labour administration system are the Industrial Relations and the Employment Services departments. These have their own staff in MOLSA and the BOLSAs, which give advice to labour inspectors on their

---

<sup>8</sup> Comments made by Ethiopian Employers Federation during the Briefing To mission on 23-2-09

<sup>9</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Profile for Ethiopia, MOLSA, Oct. 2006

---

respective topics, but they do not have any management responsibilities for labour inspection.

## **5.2. The Occupational Safety and Health Unit, the Federal Civil Service Agency**

Also at the Federal level, the Occupational Safety and Health Unit within the Federal Civil Service Agency in Ethiopia has responsibility for promoting safety and health in the public sector. Its Labour Inspectors are recruited on a higher salary than their counterparts in MOLSA, although both undertake very similar tasks. This has caused much dissatisfaction among staff in MOLSA. There was also little cooperation or coordination between the two agencies on occupational safety and health and in developing national labour inspection strategies. The existence of two separate Federal Government bodies having the same functions is a strain on public expenditure and much synergy could be obtained by merging the two and by rationalizing the salary structure.

## **5.3. Labour inspection in the Regions and City administrations**

As indicated above, the Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSAs) are responsible for the labour inspection services in the 9 different Regions, as are the 2 city administrations of Addis Ababa and Dere Dawa in those cities. The latter cover only private enterprises in those cities, since OSHWED is responsible for the inspection of public enterprises there.

The regional inspectorates perform the same functions as OSHWED, except for the latter's role in data collection and analysis and policy making. The Regional governments are mainly involved in the implementation of labour policies and the labour laws, and report to both the heads of the regions as well as to MOLSA.

The inspectors working in the regions are required to carry out regular visits and inspections in all undertakings situated in their localities and report to the regional inspectorate services. They usually cooperate with OSHWED in training inspectors as well as sending (in theory) monthly and quarterly reports on their activities. This is discussed further below.

## **5.4. The functions of the labour inspection services**

The functions of the Labour Inspection Service are stated in the Labour proclamation 377/2003. Thus, labour inspectors at Federal and Regional level are responsible for "ensuring the implementation of provisions" concerning a wide range of topics in all sectors of employment. In summary, their functions are<sup>10</sup>:

- 1) To ensure that all provisions pertaining to conditions of employment are complied with. These include wages, working hours, holidays, termination benefits, maternity benefits etc

---

<sup>10</sup> As quoted in the Occupational Safety and Health Profile for Ethiopia, MOLSA, Oct. 2006



- 
- 2) To minimize occupational accidents, diseases and disabilities at work places is maintained.
  - 3) To promote and encourage good health and safety of the workers at work places.
  - 4) To promote good and high standard working conditions above all strive for effective labour protection system is put in place and minimum working conditions are respected.
  - 5) To promote the construction of environmentally and human friendly work places.
  - 6) To protect of work places for persons at work against contamination arising out of or in connection with the activities of persons at work.
  - 7) To control the keeping and use of chemical substances which may be explosive or highly flammable or toxic other wise dangerous substances or generally preventing the unlawful acquisition, possession and use of such substance at work.
  - 8) To control the emission of dangerous levels of physical forms of energy such as radiation, heat, noise, vibration and light, which are likely to be harmful and dangerous to health at workplaces.
  - 9) To encourage workers to fully participate in his/her own safety and health care particularly to respect and implement all the available policy, guidelines and facilities provided at workplaces in the realm of occupational safety and health services.
  - 10) To ensure that all new work methods, processes, construction, machinery and substances in undertaking be it indigenous or imported are assessed for safety, health and environmental effects before they are allowed to be used in the country.
  - 11) To educate and train workers, employers and the public about occupational safety, health and working environment matters.
  - 12) To ensure all laws, regulations and other legal instruments pertaining safety, health and working environment are respected and complied with at all work places.
  - 13) To encourage and promote occupational safety and health information in general and occupational injuries in particular information at workplaces are recorded, analyzed, and reported to competent authorities.

## **5.5. Staff resources and training**

In OSHWED and the eleven regional/city inspection services, there are around 120 inspectors deployed as shown [Table 1](#) below.

*Table 1 Labour inspection services: Federal and Regional staff and qualifications*

Location	Number of Inspectors			Education and training				
	Male	Female	Total	MSc	BSc	Diploma	Certificate	Trained in OSH**
Federal OSHWE Dept	8	-	8	1	7*	-	-	5
Regions:								
Oromia	27	-	27	1	15	11	-	27
SNNP	4	-	4	-	1	3	-	3
Benshangul	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	2
Afar	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	2
Gambella	10	-	10	-	2	4	4	1
Amhara	13	3	16	-	14	2	-	16
Tigray	24	12	36	-	15	18	3	4
Addis Ababa	10	2	12	1	11	-	-	12
Somale	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Dire Dawa	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Harrar	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>77</b>

\* One inspector holds LLB in Law.

\*\* The training lasts up to two weeks.

Issues of staff and training are discussed in the next chapter, along with a number of other key issues facing the labour administration in Ethiopia.

## **6. Labour Inspection Services: Key issues**

### **6.1. Policy and direction**

A coherent national policy on labour inspection is much needed, to achieve some degree of national consistency and to maximize efficiency. The policy should take into account legislation, government policies and stakeholder engagement as well as organizational and management issues, giving clearer overall direction to inspectors and their managers. Having such a policy is also important given the growth of private sector initiatives, as in the floriculture and garment sectors.

Such a policy needs the support and commitment from the highest level of Government, such as the Minister of State. Social partners also need to be involved in developing the policy.

---

## **6.2. Planning and reports, data collection and analysis**

Good coordination and communications between Federal and Regional offices are vital for planning purposes, especially including the regular exchange of data on inspection outputs, accident and disease data and working conditions etc.

There was a great shortage of data at both Federal and Regional level, because of a lack of reporting by employers regarding, for example, accidents and diseases, labour disputes and overtime working. Moreover, there was little information about levels of compliance from inspectors' reports. This hampered planning and programming, setting priorities and targeting. For example, with the growth of construction industry in Ethiopia, many fatal accidents are taking place but most are not reported. Reports on fatal accidents or on major labour disputes should be immediately notified to relevant authorities.

From available statistics on the accident data, it was estimated that only 10 per cent of the total accidents were reported, clearly demonstrating the need for improved reporting of accidents and diseases. We were also informed about an increase in numbers of cases involving non payment of wages, disputes arising out of job transfers, promotions and victimization, all of which have implications for developing a preventive culture.

Most offices we visited did not have annual or quarterly work plans with deadlines to give some direction to manage inspections or preventive work. We were told of monthly/quarterly reports produced at the BOLSA level but some of these did not reach OSHWED. Likewise, some Regional offices do not receive sufficient guidance and information from OSHWED.

The key to successful planning depends to a large extent on having a comprehensive computer database or registry of establishments, accidents etc. While some registries are kept, these are not comprehensive and need to be updated. Modern IT systems in Federal and Regional offices would help enormously here, while questions of cost have to be considered.

## **6.3. Inspection visits**

Generally there appeared to be no targets and outputs for labour inspectors, the frequency of inspection visits was generally very low. Figures vary from one office to another and data from some offices was unavailable, but some inspectors manage to pay an average of 20-25 enterprise visits per month, others as few as 1-2 per month. To some extent, the low figures are compensated by training done by inspectors of workers at the enterprises. Inspections were often prompted by complaints from Trade unions, some were proactive and a very few were to investigate accidents. In addition, inspectors pay a significant number of visits for the purposes of training workers. Details of the breakdowns of all such visits were not available.

The lack of available transport (discussed later) was often quoted as one of the main reasons for the low number of visits. However, if inspectors are well motivated, it appeared to us that the number of visits could be fairly easily increased. For example in one Region, inspectors were able to pay more visits

---

using a combination of bicycle, public transport, office vehicles and with better management and planning. We conclude that there are hidden resources and strategies to increase the number of inspections per inspector in short to medium term.

Most of inspection visits were unannounced, giving the element of surprise and provided the employer with little opportunity to ‘window dress’ the enterprise, thereby allowing the inspector to see it in its normal state. In Ethiopia, labour inspectors are not empowered to impose immediate sanctions (administrative fines) on employers failing to comply with the provisions of the law. Fines can only be imposed by the decision of a court of law. Inspectors can write formal letters or ‘notices’ to employers in cases where, in the inspectors’ opinion, the law has been contravened. These notices can be issued on the spot or within a given time after the inspection. Issuing a notice after the visit has the advantage of allowing the inspector time to confer with superiors and reconsider his or her opinion before issuing the notice. Due to a lack of resources, follow-up visits were also not systematically undertaken.

Inspectors use two standard visit forms/checklists, one for small enterprises and the other for medium and large ones. These cover occupational safety and health matters and conditions of employment, working time, and employment issues such as contract types. A third checklist covers HIV/AIDS issues and has been prepared by OSHWED to guide inspectors on this topic; this checklist is not yet incorporated into the standard forms. Conspicuously absent from the inspection forms are questions about the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value.

We were also told that inspectors did not spend much time dealing with complaints, as this was the task of the officials in the Industrial Relations units at both Federal and Regional levels. However in the Districts, labour officers handled both inspections and dispute settlements, as in most cases there was only a single labour officer.

While much of the above matches well with the requirements of ILO Convention No. 81, which has not yet been ratified by Ethiopia, inspectors nevertheless are unable to enforce the law as envisaged by this Convention. There are several reasons for this, which are discussed below.

#### **6.4. Sanctions and enforcement**

The credibility of any inspectorate depends to a large extent on its ability to give competent advice to employers and workers on how best to comply with the law, but it also depends on the existence and implementation of an enforcement regime. Any threat of enforcement must be perceived as a real one.

We were unable to obtain national data on actual numbers of prosecutions and other sanctions. However, it appeared to us that most if not all Regions took very few prosecutions (if any) concerning safety and health. The lack of training on taking prosecution and court procedures was cited as a factor in the low figures. Additionally, we were informed that judges and magistrates often did not understand that inspectors did indeed have the authority to undertake prosecutions. Hence, judges and magistrates need to be made aware of the role of inspectors in

---

undertaking prosecutions. Additionally, inspectors must be trained in how to undertake prosecutions and court procedures, gathering evidence etc.

### **6.5. Involvement with the media and high profile activities**

The Addis Ababa labour inspection services participated in regular radio broadcasts in conjunction with the Fire services, giving out mainly safety and health messages to the general public. It appeared that such media activities were too expensive for other inspection services, but this seemed like an excellent way of getting important safety information out to the public, thinking of the informal economy in particular.

However, inspectors from several offices were actively engaged in high profile events, such as the World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28 April), which in 2008 focused on the floriculture sector. Likewise the World AIDS Day (1 December) or the World Day against Child Labour (12 June) are also opportunities for inspectors to engage in high profile events and to raise the profile of their important work.

### **6.6. Cross-regional collaboration**

There was also little cross-Regional collaboration as inspection services seemed to operate independently. This is a pity, as much information could be positively shared between the Regional inspection services to mutual benefit. For example, the experience gained from the floriculture and garment safety and health projects could easily be shared. There could also be more staff exchanges between Regions so as to enhance learning and experience, and to help achieve greater national consistency.

### **6.7. Working with other stakeholders**

Collaborative work with social partners and other stakeholders is a major challenge for the labour inspection services, as such inter-institutional cooperation, except in the case of HIV/AIDS, was not part of their culture. In Ethiopia, there are several agencies that have responsibilities which touch on or overlap with those of the labour inspection services, such as the Ministry of Health, the Federal Civil Service Authority and the Ministry of Justice. There are also private sector initiatives, such as those with the Horticulture, Textile and Garment Manufacturing Associations, all of which need greater collaborative effort on the part of the labour inspection services. Greater information flow between the stakeholders is important for national coherence and direction on labour inspection.

### **6.8. Staff recruitment**

Inspectors are Civil Servants and recruited under normal Civil Service procedures. The number of labour inspectors nationally has increased markedly over the last 6-7 years. In 2003 there were 44 inspectors nationally and currently there are 120, both figures including inspector managers. The Addis Ababa city

---

office said they would be expanding to engage a total of 57 inspectors in the next 1-2 months, but it was not clear whether other offices were considering similar expansions. As the table below shows, at present there are far more men than women inspectors in the field offices and there are none in the OSHWED. This will hopefully change soon with the Government's policy on equal opportunities and its current "Better opportunities for females" campaign.

All recently recruited inspectors are graduates and some have industrial experience. Inspectors' salaries are relatively low, starting at 1068 Birr/month (about \$100 at current exchange rates), rising to about 3000 birr after 8 years. However, there is a problem of staff retention and many junior inspectors leave after a few years' service for various reasons, not least to seek much higher salaries which private enterprises are now able to afford. This means a significant loss of investment for the government, and further costs incurred in recruitment and training.

We understood that some recent graduates from Gondar University who had obtained a degree in occupational hygiene and safety have been able to obtain much higher starting salaries as inspectors in the new Federal Civil Service Agency. However, eight of the labour inspectors recruited to the Federal Civil Service Agency have recently resigned to join the staff at Gondar University itself, indicating the anomaly in grading labour inspectors salary at a lower level than the rate demanded for the job.

## **6.9. Staff training**

On appointment, inspectors are given some induction training and then learn on the job. As shown in Table 1 above, some inspectors also receive safety and health training that is provided by OSHWED. Thereafter inspectors attend training courses on particular subjects as and when available. Some inspectors have had basic training on HIV/AIDS, using the ILO's standard training manual on this subject<sup>11</sup>, others on child labour issues<sup>12</sup>. Inspectors should have regular staff appraisals at which time any specific training needs can also be discussed, but training is not provided systematically.

The training of labour inspectors is generally weak, especially on social skills such as communications and legal skills, which are necessary for them to be able to convince duty holders to apply legislation in practice and to fulfill all their enforcement functions. With regard to occupational safety and health, OSHWED provided a training-of-trainers workshop on the Occupational Safety and Health Directive when it was adopted in 2008, but this Directive is a newly adopted and very technical piece of legislation, and field inspectors would doubtless benefit from further ongoing technical training here. This would also help build up inspectors' confidence in this area.

To illustrate the above, at one of the factories we visited, there were various safety and health risks, ranging from high noise and dust levels to steam emissions and poor machinery guarding. It appeared to us then that inspectors could be better

---

<sup>11</sup> "Handbook on HIV/AIDS for labour and factory inspectors", ILO, 2005. See Annex 2.

<sup>12</sup> "Combating child labour: a handbook for labour inspectors", ILO, 2002. See Annex 2.

---

equipped to enable them to discuss evident safety and health risks with employers and workers more competently and what practical steps could be taken to reduce the risks. We conclude that in addition to classroom training, inspectors should also be trained at enterprises themselves, so as to make them more competent in practice

#### **6.10. Standards of ethical behaviour**

Most of the offices that we visited prominently displayed a code of ethical behaviour. This sets a high standard for good governance, and it will be up to managers to ensure that each officer abides by the code.

#### **6.11. Non-staff resources: offices, transport, personal protective equipment and scientific equipment**

In order to carry out its functions effectively, the labour inspection services not only need an adequate number of trained staff, but they must also be given the necessary resources and budget to perform their tasks. It appeared to us that the labour inspection budget comes under the general budget of MOLSA and the BOLSAs, so labour inspector managers often do not know precisely how much money is available for inspection. This had implications for transport, training and the purchase of office equipment.

As noted above, many of the offices provided for inspectors were not equipped with modern IT equipment. Even OSHWED and the BOLSAs had only basic computers, while the Zonal offices needed additional computers to avoid sharing between inspectors, as well as more office stationary.

The lack of suitable transport was a serious problem for all the staff we interviewed. Office vehicles were usually shared amongst many staff, including those from other Government offices or agencies, who often claimed that their own needs were greater than those of inspectors. Moreover, the administrative procedures for booking vehicles appeared to be cumbersome, inhibiting inspectors from using them. However, the alternatives were often almost non-existent, especially in rural areas. The use of public transport, bicycles and walking between enterprises is only practicable in towns and cities. Some inspectors told us that they relied on employers or trade unions to provide them with transport. This burden on labour inspection resources puts a severe strain on their professionalism, independence and impartiality.

Inspectors also lacked their own personal protective clothing so as to set a good example during inspections.

Finally, labour inspectorates did not have sufficient and properly maintained scientific monitoring equipment to support their own assessments during inspections, for example to measure noise, dust, temperature or illumination levels. To some extent, inspectors can make a well informed judgment on matters without resorting to using such equipment, but it is often very useful to have real scientific measurements of such risks when trying to convince employers and workers that there is a genuine problem. Additionally, when an inspector needs to get clear evidence for a prosecution, it is necessary to actually measure the state of the environment and compare the actual measure with the standard determined by law.

---

## **7. Findings and recommendations**

### **7.1. National commitment, policy and direction**

Labour inspection has a vital role in applying international and national standards at the enterprise level, contributing to sustainable development, economic progress, employment and productivity, and strengthening good governance. We understand that a new Decent Work Country Programme for Ethiopia is currently being drafted, and strongly recommend that the need to strengthen labour inspection is included in it, as a statement of commitment from the highest level of Government.

We believe that there needs to be greater national direction on labour inspection, labour administration and occupational safety and health etc, to help inspectors and their managers in their tasks, to promote more of a preventive 'culture' and to encourage greater national consistency and cohesion. Recognizing the Federal structure of country, we recommend that MOLSA formulate a national policy for labour inspection, consulting BOLSAs and their staff and also social partners in the process.

The availability of adequate resources for labour inspection is vital to its effectiveness and impact. We recommend that MOLSA review the overall level of staff and material expenditure on labour inspection nationally and seek to increase financial resources allocated to it.

Having a fully functioning Labour Advisory Board would also help here and we would recommend that this Board should be made operational as soon as possible.

### **7.2. Improving the legislative base and its enforcement**

The Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003, as amended in 2006, provides a sound legal basis for an effective and modern labour inspection service. It applies to all workplaces in all economic sectors, including the informal economy, and gives inspectors a wide range of enforcement powers. It includes many if not all of the provisions of the Labour Inspection Convention 1947 (No.81) and also the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention 1969 (No.129). However, neither of these Conventions has been ratified by Ethiopia and we recommend that they are ratified so as to strengthen further the legal basis on which inspectors operate.

Although inspectors have been given a wide range of enforcement powers under this Proclamation, there is very little use of such powers in practice and little enforcement, such as of safety and health legislation. The reasons for this appear to be several, including a lack of recognition amongst the judges of inspectors' right to take legal proceedings, a generally low level of fines for labour law contraventions and poor training of inspectors in how to conduct cases in court. We note that the Federal government has already embarked on a programme of labour law reforms, and we recommend that attention is specifically given to the reasons why labour law is poorly enforced, and that steps are taken to improve this so that the law is properly implemented, achieving greater equity and justice in the



---

workplace. The Ministry of Justice may be able to assist MOLSA here and it is recommended that the Ministries collaborate on this issue, including the training of inspectors on legal proceedings.

### **7.3. Organization and communications**

To provide national direction on labour inspection, as referred to above, we recommend that MOLSA establishes a new inter-Departmental group or unit that is responsible for formulating national policy, setting priorities and developing action plans, addressing the full range of topics covered by the labour inspection services. It should also be responsible for overseeing the implementation of action plans and the collection of data to enable it to set priorities.

Social partners have an important role to play here and are already engaged to some extent in labour inspection issues at a Federal level. We recommend that they play an active role in collaborating with any new group or unit that is charged with establishing national labour inspection policy. MOLSA should regularly consult social partners on key issues relating to such policy.

With such a role, we recommend that MOLSA and its Departments discontinue any strictly operational role, so that they can focus on their important policy and planning functions. In particular, responsibility for the inspection of public sector enterprises in Addis Ababa and Dere Dawa should be transferred from the Department of Occupational Safety and Health and the Working Environment to the relevant local inspection services.

Inspectorates can work more efficiently and effectively if they are integrated within single organizations. The inspectorates of the Federal Civil Service Agency and the Ministry of Health were outside the main labour inspection organizational structures, and we recommend that relevant Ministries consider the feasibility of integrating these inspectorates. As a start, we recommend that arrangements are made for regular meetings between appropriate Heads of Inspection Service, sharing of information and expertise, and also arranging joint training activities.

The labour inspection services in the different Regions and Cities seemed to work independently, and we recommend that there is greater cross-regional collaboration and exchanging of experience, to improve knowledge-sharing and to achieve greater national consistency. Meetings between the Heads of the Labour Inspection Services of different Regions, City Administrations and OSHWED should also be held periodically. We also recommend that national responsibilities for key employment sectors, such as construction or floriculture, are allocated to different Regional or City inspection services, so that several develop sector-related expertise which they can then share with inspection services throughout the country.

Regular communications between MOLSA and some of the Regional or City inspection services appeared to be poor. We strongly recommend that such communications are improved, so that the Federal Departments have comprehensive sets of data on their respective subjects that enable them to set national priorities and develop national action plans, while the Regional offices receive clear guidance and information from the Federal Departments. We also

---

recommend that reports on fatal accidents or on major labour disputes are immediately forwarded to MOLSA.

A modern and comprehensive IT system would greatly help in the communication of data, reports and compiling national and regional statistics and registries, such as of accidents and diseases and labour disputes. We recommend that modern IT equipment and software are installed in all inspection offices, with priority given to the main offices in Regional and the Federal Departments.

Social partners appear to be engaged in labour inspection matters at the Federal level but less so at Regional levels. We recommend that tripartism is strengthened throughout the country and especially at Regional levels, with BOLSAs consulting social partners on labour inspection matters that specifically relate to their Regions.

#### **7.4. Developing national and regional and inspection programmes**

To develop meaningful national programmes with clear priorities, it is essential to have available comprehensive sets of national statistics and other data as well as taking into account wider political priorities, such as on HIV/AIDS prevention. With such data and political direction, we recommend that relevant Federal Departments agree national priorities for labour inspection and develop national action plans in consultation with the Regional Bureaus and with social partners. Such plans and priorities should be reviewed annually.

Modern labour inspection services give greater emphasis to prevention, whether of work-related accidents and ill-health or of labour disputes. We recommend that all work programmes include plans for inspectors to carry out a high proportion of preventive visits per month or per year.

It is also important to investigate certain accidents and diseases in order to establish their causes and to determine what can be done to avoid repetition. We thus recommend that inspectors investigate more accidents and diseases, especially the fatal and serious injury ones, to establish their causes and to help prevent repetition. For this, it will be necessary to have certain selection criteria, as it will never be possible to investigate all reported accidents and diseases, but certainly the more serious or significant reported injuries should be selected for investigation. We also recommend training for inspectors in good investigation techniques.

The number of visits paid by some offices was very low, at around 1-2 inspection visits per inspector per month, although some inspectors were able to pay 20-30 visits per month. We recommend that the reasons for such disparity are thoroughly investigated and that MOLSA should offer guidance to all inspection offices as to how many visits per inspector per month should be planned. Once such targets are agreed, we also recommend that managers monitor the performance of individual inspectors, to ensure that the targets are met and that any shortcomings in achievements are properly addressed. An annual staff performance appraisal system would also help here.

---

We also recommend that inspectors should make a point of discussing relevant issues with workers' representatives during their visits as well as employers. If there are Trade Union or safety and health representatives, inspectors should meet them during any routine inspection visits.

Finally, we recommend that broader targeted programmes should be developed, which include educational and awareness-raising activities and media coverage as well as the inspection of enterprises. Such targeted programmes may focus on particular sectors or cross-cutting topics and cover matters of particular concern, such as the need for prevention in sectors with high numbers of serious accidents. Programmes could also include special initiatives with private inspection organizations or auditors, such as those engaged by multi-national enterprises. National occupational safety and health programmes could be developed as envisaged by the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention 2006 (No.187) and its accompanying Recommendation.

### **7.5. Awareness-raising campaigns**

We welcome the efforts of some of the inspection service to work with the media, TV or radio, to get important messages across to a wider audience. We recommend that greater use is made of the media, especially with a view to reaching informal economy workers.

We also recommend that inspectors are more actively engaged in high profile events, such as the World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28 April), World AIDS Day (1 December) or the World Day Against Child Labour (12 June).

Recognizing the need for increased national data on accidents and diseases and on labour disputes, we recommend that MOLSA considers conducting a national inspection campaign on the reporting of accidents and diseases. This could include awareness-raising efforts in consultation with social partners and other stakeholders, including the media, targeted inspection and prosecution in serious cases.

### **7.6. HIV/AIDS and labour inspection**

The on-going labour law reform process in Ethiopia offers a unique opportunity for MOLSA to incorporate awareness-raising and behavioral change programmes for workers regarding the legal, moral, and health dimensions of discrimination. Labour inspectors did not appear to be using their powers to enforce non-discrimination legislation with regard to HIV/AIDS victims in the workplace, and we recommend that they do so, supported by fresh guidance in this area.

We also recommend that the checklist developed by MOLSA to guide the inspections should be made part of the current labour inspection form, to enable HIV/AIDS issues to be mainstreamed during the inspections. OSHWED could provide leadership in this initiative.

Many labour inspectors have had basic training on the subject, using the ILO's "Handbook on HIV/AIDS for labour and factory inspectors" on the subject. We

---

recommend that more inspectors are trained using this or other suitable material, and that refresher training is also provided for inspectors.

### **7.7. Staff resources, career development, safety and health and ethical behaviour**

It is often said that an organization's staff is its most valuable resource, and we welcome the fact that at least some offices are expanding their numbers of inspectors to meet rising demands. However, it became clear to us that there was quite a serious problem with staff retention and motivation, especially amongst junior inspectors who – as newly qualified graduates – may leave after just a few years' service for better paid jobs elsewhere. An inspectors' task is a challenging one requiring good communication skills as well as sound technical and legal knowledge, and this should be reflected in salaries offered to inspectors. We therefore recommend an urgent review of inspectors' general conditions of service, particularly their salaries, and plans for career development, so as to build confidence and to make it more attractive for young, well-qualified inspectors to stay on in their posts.

It is strongly recommended that attention should be given to the need to recruit women inspectors as well as men, thus implementing the government's current policies on equal opportunities.

As in any profession, inspectors need to have some indication of potential career progression to encourage personal motivation. We recommend that more attention is given to inspectors' career development, including promotion prospects and the need for ongoing training.

We also strongly recommend that inspectors are provided with their own personal protective equipment and are given training in how to use it. This would set a good example to employers and workers, as well as protecting inspectors' own safety and health. Other matters relating to inspectors' own safety and health should be considered in due course.

We welcome the Government's stated principles for ethical behaviour and the accompanying publicity. We recommend that all inspection service staff are trained in implementing these principles and that managers ensure that any infringements are dealt with as serious breaches of conduct.

### **7.8. Training and information for inspectors**

Inspectors should be able to make a real difference to the workplaces they inspect, and for this it is vital that they are fully competent in their jobs and work professionally. They therefore need to be well trained, not only on legal and technical subjects and in administrative procedures, but also in communication and influencing skills, and in making sound judgments about levels of compliance.

We recognize the value of projects such as those on child labour, HIV/AIDS and floriculture/garment manufacturing in making provision for inspector training. While this is welcome, this has resulted in an ad hoc approach to training and we recommend that there is a more systematic approach to training overall, with a

---

national training policy and plan. This should also include both initial and mid-career training, with the aim of making all inspectors fully competent for their tasks. Particular attention should be given to the need for a training policy and programme for new inspector recruits.

We were glad to note some safety and health training was provided for inspectors after the Occupational Safety and Health Directive was adopted in July 2008. However, we recommend that more comprehensive training is provided on the very wide range of topics covered by this Directive. Such training needs to be regularly reinforced through updating training, information-sharing etc. Attention should also be given to training in the inspection of occupational safety and health management systems and risk assessment and prevention.

We also recommend that inspectors are trained in equality and anti-discrimination issues and equal remuneration.

It may be feasible to organize some training courses in association with tertiary educational institutions, for example on industrial relations or on safety and health at work. It is understood that Gondar University has recently started a new degree course on occupational hygiene and safety and this could be a useful resource for inspectors. In particular, there is an urgent need for comprehensive training for all new inspector recruits. We recommend that MOLSA investigates the possibility of organizing inspector training in cooperation with other institutions such as the universities, the Ministry for Justice or the Civil Service College.

The ILO has developed several training modules on labour inspection and some specific topics that they have to deal with, such as occupational safety and health, HIV/AIDS, forced labour and child labour. With the expertise of the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, these training materials are currently being updated and expanded so that there should soon be a comprehensive range of ILO training products, both stand-alone courses and practical training modules that can be used by national labour administrations. We recommend using such materials, and others, in developing training plans for inspectors.

It was evident that inspectors did not often have access to comprehensive information and guidance on the subjects they deal with. We recommend that MOLSA reviews the availability of information and guidance on all subjects covered by inspectors, and draws up a plan to ensure that all inspectors have access to such information and guidance. In particular, we recommend that the International Occupational Safety and Health Information (CIS) Centre in Ethiopia should be revitalized and brought back into active service.

## **7.9. Office facilities, transport and scientific monitoring equipment**

Inspectors need suitable office working environments with modern IT equipment for them to be able to carry out their tasks efficiently and effectively. In particular, we recommend that inspectors have sufficient office space and greater access to personal computers and modern IT services.

---

There was an obvious shortage of vehicles for inspectors to use for the purpose of inspection, leading to inspectors using inefficient means of transport or else staying in offices instead of inspecting enterprises. We strongly recommend that more vehicles are made available to inspectors and that they do not have to share with other staff to the extent that they do now. The administrative procedures for booking office vehicles also appeared to be excessive and may partly account for the very low national frequency of inspection visits reported to us. We recommend that administrative procedures for booking vehicles are simplified, so that inspectors minimize time spent on administration and travel and maximize the amount of time spent on inspection.

Specialist technical equipment, such as noise meters and airflow meters, was available in some inspection offices, but the equipment that we observed did not appear to be working. We recommend such equipment continues to be provided for inspectors to use on a Regional basis, backed up by good training, and that where provided the equipment is always maintained in good working order.

## **8. Conclusions and next steps**

The task of the labour inspector is a unique and challenging one. If inspectors are to make an impact in the changing environment of today's global economy, they need sound professional knowledge on both technical and legal matters, as well as good social skills, personal integrity and commitment. They also need an effective and efficient organization behind them that is committed to investing in them and their careers, training them and giving them adequate resources to do their jobs properly.

Such may seem a far-off ideal for some countries, but Ethiopia has already embarked on broader reforms to its Civil Service and the authors of this audit report believe that it has the political will and the capacity to be able to implement all the above recommendations. It should be possible to implement the majority of them in the next 1-2 years while some may take longer, but they should all be realistic and achievable in the foreseeable future.

The next steps should firstly include developing a National Action Plan for implementing these recommendations, with agreed timings and responsibilities. Such a Plan must be drawn up in consultation with the social partners as well as different Government Ministries and the Regional BOLSAs.

Secondly, we believe that MOLSA should develop a proposal for an externally funded project, such as a Technical Cooperation project, to manage the implementation of these recommendations. The project should be managed by MOLSA and it could be of about 2 years' duration, by which time it is hoped that the majority of the recommendations above can be implemented.

## Annex I

### List of Conventions ratified by Ethiopia

Convention	Date of Ratification by Ethiopia
Unemployment Convention, 1919 (No.2)	11 – 06 – 1966
Rights of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)	4 – 06 – 1963
Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No.14)	28 – 01 – 1991
Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	2 – 09 – 2003
Final Articles Revision Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	23 – 7 – 1947
Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention 1948 (No. 87)	4 – 06 – 1963
Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)	4 – 06 – 1963
Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised) 1948 (No. 96)	Denounced on 10-05-1999
Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	4 – 06 – 1963
Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	24 – 03 – 1999
Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No.105)	24 – 03 – 1999
Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)	28 – 01 – 1999
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), Convention 1958 (No. 111)	11 – 06 – 1966
Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961	11 – 06 – 1966
Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	27 – 05 – 1999
Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)	28 – 01 – 1991
Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)	28 – 01 – 1991
Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)	28 – 01 – 1991
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)	28 – 01 – 1991
Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181)	24 – 03 – 1999
Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	02 – 09 – 2003

Source: ILOLEX, 31 – 03 – 2009

Ratified: 20

Denounced: 1