



Bureau of International Labor Affairs
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



ILAB

Bureau of International Labor Affairs



Making trade fair
for U.S. workers
and businesses
through strong
trade enforcement
of labor commitments.

OUR MISSION is to promote a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world – by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.



Unrivaled experience
and impact in
combating child labor,
forced labor, and
human trafficking
across the world.

The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) leads the U.S. government's efforts to improve working conditions and fight labor exploitation around the world. Our work reflects the values of the American people as it furthers the interests of our workers and businesses.

ILAB negotiates, monitors, and enforces the labor provisions of U.S. trade agreements and preference programs. These efforts have led to improved laws and enforcement among many key trading partners.

ILAB has a quarter century of experience overseeing technical assistance projects to improve worker rights and fight child labor and forced labor in over 90 countries. Our projects have contributed to a global reduction in the number of child laborers by more than 94 million, supported meaningful labor law reform, and strengthened enforcement efforts across the world.

Our unparalleled, in-depth reporting on child labor and forced labor and constructive engagement with governments, private sector, and civil society stakeholders spurs concrete actions to address these abuses and helps stem the flow of goods made with forced labor from entering the U.S.

Going forward, ILAB will continue to strengthen and consolidate the gains made over our 70-year history as we defend the dignity of work abroad in order to safeguard it here at home.



Leadership in
representing U.S.
interests on labor and
employment issues in
the G20, ILO, OECD,
and other forums.

MAKING TRADE FAIR FOR WORKERS

No worker should have to compete against goods made by forced laborers, exploited children, or under abusive, unsafe conditions. ILAB seeks to raise labor standards in the context of trade by negotiating strong labor commitments and holding trade partners accountable. ILAB trade enforcement combines monitoring and engagement with targeted technical assistance to strengthen the rule of law in countries that have the political will but lack the resources to comply. This multifaceted approach has improved labor law enforcement in trade partners including Honduras, Colombia, Guatemala, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. In Honduras, our comprehensive approach has prompted passage of a landmark labor inspection law that increases compliance with labor obligations and has rescued thousands of children from child labor.

Each aspect of this coordinated approach, honed over decades of experience, is vital to ensuring that U.S. trade policy benefits workers and businesses in the United States. ILAB's support for innovative partnerships with businesses and workers has lifted labor standards in supply chains and export sectors across the globe, from agriculture in Mexico to garments in Jordan. ILAB's labor attachés, posted in strategic U.S. embassies overseas, have increased monitoring capabilities and multiplied ILAB's impact in key countries, including Bangladesh and Colombia. ILAB continues to leverage all of its tools and uniquely specialized institutional knowledge to build on this work and create a fair playing field for workers in the U.S. and around the world.

COMBATING CHILD LABOR AND MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

ILAB is a global leader in efforts to combat international child labor, forced labor and human trafficking. We work with governments, businesses, and civil society to help make these abusive practices a relic of the past. As the world's largest funder of programs to combat child labor and forced labor, we confront this global scourge in some of the most challenging contexts – from cocoa plantations in West Africa to seafood processing plants in Thailand, from sugarcane fields in the Philippines to coffee plantations in Nicaragua.

Our engagement has made a critical difference in helping reduce the number of child laborers worldwide by 94 million over the past two decades. ILAB's projects have increased the capacity of over 90 countries to address these labor abuses, including by providing millions of children educational, training, and other social services, and training over 50,000 labor inspectors and law enforcement officials.

ILAB's unparalleled, congressionally mandated reports on child labor and forced labor provide recommendations to combat child labor in over 130 trade beneficiary countries and identify more than 145 goods from over 75 countries produced by child labor or forced labor. In addition, ILAB has developed two mobile applications, *Sweat & Toil* and *Comply Chain*, which identify child and forced labor, and provide compliance assistance in rooting out these labor abuses in global supply chains. Governments, businesses, and others use ILAB reports and tools to curb abusive practices and keep goods made with forced or trafficked labor out of the U.S. market.

ADVANCING U.S. LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT PRIORITIES

ILAB leads the representation of U.S. interests on labor and employment issues at the International Labor Organization (ILO), G20, G7, OECD, APEC, OAS, and other bodies. Our expert staff works to promote U.S. employment and labor priorities related to workforce development, female labor force participation, disconnected youth, and safe and healthy workplaces. The United States has played a strong role in influencing ILO policy toward many countries, including Burma, Colombia, Qatar, Uzbekistan, and Venezuela.

In the G20, G7, and OECD, ILAB pursues policies to make growth stronger, fairer, and more widespread among the world's major economies and encourages concerted action to empower women in the workplace and promote apprenticeships. ILAB couples these efforts with effective bilateral diplomacy to shape policies among strategic partners and to inform the development of domestic policies and programs to support quality job creation in the United States.