



Evaluation of Bilateral and Regional Labour Affairs and the International Trade and Labour Stream

2011 to 2016

Bilateral and Regional Labour Affairs negotiates, implements, monitors, and resolves disputes related to Labour Provisions of Free Trade Agreements (“the labour provisions”) with partner countries to:

- Promote fundamental labour rights internationally.
- Help protect Canadians from unfair competition.

Key findings

- Put in force nine trade agreements with labour provisions that require parties to respect internationally-recognized labour rights and principles and completed 3 additional negotiations.
- Provided funding of \$4.2M provided to projects in partner countries to assist with improving and maintaining labour legislation and enforcement capacity.
- Made efforts to address non-compliance with the agreements contributed to improvements in partners’ labour legislation and enforcement.
- The labour provisions and regional engagement efforts contributed to the promotion of fundamental labour rights and principles internationally.

Challenges:

- Limited stakeholder consultations during negotiations.
- Gaps in efforts to implement and monitor labour provisions.

Four lessons learned:

1. Modifying consultations to increase the involvement of provinces, territories, and other stakeholders could enhance analysis and negotiations.
2. Considering how the monitoring pilot project could progress, i.e., how it could become a sustainable tool to help address gaps in efforts to monitor labour provisions, and how it could support the monitoring requirements in the labour provisions.
3. Adjustments to the project approval process could help focus on areas of most pressing need. Adjustments to project duration could contribute to sustainability.
4. Opportunities may exist to improve how performance data is organized and to collect more data on examples of contributions to long-term outcomes.

The full Evaluation of Bilateral and Regional Labour Affairs and the International Trade and Labour Stream is available on Employment and Social Development Canada’s website.

