

AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE



Proposed by Michele Patterson, IALI President, June 2008

Introduction

During 2005-2008 we have seen IALI move forward into a new era where the demand for assistance in improving and modernising labour inspection has increased globally. Every day we have seen new requests for help – including requests for technical advice, funding, provision of expertise to projects such as Decent Work Country Programmes, attendance at conferences and forums around the globe and proposals for IALI participation in partnerships and local programmes and events.

Our experience over this period has indicated that IALI will need to improve its planning and organisation to meet these challenging new demands in the future.

Today I propose to present to you a plan of action for IALI's future: a plan for IALI to participate effectively in achieving strengthened and professional labour inspection worldwide.

Background

Providing the foundation for strong, professional and effective labour inspection – summary of 2005-2008 programme

Themes

During 2005-2008 IALI focussed on developing and promoting 3 main themes of action to build a foundation for our future. These themes were:

1. **Alliances** – partnerships between governments, employers, unions and others, and strengthening labour inspection through regional cooperation;
2. **Ethics and professionalism** – the need for a global code of ethics/integrity and developing the foundation for professional labour inspection; and
3. **Influence** – demonstrating the value of effective labour inspection and measuring effectiveness.

Activities and key achievements

To address the above themes during the 2005-2008 period, IALI:

- organised Conferences across the globe in partnership with host countries – including the second IALI conference in Asia, the first in North America and the first in the Pacific region;
- developed a draft Global Code of Integrity for endorsement at the 2008 General Assembly;
- participated in partnerships (eg with the ILO, special programmes such as forced labour, regional organisations of labour inspection, Decent Work Country Programmes and so on);
- provided expertise to a range of programmes, forums, conferences and initiatives;
- produced the IALI Forum each year and developed the interactive website; and

- began exploring the potential for development of a global means of benchmarking for improvement in labour inspection performance (ie the scoreboard approach).

Outcomes

The major activities for 2005-2008 have led to a number of significant outcomes including:

- the global Code of Integrity;
- new regional activities and programmes across Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific;
- increased membership of IALI; and
- strengthened partnerships with a range of organisations including international employers and unions.

Responding to the environment – IALI comes of age

Meeting the challenges of the environment:

IALI was formed in the 1970's when the need was identified to organise and professionalise labour inspection so that it could deliver results in the public interest – in partnership with the direct workplace stakeholders.

The 1980's and 1990's owe IALI's development and evolution to the developed countries of Europe, in particular, the resources for progress provided by Germany, the United Kingdom and Scandinavia. These countries were recognised

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

over the period for international best practice and provided the resources and inspiration for other parts of the world to develop good practices.

In the 21st century, the phenomenal rate of economic and social development around the world presents employers, workers and labour inspectors with new challenges. And quite suddenly, effective labour inspection is in great demand everywhere. All parties in the world's workforce are seeking assistance to meet safe and decent standards of work. Economic imperatives are driving the pursuit of a better standard of work practice and the profession of labour inspection – particularly health and safety inspection – is well positioned to influence the development of safe, fair and decent work world-wide.

Our international challenge is to improve occupational health and safety and fair working conditions to deliver reductions in deaths, injuries, diseases, disputes and costs to business – as well as to promote human dignity, more productive workers and the right environment for business to thrive.

In response to this challenge, it is proposed that IALI commences a new phase of operation designed to build on the achievements to date and to grow the organisation into the future.

The first step in developing a new maturity of operation is to consider and discuss an action plan for the future. This plan for 2008-2011 will aim to clarify IALI's aims, actions and

outcomes over this period. It is intended that if this first step can be agreed and achieved, comprehensive strategic and long-term plans will then be able to be developed to guide IALI beyond 2011 and well into the 21st century.

An action plan for the future – a proposal for the future directions of your association

Summary

This plan proposes that IALI defines **6 areas for action** reflecting its key roles as an international association.

Each role or **Action Area** has a strategic **Objective** and a more detailed **Description** of the role and purpose of that area of work. A programme of work for each objective is then outlined consisting of proposed **Outcomes, Areas of Engagement for IALI members** and a list of **Specific Tasks for 2008-2011**.

The 6 proposed Roles or Action Areas for IALI are:

1. **IALI – the professional association** – *Objective: To provide the professional foundation for building strong, modernised and effective labour inspection worldwide.*
2. **IALI as influencer –** *Objective: To promote the profession and interests of labour inspection through development of spheres of influence.*

3. **IALI as partner –**

Objective: To build IALI's participation in both formal and informal partnerships and alliances with related organisations and in specific projects to promote decent work around the world.

4. **IALI as catalyst – Objective:**

To act as a catalyst for the development of regional cooperation in labour inspection.

5. **IALI as facilitator and communicator – Objective:**

To provide information for members and to facilitate member initiatives to improve their labour inspection service.

6. **IALI as source of technical expertise – Objective:**

To provide a resource for accessing technical expertise in labour inspection.

The detailed plan follows.

Note that the plan does not include a specific proposal for evaluation, however the defined tasks and outcomes will provide a guide to establish whether the objectives have been met.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI’S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 1 – IALI the professional association

Objective

To provide the professional foundation for building strong, modernised and effective labour inspection worldwide

Description

IALI is the worldwide association for the profession of labour inspection. The key responsibility for any professional association is to provide the tools and services that members need to operate professionally. Examples of tools that could assist members to deliver high quality and professional labour inspection systems include:

- a global code of ethics/integrity;
- a framework for common principles of operation;
- a framework for training and professional development;
- manuals and guides for specific areas of inspection work;
- common auditing tools for prevention; and
- a framework for measuring performance and comparative benchmarking.

Globally, the demand for strong and effective labour inspection is increasing in response to the pace of change in the marketplace and the impact of these changes on the global workforce. Labour inspection plays a vital role in ensuring sound social and economic conditions and good governance. Inspectors are only effective in influencing conditions when they act in a professional, fair, transparent and ethical manner, according to sound principles of operation. Their credibility must be earned in each local environment.

IALI, the professional association, must respond by providing support for members to deal with these challenges effectively. The strength of IALI depends on increasing its membership base and delivering ongoing support to members. In this way, IALI can ensure it is truly representative of the profession on a global level, as well as enhancing its capacity to deliver services to members.

Proposed strategic action plan for 2008-2011 and beyond

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (and beyond)

1. The Global Code of Integrity is agreed and promoted to members.
2. Membership policies and strategies (covering funding, payment and ongoing involvement) are developed and agreed.
3. IALI membership is expanded according to an organised strategy – ie defined regions, objectives, member criteria, benefits.
4. IALI representation is global as defined by ILO (or other) regions.
5. Principles of operation for labour inspection are defined.
6. A framework for training resources is compiled (ie resources could be developed by IALI, developed in partnership with others or accessed through membership eg CIS), to allow IALI to provide service to members and identify any gaps for future action.
7. A framework for preventative auditing tools is progressed.
8. Statutes are revised to reflect IALI’s future.
9. Work on comparative performance benchmarking is commenced in partnership with the ILO.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – enhance all relationship opportunities, membership policies, follow- up, engagement and commitment of the member for the long term; all members involved in developing IALI’s professional foundation, tools and strategies.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. Finalise a Code of Integrity to underpin the professionalism of labour inspectors work.
2. Continue to engage international employers and employees in seeking to define roles and professional behaviour.
3. Develop a comprehensive membership strategy to take IALI into the future.
4. Commence work on common principles of operation and other frameworks listed above.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 2 – IALI as influencer

Objective

To promote the profession and interests of labour inspection through development of spheres of influence.

Description

To promote the profession, IALI must develop spheres of influence through which it can ensure that the topic of labour inspection and the interests of labour inspectors appear on all relevant agendas of organisations engaged in related areas of work. For example:

- organisations that work in the global marketplace, e.g. ILO, UN, WHO, WTO, ISSA;
- regional labour inspection groups (eg ASEAN-OSHNET, ARLAC);
- international employer and worker representative groups;
- lobby groups for decent work (eg Fair Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility groups, sustainable and socially responsible investment groups);
- organisations that resource socially responsible investment (eg World Bank, IFC).

To effectively influence other organisations about the importance and role of labour inspection, IALI must provide clear and convincing arguments. To do this it must have underpinning documentation (eg a brochure) that explains the history, philosophy and role of the organisation so that members can consistently represent IALI's aims and objectives and the reasoning behind them.

Current news and descriptions of member activities are also important as a means of influencing others. For example, in addition to informing members, the annual IALI Forum provides information to, and assists in identifying common areas of interest with those we seek to influence.

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (*and beyond*)

1. A brochure that explains IALI's philosophy and the role of labour inspection in achieving international decent work outcomes is produced.
2. The annual IALI Forum is produced and distributed for 2008, 2009 and 2010.
3. All relevant groups and organisations that IALI should seek to influence are identified.
4. Arrangements to develop contacts in each group and seek to contribute to their organisational agendas, are commenced.
5. Ongoing work with existing contacts and networks is actively pursued.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – enhance all opportunities to influence through promotion, lobbying, information contributions to other organisations, participation in local conferences and forums and production of a brochure explaining background and philosophy of labour inspection.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. Finalise an IALI brochure to explain the philosophical basis of IALI and the role of labour inspection.
2. Identify and create a directory of groups and contact persons for each sphere of influence.
3. Engage IALI members in compiling an (ongoing) list of opportunities for engaging with the groups in each sphere of influence (eg annual general meetings, conferences, forums, informal meetings etc).
4. Create a means of recording IALI contact and involvement with other organisations (eg on IALI's interactive web site).
5. Continue to engage international employers and employees in developing spheres of influence around the world.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI’S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 3 – IALI as partner

Objective

To build IALI’s participation in both formal and informal partnerships and alliances with related organisations and in specific projects to promote decent work around the world.

Description

IALI alone cannot achieve safe, healthy and decent work. In addition to developing spheres of influence, IALI needs to work in partnership with other organisations and in specific projects to achieve common aims. Partnerships can be both formal and informal.

IALI currently has an ongoing partnership with the ILO and some regional groups of inspectors (eg ARLAC) which it will seek to strengthen and build further. IALI is also a formal partner in the ILO’s special project on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking.

Many other opportunities for partnerships and alliances can be identified and pursued. For example, partnerships in decent work country programmes, ethical investment and global supply chain regulation, are all objectives that have been discussed at recent IALI regional conferences. Other examples include the development of alliances between regional inspectorates (eg Memorandums of Understanding for compliance work and exchange of information), and with employer and employee organisations.

Through formal and informal partnerships and alliances, IALI can seek to increase its influence and participation in decent work initiatives throughout the world.

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (*and beyond*)

1. A strengthened partnership with the ILO is developed and built around key strategic objectives in areas of mutual interest.
2. IALI’s partnership with the ILO’s special project on forced labour and human trafficking is continued.
3. All regional groups coordinating labour inspection activities (eg SLIC, ASEAN-OSHNET, ARLAC, CRADAC, MAGREB, ARAB states etc) are mapped and opportunities for partnership with IALI are pursued.
4. Opportunities for partnerships to promote decent work with other organisations and projects are identified and work is commenced to develop these potential relationships.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – participate in enhancing all opportunities for regional cooperation and alliances and in identifying organisations and projects with common interests for further relationship-building.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. Undertake discussions with the ILO on the strategic objectives of the partnership with IALI.
2. Work with the ILO’s Special Project on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking to identify where and how IALI can contribute to the next phase of the project.
3. Engage members in mapping all regional organisations that coordinate labour inspection activities and explore potential for partnerships.
4. Hold discussions with international employers, unions and other organisations to identify partnership opportunities.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 4 – IALI as catalyst

Objective

To act as a catalyst for the development of regional cooperation in labour inspection.

Description

A catalyst makes things happen. IALI, through its Executive and membership, can provide the impetus for regional cooperation in labour inspection through organising conferences with host countries (eg 2004-2008 in Macao, Beijing, Ontario and Adelaide); by starting and supporting regional technical programmes (eg Pacific regional technical cooperation programme), and by assisting members to organise regional cooperative initiatives.

IALI is proposing to further develop its current arrangements for promoting regional alliances by assigning regional representative roles to each member of the IALI Executive. It is intended that EC members would work with interested countries to provide the catalyst for regional cooperation to be encouraged to develop. Regional representatives will work to a set of strategic objectives in each region.

Helping members to propose and organise conferences, alliances and inspector exchange programmes are examples of how IALI can provide the catalyst for action. IALI needs to identify where it can add value to existing initiatives as well as promoting new ones.

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (*and beyond*)

1. EC members are assigned regional areas to provide a catalyst for the development of regional cooperative initiatives.
2. A strategic plan for regional cooperation, to be promoted by IALI's regional representatives, is developed.
3. One major IALI conference is held in 2009, 2010 and 2011 in partnership with a host member country (priority given to those countries proposing to develop regional alliances and cooperative programmes as part of the conference objectives).
4. Regional conferences and forums organised by local inspectorates are encouraged and supported by IALI.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – encouraged to propose and host conferences and forums for the promotion of regional cooperation, and to engage in regional initiatives.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. EC plans strategic approach to regional coordination and representation activities and assigns roles to EC members.
2. 3 major conferences held 2009-2011 in addition to the 3-yearly IALI Congress and General Assembly.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI’S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 5 – IALI as communicator and facilitator

Objective

To provide information for members and to facilitate member initiatives to improve their labour inspection service.

Description

A key function of IALI has always been the provision of information to members. With the development of IALI’s web site it is now possible to organise and increase IALI’s role as an information source. A particular aim would be to further develop the interactive web site (eg regional work groups, register of MOU’s, cooperative compliance agreements etc).

IALI members are constantly developing initiatives to improve their performance. IALI can add value to this work by helping to facilitate member initiatives and projects. For example, developing a compendium of regional initiatives and regional labour inspection coordination groups; developing a compendium of best practice; producing guides for operation; providing training resources and so on are all potential areas for development arising out of recent IALI conferences.

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (*and beyond*)

1. A framework for providing information resources to IALI members is developed (through a member survey).
2. Work is commenced on gathering resources and establishing databases of information for members to access.
3. Links to other resources (such as CIS and the European OSH Agency) are provided on the web site.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – contributions to IALI web site and databases; participation in identifying information needs and gaps; access to web services and resources.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. Further develop the interactive web site.
2. Establish databases to provide information resources to members.
3. Examine feasibility of developing a series of compendiums to assist in facilitating regional and individual member initiatives and projects.

continuation – AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE – IALI'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING STRENGTHENED AND PROFESSIONAL LABOUR INSPECTION WORLDWIDE

Action AREA 6 – IALI as source of technical expertise

Objective

To provide a resource for accessing technical expertise in labour inspection.

Description

For many years, IALI has provided technical expertise to members. Most commonly, an individual with the relevant expertise required to meet a specific need is identified and sponsored to provide expertise to a conference, symposium, training course or other forum. On other occasions, IALI has suggested individuals who could be approached for involvement in consultancies with a country, to participate in development projects or decent work country programmes.

This work has traditionally occurred on an ad hoc basis where members suggest suitable names to carry out the work. It is now proposed that IALI develops a database of 'experts' who can assist in technical advice to labour inspectorates in specific subject areas. By listing certain criteria, those in need of expertise could access potential programme partners who could provide the expertise needed for a particular project.

IALI does not currently have the capacity to introduce a system that could take responsibility for assessing the qualifications of individuals or review of their performance. It is therefore not proposed that IALI would accredit individuals or analyse the skills of individual contributors to this programme other than to identify broad skill sets and categories of expertise. Rather, the database would serve as a means of providing initial contact data to match potential providers of services to programme partners. All responsibilities arising from accessing expertise from the database would rest with the programme organisers and liabilities arising from any services provided would be the responsibility of the individual. IALI would reserve the right to list or delete individuals from the database according to criteria to be established.

Even with these limitations, it is considered that such a database would assist in providing an avenue for IALI members to access (or provide) technical expertise to meet ever-increasing demands around the world.

IALI will continue to provide sponsored expertise wherever it can, to member country forums and training programmes assessed as fitting IALI objectives.

Key outcomes – 2008-2011 (*and beyond*)

1. Criteria is developed to facilitate assessment of requests for technical expertise, based on the principles of IALI's strategic objectives and priorities, demonstrated need, fairness in allocation of resources etc.
2. All requests for specific IALI-sponsored provision of technical expertise to assist member country forums and training programmes, are assessed by the Executive Committee according to the developed criteria.
3. A database of individuals who can provide technical expertise in labour inspection is developed and accessible on IALI's web site.

Areas of engagement for IALI members

IALI membership – can provide and access details of individuals with technical expertise in labour inspection.

Specific tasks 2008-2011

1. Develop criteria to assess requests for provision of technical expertise at member country forums or training courses, in a consistent and fair manner.
2. Respond to such requests for assistance in a timely manner.
3. Provide the infrastructure on IALI's web site for a public database of individuals who can provide technical expertise on matters relevant to labour inspection.

Conclusion

What now with the Action Plan?

The Action Plan for the Future is proposed for the consideration of the General Assembly on Wednesday.

The new Executive Committee would then consider the plan taking into account the comments provided by members at the General Assembly.

The plan would be provided on IALI's web site for the information of all members.

Our international opportunity

By agreeing on IALI's key roles and planning for the future, IALI will be well placed to deliver improved services to members. As an Association with a plan, we will have the opportunity to be involved in key initiatives to promote decent work worldwide.

"An efficient and adequately resourced labour inspection system makes a significant contribution to economic development, social cohesion and good governance"

(ILO Governing Body Committee on Employment and Social Policy, November 2006)