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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of the Secretary

Strengthening Labor Systems in Southern Africa

AGENCY: Bureau of International Labor Affairs, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice of availability of funds and solicitation for grant application (SGA 03-21).

SUMMARY: This notice contains all of the necessary information and forms needed to apply for grant funding. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), announces the availability of funds to be granted by cooperative agreement (hereafter referred to as "grant") to one or more qualifying organizations. USDOL will award up to U.S. \$4.2 million through one or more grants to an organization or organizations to improve labor law compliance in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland in order to facilitate their integration into the global economy. Proposals must be regional in scope and respond to the entire Statement of Work as contained in Section III, but applicants will not be penalized for lacking previous experience with regional projects. For example, organizations with experience in only one country will be judged based on the success they achieved in that country and their proposal for how they plan to work successfully throughout the rest of the targeted region. Partnerships between more than one organization are also eligible and encouraged, in particular with qualified, regionally-based organizations in order to build local capacity, although in such a case a lead organization must be identified.

DATES: The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, August 22, 2003. Applications must be received by 4:45 p.m. (Eastern Time) at the address below.

ADDRESSES: Application forms will not be mailed. They are published as part of this **Federal Register** notice and in the **Federal Register**, which may be obtained from your nearest U.S. Government office or public library or online at http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/index.html.

Applications must be delivered to: U.S. Department of Labor, Procurement Services Center, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room N-5416, Attention:

Lisa Harvey, Reference: SGA 03-21, Washington, DC 20210.

Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX) will not be accepted. Applications sent by other delivery services, such as Federal Express, UPS, etc., will be accepted; the applicant, however, bears the responsibility for timely submission. Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will not be honored. No exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice will be granted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Harvey, e-mail address:

harvey.lisa@dol.gov, tel: (202) 693-4570 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The expansion of global trade and investment and the improvement of working conditions and protection of basic worker rights are best understood as mutually reinforcing, and not mutually exclusive objectives. In today's environment of widespread market reforms and economic integration, efficient and fair labor markets are a prerequisite for economic growth, increasing living standards, and promoting employment in the U.S. As political developments, market reforms, and the transition to a global economy bring significant changes to national economies, individual labor market systems need to change accordingly to remain viable and to support their populations. In addition, the inability to manage the development of a relatively open market economy during periods of political and social transition impedes the development of political democracy, social cohesion, and equity.

USDOL/ILAB carries out a worldwide International Cooperation Program that helps address some of these difficulties by working to ensure that the greatest possible number of workers benefit from a more open world economy. The three major initiatives of the International Cooperation Program are:

Improving Economic Opportunity and Income Security for Workers (EOIS)—

Under the EOIS initiative, USDOL works to strengthen developing countries' abilities to build and institutionalize social safety net policies and programs needed to improve working conditions and foster economic growth. Projects under this initiative aim to increase employment among targeted groups, improve workplace safety and health, and increase access to social insurance.

Protecting the Basic Rights of Workers (PBRW)—Under the PBRW initiative, USDOL works to implement the fundamental principles embodied in the

International Labor Organization's (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, specifically working towards strengthening the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, eliminating forced or compulsory labor, and eliminating employment discrimination.

International HIV/AIDS Workplace-based Education Program (IHWEPP)—Under the IHWEPP initiative, USDOL works to reduce the rate of HIV/AIDS infection through workplace-based prevention and education programs and to improve the workplace environment for workers living with HIV/AIDS. The IHWEPP program also works to build the capacity of the tripartite partners to address the long-term impact of HIV/AIDS on labor markets and economic development.

USDOL/ILAB manages its projects in partnership with stakeholders representing the government, employers, workers, and other organizations.

I. Authority

ILAB is authorized to award and administer this program by the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003, Public Law 108-7, 117 Stat. 11 (2003).

II. Application Process

A. Eligible Applicants

Any commercial, international, educational, or not-for-profit organization (including faith-based organizations) with experience effectively implementing projects in the relevant technical field(s) and working with foreign national government ministries, regional and local government entities, employers and employer organizations, workers and labor organizations, and non-governmental and community-based organizations is eligible for this grant(s). All applicants are requested to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (OMB No. 1225-0083) (see Appendix A). Labor ministries are the primary government entities that will be involved, but projects may also include ministries for education, social affairs, commerce, finance, and those working with special targeted populations such as youth, women, persons with disabilities or minorities. Partnerships of more than one organization are also eligible and encouraged, in particular with qualified regionally-based organizations to further build local capacity, although in such a case a lead organization must be identified. The capability of an applicant, partners, and co-applicants to