

exploitative child labor would need to document, maintain, and effectively communicate policies and procedures that addressed the needs of displaced children (i.e., those put out of work by effective monitoring itself)—plus take preventive action to avoid a recurrence.

### Certification and Accreditation

Companies interested in demonstrating that they and their suppliers are honoring Social Accountability standards will be able to have that fact certified, with the advice and involvement of NGOs. Certification itself is the process by which companies submit to an independent audit against a set of standards. For example, many manufacturing companies currently seek certification of their conformance to international quality standards (ISO 9000) and environmental management systems (ISO 14000). In this way they demonstrate their reliability to customers worldwide. The success of the several large international certification companies which conduct those audits depends upon their reputation for integrity and consistency. Thus, those and other companies which may earn accreditation to conduct SA8000 audits have a great incentive to be professional and impartial.

Under SA 8000, certification firms will conduct an audit against SA 8000: if a facility meets the standard, it will earn a certificate attesting to its social accountability policies, management, and operations.

Certification firms will need to be accredited to ensure that they are able to perform audits and to ensure these audits are carried out in a professional manner. CEPAA will thus set strict standards for accreditation of qualified organizations to certify against SA 8000.

Consumers will be able to ascertain whether or not a company prefers or uses only certified suppliers, and whether the company itself is certified.

### The Role of Interested Parties

Interested parties, such as NGOs and unions, have played a major role in SA8000—from the development of the Standard to the preparation of audits. They will continue to have major responsibilities after certification and accreditation occur. A broad sample of NGOs and unions worldwide are being asked to comment on the process; this request will also be posted on the World Wide Web. The standard is available for comment to any interested party. NGOs and unions will also systematically brief auditors on local issues.

Individual workers and non-governmental organizations have a significant role/say in the process—the right to appeal. Through an appeal to the certification body, a local organization can challenge the decision to certify a supplier (i.e., seek revocation of the certification) if they have evidence to support major violations. Indeed, if a local factory receives certification but you (or another interested party) were to have evidence that the factory was in violation of SA8000 a community-based organisation could appeal. As a result, firms will need to consider public recommendations very seriously. For its part, CEPAA will convene meetings of NGOs and encourage certification firms to offer comprehensive training in SA8000 auditing techniques for NGO staff.