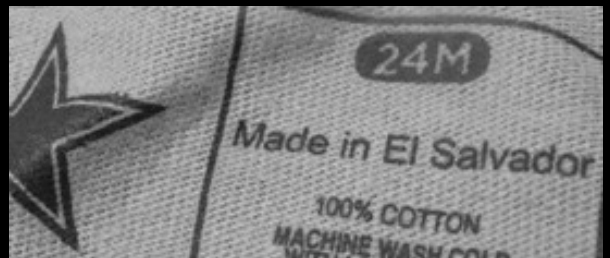


# DRESSING BABIES IN SWEATSHOP CLOTHING

## Dallas Cowboys, Ohio State and a Creepy Business

Style Avenue in El Salvador



Joint Report  
Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights  
Federation of Independent Associations and Unions of El Salvador

October 2011



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## **Dallas Cowboys, Ohio State and a Creepy Business**

Style Avenue in El Salvador

October 2011

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## Executive Summary

- NFL and NCAA garments sewn under gross sweatshop conditions at the Style Avenue factory in El Salvador.
- Workers paid just **10 cents** for each **\$15 Dallas Cowboys** and **Ohio State** infant and toddler creeper they sew. Workers' wages amount to **less than one percent** of the garment's retail price.
- Enormous NCAA mark-up on sweatshop goods. The total cost of production for collegiate logo creepers is just **\$1.80**, which means the mark-up on the \$15 NCAA garments is **over 800 percent!**
- Dallas Cowboys' owner, Jerry Jones, wants to monopolize the production of all NCAA licensed goods. United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) is fighting to protect the rights of workers.
- Workers are **locked in** the Style Avenue factory.
- Women **drenched in their own sweat**, with factory temperatures routinely **in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit**.
- **Mandatory all-night, 19-to-25-hour shifts** when NFL/NCAA garments must be shipped to the U.S.
- Workers are paid a base wage of just **78 cents** an hour, and 99 cents an hour if they receive their attendance bonus. No one can live on these wages. Women report borrowing \$40 every two weeks from a member of management at a **20 percent** interest rate, meaning they have to pay back \$48 every 14 days, including \$8.00 in interest.
- Under the U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement **real wages have actually fallen by 13 percent for El Salvador's 73,000 export garment workers**.
- Filthy drinking water and dirty bathrooms lacking even toilet paper.
- Constant verbal abuse: ***"You are like shit,"*** the workers are told.
- Workers are at the factory 60 hours a week, forced to work 11 ¾ hours of overtime, ***much of which is unpaid.***

- Six workers **illegally fired for attempting to exercise their legal right to organize.** The Salvadoran Labor Ministry has demanded their reinstatement, but management refuses. The government fined Style Avenue a pitiful **\$57**. There is no response from the U.S. Government.
- Despite spending over **\$142 million** to “enhance respect” for worker rights, the U.S. Government seems either unable or unwilling to assure respect for the basic worker rights protections afforded under the U.S.-Central America/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. Despite zero protection for workers’ rights, the **corporations are the big winners, able to import their goods to the U.S. duty-free.**



## PREFACE

### ***An Appeal to the NFL and NCAA By a Single Mother with Two Children, Fired from Style Avenue for Asking for Her Legal Rights***

*“...I feel like a prisoner in a maquila [factory]... I would tell [Cowboys and Ohio State] that they should pay more attention, not only to the product for export, but to the wages. That they should verify that we are not earning well, that we have a starvation wage, a wage of poverty, of misery. That maybe they could be a little more conscious, because they don’t know how much we sacrifice to make the garments with 100 percent efficiency and with quality—and they should value this. That they should keep more of an eye on the bosses here, how they maltreat us, and the ability [we have] that is not paid and they should pay for it.”*

**Like any good mother, she wants a better life for her children**



A four-year-old daughter of a working mom at the Style Avenue factory

*“But I don’t want a job in the maquila for my children, because it is a job where they exploit you. Even if one does things, they shout at you. Even if you do your work carefully and are caught up, you’re always shouted at. They always ask more of you. It’s not a normal lunch time. They let us out for 45 minutes, and we finish eating in half an hour, because we have to be there before the bell rings.”*

*“I tell them [my children] that I feel like a prisoner in a maquila, and this is my punishment because I didn’t get an education, and I tell them, even if we have to eat grass I’m going to give you studies so you can be professionals—because one wants the best for one’s children even if you continue being the same...”*

## Style Avenue S.A. de C.V.

Style Avenue S.A. de C.V.  
Calle Jiboa Oriente, Bodega 5  
San Bartolo Free Trade Zone  
Ilopango, El Salvador



Front gate of the Style Avenue factory

<b>Ownership</b>	Philippine factory owned by Ms. Joan Olivar Cascaño, Ms. Lina Manzo Banca
<b>Workers</b>	Approximately 300, 75% of whom are women
<b>Licensed to produce NFL and NCAA</b>	Style Avenue is one of six factories in El Salvador officially licensed by Reebok to produce the United States National Football League (NFL) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) apparel.
<b>Production</b>	<b>80%</b> of production is NFL and NCAA creepers for infants and toddlers up to 36 months.



A cell-phone photo of a Detroit Lions creeper taken by workers

NFL labels smuggled out from the Style Avenue factory



Dallas Cowboys creepers made in Style Avenue, sold at \$15 in Cowboys stores.







Style Avenue produces 3-pack bodysuits sold at \$24.99 for NFL teams including the Pittsburgh Steelers, the Green Bay Packers, the Minnesota Vikings, the Tennessee Titans, the Arizona Cardinals, the Philadelphia Eagles, the Orlando Raiders, the San Francisco 49ers, the Chicago Bears, and the Miami Dolphins.



## Enormous NCAA Mark-up

Boise State and Utah creepers

**Total production cost per creeper is just \$1.80!**

The same NCAA/NFL creeper retail at the low end of **\$8.00 up to \$20.00**

This is a **460 to 1100 percent mark-up!**

Sweatshop workers paid just **10 cents** to sew each creeper

Shipping Document smuggled out of Style Avenue factory (March 30, 2011)

STARLAND GROUP COMMERCE INC				Pág. 1 / 2	
Internal Purchase Order. P.O. #31559				30/03/2011 03:29:51 p.m.	
Contractor	STYLE AVENUE				
Contractor Delivery Date	15/04/2011 12:00:00 a.m.	Fabric ETA	30/03/2011 12:00:00 a.m.		
Customer	OUTERSTUFF	Shop	KROGER/FRED MEYER AP		
P.O. #	31559	RN	67891		
PO Date	01/17/2011	Ex Factory	15/04/2011 12:00:00 a.m.		
Total PO Value	\$ 345.60	Total PO Quantity	192		
Price	\$ 1.8000				
Ship To	N & S ENTERPRISE 11603 HWY 32 WEST				
Packing Instructions	6PCS PER POLYBAG IN SCALE, 6PCS PER CARTON				
League	COLLEGE				
Style	8TD - 3 PCS SET CREEPER S/S FOR GIRLS, SOLID COLORS, HEATHER GREY, TEAM COLOR & WHITE. RUFFLES IN SLEEVES				
Comments					
Other Comments	3PCS CREEPER SET				
Authorized	Ing. Javier Zablah	Send by	Lic. Lorena Colindres		
Size/Ratio	Size	0/3	3/6	6/9	
	Ratio	2	2	2	

League	Style	POStyle	Cod	Team	Total	0/3	3/6	6/9
COLLEGE	8TD	K8 -418TD N	2Y	BOISE ST(BOISE STATE)	108	36	36	36
	Part			Fabric				Color
	BODY and leg binding #1			INTERLOCK 90% COTTON/10% POLYESTER				ATHLETIC GREY - HEATHER GREY
	BODY and leg binding #2			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				17-1464TC 1655 - ORANGE 1655
	BODY and leg binding #3			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				WHITE - WHITE
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #1			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				17-1464TC 1655 - ORANGE 1655
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #2			INTERLOCK 90% COTTON/10% POLYESTER				ATHLETIC GREY - HEATHER GREY
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #3			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				17-1464TC 1655 - ORANGE 1655
								Yards
								31.95
								31.95
								31.95
								4.45
								4.45
								4.45


League	Style	POStyle	Cod	Team	Total	0/3	3/6	6/9
COLLEGE	8TD	K8 -418TD N	32	UTAH	84	28	28	28
	Part			Fabric				Color
	BODY and leg binding #1			INTERLOCK 90% COTTON/10% POLYESTER				ATHLETIC GREY - HEATHER GREY
	BODY and leg binding #2			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				19-1557TC 187 - UNIVERSITY RED 187
	BODY and leg binding #3			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				WHITE - WHITE
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #1			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				19-1557TC 187 - UNIVERSITY RED 187
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #2			INTERLOCK 90% COTTON/10% POLYESTER				ATHLETIC GREY - HEATHER GREY
	Neck Binding & Ruffles #3			INTERLOCK 100% COTTON				19-1557TC 187 - UNIVERSITY RED 187
								Yards
								24.85
								24.85
								24.85
								3.46
								3.46
								3.46

Total PO				192	64	64	64
Fabric	Color	Yards	Units				
INTERLOCK 100% COTTON	17-1464TC 1655 - ORANGE 1655	40.85	324				
INTERLOCK 100% COTTON	19-1557TC 187 - UNIVERSITY RED 187	31.77	252				
INTERLOCK 100% COTTON	WHITE - WHITE	56.79	192				
INTERLOCK 90% COTTON/10% POLYESTER	ATHLETIC GREY - HEATHER GREY	64.70	384				
Trim	Quantity	Price	Extra	Quantity To Purchase	Value To Purchase		
P356 ADIDAS Woven Main Label	3.00	0.0000	2.00	588	0.0000		
Care label (2 languages)	3.00	0.0100	2.00	588	5.8752		
Snaps 16L	9.00	0.0400	3.00	1,780	71.1936		
Screen P. CFN & Left sleeve	3.00	0.3500	2.00	588	205.6320		

**NFL creepers sewn under illegal sweatshop conditions at the Style Avenue factory are also sold at Wal-Mart.** The Style Avenue workers immediately recognized the NFL blanket sleeper for sale at Wal-Mart.

Reebok appointed Outerstuff as their sole licensee to produce Reebok/NFL children's wear (except for the Dallas Cowboys, which is handled by their own Dallas Cowboys Merchandising).


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### NFL - Newborn Baby Green Bay Packers Blanket Sleeper

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1) Size:  2) Color: Packers 

[See size chart](#)

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## NCAA production order smuggled out from the Style Avenue factory

OUTERSTUFF LTD. COLOR SHEET									
COLLEGE									
STYLE #	8TD	3PC BODYSUIT SET - GIRLS			DESIGNER: FRANK	CUSTOMER:			
RVSD: 6-2-10 FR		BODY 1	TRIM	BINDING	COLOR BY: AJ	BODY 2	TAPING	BINDING	DATE: 12/13/10
TEAM # & NAME		A	B	C		A	B	C	
E6 NORTH WESTERN STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	REGAL PURPLE 2685	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		RBK001TC				RBK001TC			
05 TEXAS STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	CLASSIC MAROON 504	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1718TC				19-1718TC			
1C RUTGERS		ATHLETIC GREY	RED 186	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1763TC				19-1763TC			
14 NEW MEXICO		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
16 OREGON STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	ORANGE 1655	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		17-1464TC				17-1464TC			
2K MARQUETTE		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
24 MISSOURI		ATHLETIC GREY	BLACK	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
2Y BOISE ST		ATHLETIC GREY	ORANGE 1655	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		17-1464TC				17-1464TC			
3B U CALL BERKELY		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
33 UCLA		ATHLETIC GREY	STRONG BLUE 285	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		18-4051TC				18-4051TC			
32 UTAH		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
35 WASH STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
36 BOSTON COLLEGE		ATHLETIC GREY	BURGUNDY 209	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1726TC				19-1726TC			
37 NORTH WESTERN		ATHLETIC GREY	REGAL PURPLE 2685	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		RBK001TC				RBK001TC			
39 MINNESOTA		ATHLETIC GREY	BURGUNDY 209C	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1726TC				19-1726TC			
40 BOSTON U		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
41 U MASS		ATHLETIC GREY	BURGUNDY 209	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1726TC				19-1726TC			
42 OKLAHOMA STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	ORANGE 1655	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		17-1464TC				17-1464TC			
45 CINCINNATI		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
47 VA TECH		ATHLETIC GREY	BURGUNDY 209	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1726TC				19-1726TC			
50 CLEMSON		ATHLETIC GREY	ORANGE 1655	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		17-1464TC				17-1464TC			
51 DUKE		ATHLETIC GREY	COLLEGIATE ROYAL 661	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3952TC				19-3952TC			
52 FLORIDA STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	BURGUNDY 209	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1726TC				19-1726TC			
54 GEORGIA TECH		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
55 LOUISVILLE		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
57 MIAMI		ATHLETIC GREY	DARK GREEN 343	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-5511TC				19-5511TC			
58 MICHIGAN		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
61 NC STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
65 SYRACUSE		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
66 TEXAS A&M		ATHLETIC GREY	CLASSIC MAROON 504	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1718TC				19-1718TC			
69 ALABAMA		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
7H HARVARD		ATHLETIC GREY	CLASSIC MAROON 504	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1718TC				19-1718TC			
70 ARKANSAS		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
72 FLORIDA		ATHLETIC GREY	COLLEGIATE ROYAL 661	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3952TC				19-3952TC			
74 ILLINOIS		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
77 NEBRASKA		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
78 TENNESSEE		ATHLETIC GREY	LIGHT ORANGE 151	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		15-1263TC				15-1263TC			
82 WISCONSIN		ATHLETIC GREY	UNIVERSITY RED 187	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1557TC				19-1557TC			
85 UNIV. INDIANA		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
87 ARIZONA STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	CLASSIC MAROON 504	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1718TC				19-1718TC			
89 MISS STATE		ATHLETIC GREY	CLASSIC MAROON 504	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1718TC				19-1718TC			
91 OKLAHOMA UNIV		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
92 AUBURN		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
93 IOWA UNIV.		ATHLETIC GREY	BLACK	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
95 KANSAS		ATHLETIC GREY	COLLEGIATE ROYAL 661	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3952TC				19-3952TC			
97 NOTRE DAME		ATHLETIC GREY	DK NAVY 289	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-3920TC				19-3920TC			
99 SOUTH CAROLINA		ATHLETIC GREY	VICTORY RED 201	DTM 'A'		ATHLETIC GREY	DTM 'A'	WHITE	
		19-1862TC				19-1862TC			
REMOVE 96 KANSAS STATE B/C GS TEAM 2/5/11									

## Starvation Wages

### Women Paid Just 10 Cents for Each \$15 to \$20 Cowboys or Ohio State Creeper They Sew

This is how the system works. There are ten modules, or production units, producing for the NFL and NCAA. On average each module has 17 workers—14 sewing operators, two quality controllers and one supervisor. Management sets a mandatory production goal of completing 1,500 creepers during the regular nine-hour shift. This means the 17 workers must complete **166.7 creepers per hour**, which gives them **6.12 minutes per creeper**. The workers can make up to 99 cents an hour if they receive their attendance bonus. Assuming that wage, since 6.12 minutes equals 10.2 percent of an hour, *the workers earn just 10 cents for each pair of creepers they sew*. This means **the workers' wages to sew the \$15 to \$20 NFL and NCAA creepers amount to less than one percent of the retail price!** (The workers' wages actually amount to between half and seven-tenths of one percent of the creepers' retail price.)

On the other hand, one can be well assured that the mark-up going to the Cowboys/NFL and Ohio State/NCAA is exponentially greater than the pitiful 10 cents the workers earn for sewing the garment.



A Dallas Cowboys 3-6 month bodysuit made in Style Avenue factory, bought in a Cowboys store in Texas, U.S.



Dallas Cowboys official 2011 catalog





College Kids label smuggled out of Style Avenue factory matches the label of Ohio State creeper sold for \$19.98 at OSU bookstore.



## ***"Buddy, Can You Spare a Dime?"***

One would think the NFL and NCAA were broke, slouching around in rags with a tin cup, desperately pleading for a hand-out, no matter how small, to pay the workers in El Salvador their 10 cents for each NFL/NCAA garment they sew.

But there is something seriously wrong with this image.

For one thing the **Dallas Cowboys** football team is worth **\$1.85 billion**. Jerry Jones, the Cowboys' owner, is himself worth **\$1.9 billion**. Annual revenue for the Cowboys was **\$406 million** in 2010. The **NFL** estimates its revenues in 2010 at **\$8.3 billion**, with \$4.1 billion coming from television alone.

The **NCAA** is no slouch either, with annual sales of **\$4 billion** in collegiate licensed merchandise. **Ohio State** alone has **125 official licensees** to



produce its Ohio State logo garments. The **University of Southern California (USC)** estimates its retail sales of USC logo merchandise at **over \$20 million a year**.

The truth of the matter is that the sale of NFL and NCAA licensed merchandise is big business. It is a business largely run on exploited sweatshop labor in El Salvador and elsewhere in the developing world. And it isn't a pretty picture.

By the way, suppose the NFL and NCAA agreed that the workers in El Salvador should earn a minimum wage of **\$2.00 an hour**, which would allow the women and their children to climb out of misery and into poverty. Instead of paying the women **ten cents** to sew each garment, they would now earn **20.4 cents**. Do you think the NFL and NCAA could spare the extra dime?

**“Outerstuff”** and **“College Kids”** are both official collegiate licensees. However, both “Outerstuff” and “College Kids” have failed to disclose the Style Avenue factory as one of their collegiate producers, which is a serious violation of university codes.

8

INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL LABOUR &amp; HUMAN RIGHTS





Ohio State creeper sells for \$24.98 at  
OSU bookstore.





NBA label smuggled out of the Style Avenue factory.

In addition to its major production for NFL and NCAA, Style Avenue also produces creepers for National Basketball Association (NBA), Major League Baseball (MLB) and National Hockey League (NHL).



The red, Reebok label of the NHL 3-pack bodysuits matched with the label smuggled out of the Style Avenue factory (bottom)





## A Glimpse inside the Style Avenue Sweatshop

### NFL/NCAA Production

*“I haven’t bought anything, because it has always been a wage that is only enough to survive.”*

— Style Avenue worker

#### Locked in

The workers are locked in the Style Avenue factory compound, which itself is located in the fortress-like San Bartolo Free Trade Zone, replete with high walls, rolls of razor wire and armed guards. The Style Avenue workers are not even allowed to leave the factory during their lunch period. Management says this is “**for their own protection.**”



San Bartolo free trade zone in El Salvador

#### Drenched in Sweat

By 9:30 a.m. one August morning, the temperature inside Style Avenue was already a steamy 90 degrees. By 11:30 a.m., the temperature had soared to 102.2 degrees, leaving

the women drenched in their own sweat. (The factory has some dust extractors, but no real ventilation.)



Workers sewing creepers at Style Avenue factory

#### Mandatory 19 to 25-Hour Shifts

The standard shift Monday through Thursday is 9 hours and 45 minutes, from 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., including a 45-minute lunch break. On Friday, the shift is 8 hours and 45 minutes, from 7:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The regular workweek in El Salvador is 44 hours.

However, in practice, it is common for the workers to be kept to 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. unpaid, until they reach their mandatory and excessive

production goals. At least three Saturdays a month, it is common for the workers to put in a nine-hour shift, from 7:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

It is routine for the workers to be at the factory 60 1/4 hours a week, while working 55 3/4 hours, including 11 3/4 hours of mandatory overtime, a good portion of which is unpaid.

However, when shipments must leave, it is typical for at least two lines to be kept for grueling 19 3/4 to 25 3/4 hour shifts. For example, on Saturday, July 23, two production lines **“had to work all night because the shipments had to go out.”** The shift stretched from 7:15 a.m. on Saturday straight through to 9:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, a 25 3/4 hour shift. On Monday, July 18, a line of 17 workers was also forced to work a 19 hour and 25 minute shift, from 7:15 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. Tuesday morning –and then they still had to show up for work at 7:15 a.m. that same day.

Two women who tried to escape from the locked factory—pleading they had to take care of their children and an elderly sick mother—were immediately fired.

### Filthy Drinking Water

We tested the drinking water at a professional laboratory, which found high levels of “heterotrophic bacteria” and the bacteria “pseudomonas aeruginosa.” Drinking water

contaminated with these bacteria can have long-term consequences, including stomach infections and parasites. Even washing with such polluted water can cause skin rashes, or infections if one has an exposed cut.

### You’re like shit!

This is a constant refrain by management and supervisors, who yell and curse at the women to work faster, demanding they meet their excessive production goals.

*“You’re a piece of garbage. You don’t know how to work and you’re good for nothing.”*

*“Hurry up, stop pissing around.”*

*“I don’t get it. Why can’t this old son-of-a-bitch hurry up. You’re shit. You’re like a mule.”*

Drinking water or daring to use the bathroom results in reprimands.

*“What do you think you’re doing? You’re not in a park here. Get back to your seat.”*

Water analysis results show high levels of “heterotrophic bacteria” and the bacteria “pseudomonas aeruginosa.”

<b>Fuente:</b> Cisterna	<b>Control:</b>	<b>Referencia:</b> Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 21th Ed.	<b>DATOS DE CAMPO</b>	
<b>Descripción:</b> Líquido transparente e incoloro.			<b>Fecha:</b> 15/08/11	<b>Hora:</b> 11:40 am
			<b>T° Agua:</b> N/D	<b>T° Ambiente:</b> N/D
<b>MUESTRA TOMADA POR:</b>				
Cliente [ x ]      Personal de				
DETERMINACION	METODO	RESULTADO	LIMITES SEGÚN NSO 13.07.01:08	
RECuento DE BACTERIAS HETERÓTROFAS (1)	9215 AB. Placa Vertida	1100 UFC/mL	100 UFC/mL	
DETECCIÓN DE PSEUDOMONA AERUGINOSA	Medio Diferencial	Presencia	Ausencia	
DETECCIÓN DE SALMONELLA SP	9260 B Medio Diferencial	Ausencia	Ausencia	

*"Hurry up; we need to complete the goal."*

*"If you have to use the toilet, hurry up and don't waste time."*

*"Work fast! You have to reach the goal. Remember, we work for and depend on our clients. So help us. There are people who are trying to damage us."*

*"It's your duty to stay for overtime, because if you don't stay working, the shipment is not going to go out on time and we'll lose the work. And you're the ones who will get fired."*

## Below Subsistence Wages

For all this—forced overtime, all-night shifts, 100-degree temperatures, excessive mandatory production goals, the constant taunts, curses and humiliation—the Style Avenue workers can earn a base wage of just **78 cents an hour**, sewing garments for NFL and NCAA. If the workers receive their attendance bonus they can earn **99 cents an hour**. No one can survive on this.

A single mother with two children told us she borrows \$40 every two week period from factory management in order to survive, but she has to pay a **20 percent interest rate** over the 14 days, meaning she has to pay back \$48, including the eight dollars in interest. This almost borders on indentured servitude. She allows her family to eat chicken just once a month. Otherwise it is a sparse diet of rice, beans, tortillas, eggs and cheese.

### Style Avenue workers' pay stubs

STYLE AVENUE S.A. DE C.V.

Codigo: [REDACTED] Nomina : [REDACTED]

Linea: LINEA [REDACTED]

Dias Trab	14.00	Salario	87.50
Hextras D.	0.00	Hextras	0.00
Hextras N.	0.00	Hextras	0.00
Isss	2.62		
AFP	5.47	Devengado	87.50
Otros Des	0.00	Renta	0.00
Tot Des	8.09	A recibir	79.41

STYLE AVENUE S.A. DE C.V.

Codigo: [REDACTED] Nomina : [REDACTED]

Linea: LINEA [REDACTED]

Dias Trab	14.00	Salario	87.50
Hextras D.	9.00	Hextras	14.06
Hextras N.	0.00	Hextras	0.00
Isss	3.05		
AFP	6.35	Devengado	101.56
Otros Des		Renta	0.00
Tot Des		A recibir	

**Base Wage**

78 cents an hour  
 \$6.24 a day (8 hours)  
 \$34.32 a week (44 hours)  
 \$148.72 a month  
 \$1,784.64 a year

**With the Attendance Bonus**

(if a worker does not arrive late or miss a day)

99 cents an hour  
 \$7.94 a day (8 hours)  
 \$43.68 a week (44 hours)  
 \$189.28 a month  
 \$2,271.34 a year

\* Overtime is paid at premium rate of \$1.54 per hour.

## Workers Are Going backward as Real Wages Plummet under the U.S.-Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement

### El Salvador Maquila Minimum Wages and Inflation 2003-2011

\* May, 16, 2011 through August 30, 2011

Year	Wages in Dollars	Inflation Rate	Wage Increase in %
2003	\$151.20	2.5%	5%
2004	\$151.20	5.4%	0%
2005	\$151.20	4.3%	0%
2006	\$157.25	4.9%	4%
2007	\$162.00	4.9%	3%
2008	\$167.10	5.5%	3%
2009	\$173.70	(0.2%)	4%
2010	\$173.70	2.1%	0%
2011	\$187.60	5.4%	8%

Real wages for Salvadoran garment workers have actually declined **13 percent**, with monthly wages dropping **\$24.83** since 2003.

Nominally maquila garment industry wages have increased **24 percent**, or **\$36.40** a month, from \$151.20 in 2003 to \$187.60 in August, 2011.

However, the rate of inflation over that same period was **40.5 percent**.

There have been no real wage gains for El Salvador's garment workers under the Free Trade Agreement. In fact, in real terms, the workers are earning \$24.83 less each month in August 2011 than they did 8 ½ years ago in 2003.



## Multinationals and Sweatshop Factories are the Big Winners

### Under the U.S.-Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement

**W**hile real wages for garment workers in El Salvador are plummeting, trapping them in poverty, the big winners under the Free Trade Agreement are the multinationals, like the NFL and NCAA, who sew their garments in sweatshops like Style Avenue and then import their goods to the U.S. duty-free. This has been going on since January 1, 2004. **The NFL/NCAA sweatshop infant creepers made in El Salvador enter the U.S. duty-free, saving the companies the regular 14.9 percent tariff duty, which adds up to no small amount of money for the companies.**

The Free Trade Agreement was meant to function as a *quid pro quo*, with the corporate privilege of duty-free access given in return for compliance with internationally recognized worker right standards. That never happened. The corporations gobbled up the tariff breaks and ignored any responsibility to respect worker rights.

### God Help Us If CAFTA Labor Rights Are the Model

“Only CAFTA has a robust labor capacity-building mechanism. CAFTA includes the most robust mechanism yet. The Jordan FTA only recognizes the appropriateness of capacity building.”

Office of the United States Trade  
Representative  
[CAFTA Policy Brief](#)  
June 2005

U.S. economic assistance to El Salvador, from 2007 to 2009, totaled **\$603,768,196**. One would think that U.S. Government officials could use the over \$600 million in aid as leverage to demand respect for worker rights.

## A \$142 Million Fig Leaf

### U.S. Aid for Labor Rights “Capacity Building” Achieves Little

The United States Government spent **over \$142 million** between 2005 and 2010 to **enhance “Labor Capacity Building in the CAFTA countries.”** (*See full fact sheet in the addenda.*)

All this help would come as a great surprise to the women at the Style Avenue sweatshop sewing garments for NCAA and NFL, just as it would shock all garment workers across Central America and the Dominican Republic. Across El Salvador, with 73,000 mostly women workers sewing garments for duty-free export to the U.S., there is **not one single factory with a union. Real wages are also falling, trapping the women and their families in extreme poverty.**

**Forced overtime, often without pay, is the norm. So are harsh and humiliating treatment, filthy drinking water, extreme heat and excessive production goals. In short, these workers have no rights.**

Apparently the big winners under the U.S. Government’s largesse are the well-heeled mainstream NGOs that operate more like businesses, focused on securing lucrative grants.

Here’s a question: Do you think that out of the over \$142 million in worker rights funds the U.S. Government could allocate even **10 percent of this money directly to empowering workers so they can organize, form a union and bargain collectively?**

That would still leave 90 percent to fund the business of NGO activities. This seems a do-able bargain.

*“We didn’t know. We never heard that the United States had given so much money to protect the rights of workers. **The rights of workers and working conditions in the maquila [export factories] have not changed, nor have they improved even in the slightest. The rights of the workers are not respected. They [factory owners] are not willing to respect our legal right to organize. The minute they suspect we are organizing, they fire us.**”*

— Style Avenue factory worker who sews garments for NFL and NCAA

*“That is an enormous amount of money that the United States Government has sent to improve the rights of workers. Maybe the Ministry of Labor has been benefited by these funds. **But the reality is that neither changes nor improvements have been seen regarding respect for workers’ rights.**”*

— FEASIES union

## Routine Working Hours at the Style Avenue Factory

*“There is no slow season at Style Avenue.  
The factory never stops!”*

—A Worker

**O**n average, workers are at the factory **60**  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours a week, while working **55**  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours, including **11**  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours mandatory overtime, **much of which is unpaid.**

### Examples of All-night Shifts

(The all-night shifts are mandatory and have been going on since at least 2009.)

**July 23, 2011 (Saturday)**

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Monday –      **7:15 a.m. to 5:30 or 6:00 p.m.**  
Thursday

(A 10  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 10  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour shift with one 45 minute break for lunch.)

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Friday              **7:15 a.m. to 4:30 or 5:00 p.m.**

(A 9  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour shift, with one 45 minute break for lunch.)

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Saturday            **7:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

(An 8  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour shift three Saturdays each month, with one 45 minute break for lunch. One Saturday a month, they work a 4  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour shift, from 7:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon.)

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Two production lines were informed that they “had to work all night because the shipments must go out.”

**They were kept working from 7:15 a.m. Saturday morning straight through to 9:00 a.m. Sunday, forced to work a 25  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour shift.** The workers received just 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours of breaks: 45 minutes for lunch; 30 minutes for supper and a 15 minute snack at midnight. Their working hours totaled 24  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours, including 15  $\frac{1}{4}$  mandatory overtime hours.

Moreover, the same workers were **ordered to return to the factory Sunday afternoon to work an additional four hours, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** So on Saturday and Sunday the workers were at the factory 28  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours.

On Monday morning, July 25, the exhausted workers still had to show up at 7:15 a.m. The workers told us that the Saturday overtime was recorded on their pay stubs until 7:00 p.m., but not the Saturday night or Sunday hours, which

were paid in cash, off the books. The workers were paid just \$15 in cash, while they should have earned \$21.45.

During the all-night shifts, the Style Avenue factory gates remain locked so workers cannot attempt to escape the factory.

### **July 18, 2011 (Monday)**

Just a few days earlier, another production line of 18 workers was **forced to work an all-night 19 ¾ hour shift from 7:15 a.m. Monday morning straight through to 3:00 a.m. Tuesday morning.**

The workers were told they had to remain working so that they could meet their shipping date (so that the NFL and NCAA creepers could arrive in the U.S. on time).



Workers sewing creepers at Style Avenue factory

### **The Great Escape**

This time, three women could not stay for the all-night shift—two because there was no one to take care of their children, while a third woman had to care for her sick mother. They ran to the factory gate, but security guards blocked them. It was only when the women threatened to call the

police that the security guards opened the gate. In retaliation, management fired two of the women under false charges. (The third woman, who was not fired, had worked at the factory for a number of years and was owed considerable severance pay. Workers believe management is just waiting for a chance to fire her without paying severance.)

When the women work an all-night shift to 3:00 a.m., they are unable to leave the factory when they are done, since the first buses only start running at 4:15 a.m. So the women either lay cardboard down on the floor to try to sleep or sit at their work benches slumped over their sewing machines.

Mothers with young children have to wait until 4:15 a.m. to catch a bus to their homes so they can feed and dress their children for school. Then they have to rush back to the factory to begin working again at 7:15 a.m.

### **Locked in for Lunch**

If the women were at least allowed to leave the Style Avenue factory –though they would still be locked inside the San Bartolo FTZ– they could purchase cheaper and better food in the free trade zone. At Style Avenue, management charges \$1.40 to \$1.80 for lunch with a soda, which is far more than the workers can afford. So the workers are forced to bring their lunch, spending about 50 cents for three small corn tortillas, beans and some fresh cheese. Often they skip the cheese to keep their lunch cost down to a quarter.

Even more important, if the women were allowed out of the factory they could run to the main gate at the San Bartolo Free Trade Zone. If there are problems at home, it is custom for older children to come to the gate to tell their mothers what is happening.

## Students Take the Lead, and Go Naked

The United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) chapter at Ohio State has taken the lead in exposing Ohio State's backroom sweetheart deal to hand over the production of collegiate licensed goods to, of all people, the Dallas Cowboys, who are not well known for their commitment to human rights around the world.

On September 26, 2011, USAS students demonstrated in front of the office of Ohio State's president, Gordon Gee, wearing only cardboard boxes and chanting: ***"I'd rather go naked than wear Dallas Cowboys' sweatshop apparel."***

The Dallas Cowboys' owner, Jerry Jones, now wants to dominate the production of licensed university goods. Ohio State and the University of Southern California have been the Cowboys first two targets. More will follow.

Please help USAS stop this sweatshop grab by the Cowboys.

["Students Battle a Dallas Cowboys Unit Over College Apparel"](#)

New York Times, September 23, 2011 by Steven Greenhouse

["Ohio State & Dallas Cowboys Caught Rigging Bid Process for Monopoly Apparel Deal"](#)

USAS, September 26, 2011

USAS Contact Information

<http://usas.org/contact-us/>

## The CAFTA-DR and Salvadoran Labor Law

### Guarantee the Workers' Legal Right to Organize

**I**n theory anyway. In practice the garment workers have about as much a chance to organize a union as a snowball has in hell.

The 73,000 garment workers in El Salvador who sew clothing for duty-free export to the U.S. are not represented by a **single functioning union**. Only once, at the **Industria Gama** apparel factory, have workers organized “50 percent plus one,” that gave them the right to negotiate a collective contract. **But on June 17, 2011, the factory was abruptly closed and all 270 workers were fired and then blacklisted.** For days, workers camped out around the factory, but management refused to reopen. Had they not been fired and blacklisted, this would have been the first collective contract ever in the export garment industry in El Salvador.

In July 2011, a small group of five workers initiated steps to organize a local union at the Style Avenue factory. With the help of the FEASIES union federation (Federation of Independent Associations and Unions of El Salvador, or Federación y Asociaciones y Sindicatos Independientes de El Salvador), the workers formed a small union local of the Union of Workers of the Garment Industry, STIVES. On July 25, the Salvadoran Ministry of Labor legally recognized the small union local. Under Salvadoran law, these five union leaders were legally protected and could not be fired or suffer any reprisals whatsoever by factory management. In theory, this should allow a small core group to

begin organizing a union with majority support that can serve as a voice for workers to improve factory conditions and wages.

On Friday, August 19, management at Style Avenue found out that a legal union organizing drive was underway. Immediately, a human resource manager, Ms. Wilda Quintanilla, told the workers on line #10: *“You shouldn’t be involved with these people of the unions. They’re lazy. They walk in the streets waving banners over their heads, but they are only good to **shut factories down.**”* If a few workers go forward with this union, she said, *“that will be the end of the factory.”*

By the end of August, management had illegally fired all of the union leaders, giving several conflicting reasons why they were being let go. The human resource chief said they were fired because of “low productivity.” Management also said they had “violated company internal rules” and simply that, “the company has decided to set aside your service.”

On Monday, September 12, a Ministry of Labor inspector, Mr. Eduardo Marchena, informed **“Style Avenue management that they had violated the labor code”** and that they must **“reinstate the illegally fired workers to their former jobs.”**

Style Avenue management blandly informed the Ministry of Labor inspector that: “**No, that’s out of question. We will not reinstate the fired women workers.**”

Right now, the situation remains in a stalemate. Salvadoran labor law is so antiquated that the only weapon the Ministry of Labor has to enforce the law is to threaten Style Avenue management with **a fine of \$57.14** for failing to reinstate the illegally fired union workers!

### **Another Failure of Corporate Audits**

Reebok and Adidas have their corporate codes of conduct—detailing the rights of workers—posted inside the factory next to the main entrance gate. Reebok and Adidas even conduct unannounced visits. But it is all a game and the workers know the part they are required to play—although the majority have not the slightest idea what a corporate code of conduct is. New workers entering the factory have never been alerted or informed of the codes that are supposed to protect and guarantee their legal labor rights.

What the workers do know, in advance of announced audits, is that management runs them through the same old drill. “Auditors are coming to the factory,” managers tell them, “you know what you have to answer. The future of the factory, and your jobs, depend on how you answer. If you are questioned, you know what you have to say.”

Usually two Style Avenue supervisors, Olga and Mario, pick the workers who will speak with the gullible auditors.

The factory is cleaned, even the bathrooms, which suddenly have toilet paper, paper towels and soap for the workers to wash their hands with.

As Reebok is soon to lose its exclusive license to sew NFL garments—as its arch-rival, Nike, takes over—perhaps the company has lost interest in even going through the monitoring charade. Unless something changes, we can predict that factory and working conditions will continue to plummet.

## Workers' Demands

Every demand by the workers is in full compliance with both El Salvador's labor laws and the country's worker rights commitments under the U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement.

- **Immediately reinstate the six illegally fired union workers:** The six workers were illegally fired by Style Avenue management, claiming that *"the labels [NFL, NCAA] don't like unions and would cut their orders if a union is formed."*

**Twice, in September and again in October, Salvadoran Ministry of Labor inspectors ordered Style Avenue management to reinstate the "illegally fired workers," stating that the factory is "in violation of the Labor Code."**

Law or no law, Style Avenue management refuses to reinstate the illegally fired union workers. The Ministry of Labor has ordered management to continue paying the wages of the illegally fired workers, as per Salvadoran labor law, but management refuses this as well.

The six fired workers are:

- Ada Jackeline Molina, fired on August 30, 2011
  - Marta Teresa Alvarez, fired on August 31, 2011
  - Reyna Navidad Muñoz, fired on August 31, 2011
  - Lucia Saravia Arevalo, fired on September 26, 2011
  - Miriam del Carmen Gutierrez Cuellar, fired on September 26, 2011
  - Jose Reynaldo Mejia Gonzales, fired on September 26, 2011
  - (Another union member, Isabel Rivas Escobar, died on August 3, 2011)
- **Style Avenue management must begin good faith negotiations with the FEASIES union federation:** The workers, together with the FEASIES union federation, are ready to sit down at any time for good-faith negotiations with Style Avenue management with the goal of improving working conditions while guaranteeing the success of Style Avenue going into the future. Compliance with El Salvador's labor laws will benefit both the workers and factory management.

As things stand now, Style Avenue management is refusing all attempts at negotiations, including ignoring the demands of the Ministry of Labor.



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**More pressure must be placed on Style Avenue management by the NFL, NCAA and the Salvadoran Government** to comply with its obligations under the U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement and Salvadoran labor law.

- **Stop locking the workers in the factory compound:** They are not prisoners. The workers must be free to leave the factory in order to take lunch inside the Free Trade Zone and to communicate with their families in case of emergencies at the free zone gate. Moreover, the locked exits at Style Avenue constitute a serious fire hazard.
- **End the all-night shifts and forced overtime:** The workers are ready to work overtime several times a week, but they must be paid correctly and all overtime must be voluntary. Even in extreme cases, when clothing shipments must go out, the workers are willing to work overtime to help the factory as long as they are notified in advance and paid correctly. The workers are willing to bend over backward to help the factory, but they also want to be respected and treated as human beings.
- **Workers must be paid correctly:** Production goals must be set at a fair and reasonable level, and all work must be paid. Management must immediately stop the routine practice of forcing workers to work unpaid in order to reach the excessive mandatory production targets set by management.
- **Provide clean drinking water:** At present, the drinking water available at Style Avenue is filthy and unsafe. Management must have the water tested regularly at a professional laboratory and establish a schedule for cleaning the cistern and replacing water filters. Until this is done, the workers should be provided with bottled water.
- **Immediately stop the abusive treatment:** The factory's human resources chief, Ms. Wilda Quintanilla, is particularly crude and vicious, and must be terminated immediately. The constant maltreatment and humiliation of the workers at the hands of supervisors must end. Supervisors must receive training on El Salvador's labor laws and proper, respectful treatment of the workers.
- **Workers drenched in their own sweat:** Factory management must take drastic steps to improve ventilation and end the extreme heat in the factory, which routinely exceeds 100 degrees by 11:30 a.m. The factory should undergo regular health and safety inspections.

## Transcript

### Interview with NFL/NCAA Garment Worker Fired from Style Avenue Factory in El Salvador

#### Part 1

Can you tell me your name and experience in the maquila?

*My name is Carmen [Pseudonym] and I have worked in the maquila for 18 years in different places in the Free Zones and San Marcos [FZ].*

In which factories have you worked and which products have you made?

*I've worked in Evergreen [Nike, Adidas, Columbia], Brooklyn, BCTC [Puritan, No Boundaries, Faded Glory] factories that are already closed, in Products Department, in Style Avenue and in some small shops.*

What do you sew in Style Avenue?

*In Style Avenue we sew t-shirts and creepers, but [on the line] where I work we only make creepers.*

Do you remember some names of the creepers that you sew?

*We work for teams—football, basketball--those kinds of creepers, like Dallas, Texas, New York and those kinds of creepers we make.*

How much do you earn a month there?

*In a month the minimum [maquila wage], \$187.50 a month. We don't earn more.*

How often are you paid?

*We're paid every two weeks.*

How much do you earn every two weeks?

*\$79*

How do you distribute that money? How do you spend it?

*Buying the most basic, because we have to make it last for two weeks, and because I have two children. I invest more in one of them because she's bigger, and the other one, also, right, only the most necessary for the little one. It's not enough; we always end up borrowing. When we're paid we owe half of it, or almost all of it.*

Who lends you the money?

*There's a general supervisor who lends money at a [rate] of 2 percent.*

*Two percent rate every two weeks. For example she lends me \$40, I have to give her \$48, after two weeks. [This is actually 20%—but she says 2.]*

*And that's the way we get along.*



Four-year-old daughter of Carmen

And about food? What do you eat every day, daily?

*The common [foods]: beans, rice, eggs, cheese, [sour] cream and what I cook for them I take to the factory for my lunch.*

What about meat, pizzas, chicken?

*Meat once in a while. Once every month, chicken; but no pizzas. Pizzas, no.*

Hamburgers?

*No, nothing like that.*

Apart from food what expenses do you have? Do you owe this house?

*[The house Carmen and her daughters live in measures 14 x 23 feet. In the house are 2 single bunkbeds.]*

*No, this house belongs to a friend who rents it to me. Before she rented the house for \$100 [a month]. But because she's my friend and she sees I'm alone she rents it for \$60. I pay her at the end of every month, and I pay water, electricity... that's another [bill].*

*I pay \$5 for water, and up to \$12 for electricity, because we save. We don't like to waste electricity.*

And how much do you spend in food every two weeks? What do you buy, in detail?

*To have something for [the whole] two weeks, we buy four pounds of beans, that cost us up to \$4.50, because beans are expensive now. The rice, if we buy two pounds it costs \$2 or \$1.80 depending where we buy it, because sometimes we go to the market and it's cheaper. We buy eggs. Sometimes I buy a "carton" of eggs [15], for \$3.50 at the cheapest, the smaller ones. We buy tomatoes, onions.*



You have been working in the maquila for 18 years. What have you been able to buy? A house? A plot?

*I haven't bought anything, because it has always been a wage that is only enough to survive. [I went to the [government housing] Fund I went to ask for a home [loan], and the first time I went they said to me that I had to give a down payment ["prima"]. I didn't have anywhere to get it. One woman was selling a house but I had to give the down payment. I didn't have anywhere to get the money. I went another time and they told me that the company where I worked didn't...what I mean is that the minimum [wage] is not enough to receive a loan. You have to earn two minimum wages [double the minimum wage] to receive a loan for a house. I couldn't buy anything. If you see [I have] only the basic, beds and where to sit. We don't have anything more.*



Carmen's house

But labels in USA say that wages are enough, that you live well, and you have everything necessary to live. What are your comments about that?

*No, because, there have been times we've earned a bonus, to call it like that, a [production] goal. But they call it a gift from the company. We're paid \$2.00 [bonus] for producing 1,500 creepers. But it's paid every two weeks, we can't say we earn \$2.00 daily, but rather two goals a week, or three goals every two weeks, which is \$6, that we maybe use to pay the interest on what we've borrowed, it's not enough for anything more.*

What else have you bought? You tried to buy a house, but furniture?

*Yes, from the companies where I have worked I haven't bought anything, never. I couldn't even get a loan to buy a plot. But in a workshop where I worked, a friend of mine had a friend that was a carpenter and he made a bed*



*[camarote], a small wardrobe [closet]. The things I have made of wood because he was a carpenter. So they [the workshop] were deducting. They were paying me and deducting for furniture; that's the way I have some things.*

## Part 2

With your small daughter what expenses do you have, and where is she during the day?

*I send her to a Maternal Parish School [Church owned and free]; .....because I don't have anywhere to leave here at home, and my daughter who goes to ninth grade, she takes her and she picks her up, and in the afternoon they're both alone while I'm working.*

*In the kindergarten [the parish school] we pay a quota of \$60 a year and \$1 a month as collaboration. We go to cook [on weekend] so they get something as a snack, and we spend more on paper when they have to do homework. And we spend up to \$20 [a year] because they ask for a lot of paper.*

And are you asked to get uniforms or to make contributions?

*I got the uniform from the kinder. This year they gave me the shoes and the uniform. Last year they gave me only the uniform. We had to buy them the bag. They gave me two notebooks and a [libreta], that's all they gave me. They [the school] asks us and we have to buy paper. At the beginning of the year they ask [each student] for paper and toilet paper.*

And if your wage is so low how do you manage to do it? Do you borrow money?

*I borrow money or I ask credit – there's a women that gives credit.*

Like?

*Chicken, sausages, toilet paper, soap, washing powder, we try to ask [credit] to survive, because on pay day they deduct that amount.*

*We don't sign anything they only ask us our number of badge. The cafeteria belonged to the sister of the factory owner where I work, Joan...Gina was her name, she went back to her country...and she left the cafeteria to the cook, and we get the deduction, and everything is, maybe, [property] of the company.*

## Part 3

Carmen, what is your free time like with your children? Where do you go?

*Well in my free time, they leave off watching TV and amusing themselves with TV. I have a sister that lives in [the town of] Cojutepeque, in the rural area because she's peasant. We go to her, and when they're on vacation I send them [to my sister's place] and I continue working. That's their entertainment going to her place because we don't any place to go. A friend of mine sometimes gets tickets to go to the movies, as a gift, and I've taken them twice to the movies. We don't get out, only when a sister invites us to a river near there, since in the countryside there are rivers, we go there.*

Do you go to the beach, to hotels?

*No. We never go to those places. We've never been there.*

To the lake?

*Only to Apulo (a small poor town near a lake in San Salvador) once.*

But why if the lake is near?

*Yes, it's near and we only pay the bus. We don't go to the [government-run] Tourist Center*

*because we would have to pay. We've only gone to the shore of the lake.*

#### *Part 4*

*I have some things. I have a television that I got on credit. Not under my name but under the name of a friend, because with the pay receipt we have we don't get credit, not in small stores or any big store. My friend got it on credit for \$18 a month for one and a half years. I have a kitchen that I got paying \$8 a month, also under a friend's name. I finished paying the television two years ago. It has no games. My children don't know how to play the Nintendo. They don't know them and they don't know how to play them.*

#### *Part 5*

*But I don't want a job in the maquila for my children. Because it's a job where they exploit you. Even if one does things, they shout you. Even if you do your work carefully and are caught up, you're always shouted at. They always ask more of you. It's not a normal lunch time. It's not on time. They let us get out for 45 minutes, and we finish eating in half an hour, because we have to be there before the bell rings...*

*I tell them [my children] that I feel like a prisoner in a maquila, and this is my punishment because I didn't get an education, and I tell them, even if we have to eat grass I'm going to give you studies so you can be professionals—because one wants the best for one's children even if you continue being the same...*

#### *Part 6*

Do you have a message for the brands or Style Avenue clients, you as a worker, what could you say?

*I would tell them that they should pay more attention, not only to the production for export, but to the wages. —That they should verify that we are not earning well, that we have a starvation wage, a wage of poverty, of misery. That maybe they could be a little more conscious, because they don't know how much we sacrifice to make the garment with 100 percent of efficiency and with quality —and that they should value this. That they should keep more an eye on the bosses here, how they maltreat us, and on the ability [we have] that is not paid and that they should pay it.*

#### **Example of Partial Monthly Expenses for a maquila worker with two children**

**October 2, 2011**

Food	\$130.00
Rent	\$60.00
Water bill	\$5.00
Electricity	\$12.00
Cooking gas	\$5.00
Cleaning supplies	\$8.00
Soap, shampoo, deodorant	\$10.00
School contributions	\$2.00

<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>\$232.00</b>
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## Addenda

### A. Previous IGLHR Reports On NFL and other Team Logo Production

Ocean Sky: Workers Paid 8 Cents for Each \$25 NFL T-shirt They Sew  
January 2011 (El Salvador)

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0623>

NFL and Reebok Fumble: Women Paid 10 Cents to Sew \$80 NFL Peyton Manning Jerseys  
February 2010 (Chi Fung factory, El Salvador)

[http://www.globallabourrights.org/admin/reports/files/NFL\\_Reebok\\_Fumble\\_2010-1.pdf](http://www.globallabourrights.org/admin/reports/files/NFL_Reebok_Fumble_2010-1.pdf)

Another CAFTA Disaster: Nike, NFL and Anvil Workers in Honduras Fired for Organizing Legal  
Union at the U.S.-owned Star, S.A.,  
November 2007 (Honduras)

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/alerts?id=0315>

Han Soll Factory: Sweating for the NBA and NFL  
July 2005 (Honduras)

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/admin/reports/files/050721-Han-SOLL-Complete-PIERS-HIDDEN.pdf>

Toys of Misery

February 2004 (He Yi Electronics and Plastics Factory, China)

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0183>

NBA in Burma: Why is the NBA Exploiting 7-cent-an-hour Slave Labor and Supporting Brutal  
Military Dictators and Drug Lords in Burma, January 2004

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0090>

Bangladesh: The Role of U.S. Universities and Student Solidarity, October 2001

Part 1: <http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0238>

Part 2: <http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0239>

Workers Rights in the Americas? A Rare Inside Glimpse

May 2001 (NBA, Adidas, Ohio State and other universities in El Salvador)

<http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0618>

## **B. CAFTA-DR Labor Capacity Building**

Source: [Office of the United States Trade Representative](#). May 2011.

In support of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), the US Government committed over \$142 million in funds from FY2005 - FY2010 for labor capacity building in the CAFTA-DR countries. Funds have been dedicated to labor capacity building programs focused on strengthening labor ministries and courts, promoting an overall culture of compliance, and removing or preventing children from exploitive child labor.

Goal areas for labor capacity building in Central America and the Dominican Republic were identified through a cooperative process with partner countries and civil society partners. Priorities reflected on-going needs in priority areas identified in the April 2005 “White Paper” of the Working Group of the Vice Ministers Responsible for Trade and Labor in the Countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. Programs administered by the Department of Labor (USDOL), the Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of State’s Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (State/DRL) through FY2009 include:

### **Goal: Strengthen Labor Ministries’ Capacity to Enforce Labor Laws, Conduct Inspections, and Resolve Labor Disputes**

Comply and Win II (FY05; \$4.49 million; 2006-2009): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Foundation for Peace and Democracy—FUNPADEM

This project provided over three million workers information on labor rights by airing 52 radio spots at a rate of 1,800 per month, disseminating over 3.3 million informational materials, and installing an innovative web site with information on labor laws for workers and employers, [www.leylaboral.com](http://www.leylaboral.com). Additionally, the project trained over 10,000 ministry officials, employers, and workers on labor laws and procedures, and developed labor inspection manuals and electronic case management systems in each of the countries. The project built on a previously-funded USDOL project, Comply and Win I.

Comply and Win III for Inspection (FY07-08; \$8.8 million; 2008-2012): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Foundation for Peace and Democracy—FUNPADEM

This project helps CAFTA-DR Labor Ministries make maximum use of resources by strategically targeting their labor inspection activities to specific sectors and/or types of labor violations. The project completed the installation of electronic systems in the several Inspectorates to assist in the management of cases and data collection. The project also developed inspection protocols, including for freedom of association and collective bargaining, which were validated by worker and business organizations and will be widely used by inspectors starting in 2011.



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Modernize Labor Ministries (FY05-08, \$3 million; 2006-2009): Administered by USAID, Implemented by SRA International

This project developed integrated management systems to better provide services to workers and employers. The project helped develop information technology infrastructure and training and media production centers, provided computer equipment to the Ministries to support key electronic systems, and facilitated a Virtual Regional Labor Training Center that will network regional Ministry training centers.

Todas y Todos Trabajamos: Establishing Worker Rights Centers (FY06-07-09; \$6.4 million; 2007-2012): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Catholic Relief Services

This project, implemented through local Worker Rights Centers in each country, has provided legal assistance on 54,821 labor rights cases and supported workers in submitting nearly 37,410 of those cases to labor authorities. The Centers have conducted educational workshops for 57,079 workers and trained 418 local trainers, who have conducted 211 repeat trainings to continue the project's outreach services beyond US funding. The media campaign has used television, radio, flyers, and kiosks to inform nearly 7 million workers about their labor rights.

Strengthening Civil Service Systems for Labor Inspectorates (FY06; \$1.19 million; 2007-2012): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by the International Labor Organization

This project works within the Inspectorates of the Ministries of Labor of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified, experienced, and professional staff. The project has created inspection training modules that focus on ethical protocols and unification of inspector positions and responsibilities and drafted a code of ethics and integrity, which is in review and will be finalized in 2011.

Ensuring Benefits in the Formal Sector: Working with the Salvadoran Social Security Institute (FY07; \$940,000; 2008-2011): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Alexius International

This project is designed to raise awareness of El Salvador's social security system and increase accountability. The project promotes a transparent process for employers' payments into the social security system, allowing workers to verify, via text message, the proper transfer of salary deductions to the social security agency. This assures that workers can receive the health care benefits to which they are entitled.

**Goal: Modernize Labor Justice Systems**

Labor Justice Training (FY05; \$2 million; 2006-2008): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by the International Labor Organization

This comprehensive training program trained judicial personnel on national labor laws, the application of international labor standards, and proper handling of labor-related cases. This program trained over 600

legal professionals on international labor standards and conducted five courses on techniques for admission of evidence for 140 participating judges.

Strengthening Labor Justice for CAFTA-DR (FY05-07-08-09; \$12.14 million; 2007-2012): Administered by USAID, Implemented by Management Sciences for Development

To address inefficiencies in court systems and guarantee legal compliance and predictability, this project was designed to build the capacity of labor courts and expedite labor court cases in CAFTA-DR countries. After implementing pilot labor courts, the program is now replicating the model in 68 labor courts across the region. Court processes are being streamlined and electronic case management systems designed and implemented. Model court rooms with audio/video capability have been set up to facilitate the training of law professionals and law students in oral techniques. Post-graduate degree programs have been launched in three countries. Virtual labor justice observatories have been set up in each country as part of a region-wide judicial monitoring effort by civil society.

Citizens' Access to Labor Justice for CAFTA-DR (FY07-08-09; \$5.3 million; 2008-2012): Administered by USAID, Implemented by Pact & the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights

This program was designed to facilitate access to labor justice, contribute to transparency and accountability in the labor justice system, and reduce gender and other forms of discrimination in the administration of labor justice in CAFTA-DR countries. The program has trained 21 civil society institutions throughout the region to provide legal services in labor cases; designed and installed an electronic case management system in each legal clinic; and provided grants and training in the area of access to labor justice to 10 civil society institutions. 500 public employees have been trained to detect and reduce labor discrimination based on gender, workers with HIV/AIDS, domestic workers, physically challenged workers, and migrant workers.

### **Goal: Eliminate Gender and Other Types of Discrimination**

Comply and Win Gender Component (FY05; \$1.98 million ; 2006-2009): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Foundation for Peace and Democracy

Offices specializing in issues related to gender were established or enhanced in CAFTA-DR Ministries of Labor, which included providing training, technical support, and equipment to the staff. Labor inspectors and mediators were trained on techniques for detecting and investigating gender workplace discrimination, and over 1,500 workers were trained on protection against gender discrimination and labor rights through "Train the Trainer" programs.

Provide Job Training for People with Disabilities in Costa Rica (FY07; \$470,000; 2008-2010): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Trust for the Americas

The Government of Costa Rica recently passed legislation to encourage hiring people with disabilities. This project, which concluded in September 2010, was successful in reducing the barriers to employment

for people with disabilities by training them in information technology (using adaptive technology) and other skills, educating employers, and facilitating job placement. The project trained 268 employers and 242 people with disabilities.

Continuous Improvement in the Central American Workplace (FY06; \$2 million; 2007-2008):  
Administered by USAID, Implemented by DAI and a multi-sectoral stakeholder alliance

This alliance worked to jointly train workers and managers in 47 factories and Labor Ministry inspectors across the region on labor rights and voluntary compliance best practices, resulting in improved working conditions for nearly 24,000 workers in the predominantly female textile/apparel sector. Factory-level improvements included implementation of a new anti-discrimination manual, non-interference in formation of a union, reduced overtime, creation of a Safety and Hygiene committee, better employee training, and improved worker-manager communication

Citizens' Access to Labor Justice for CAFTA-DR (FY07-08; \$1.3 million; 2008-2010): Administered by  
USAID, Implemented by Pact & the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights

This aspect of the Citizen's Access to Labor Justice project provided training and other support to civil society organizations that provide services (counseling, accessibility, translation for indigenous languages, etc.) to women and other disadvantaged groups to obtain access to labor justice. The project conducted an audit of court processes that affect women, disabled persons, indigenous groups, and other disadvantaged populations, and provided technical assistance to these courts, as well as sensitization training for judges and public defenders.

**Goal: Promote a Culture of Compliance**

Better Work Nicaragua (FY09; \$2 million; 2010-2015): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by the  
International Labor Organization

This project aims to create decent job opportunities in the garment sector in Nicaragua. The project's objective is to increase the competitiveness of the sector by monitoring labor law compliance and providing services to elevate productivity at the factory level. This model has been proven successful for job creation in other countries, including Cambodia. The level of transparency provided by the ILO's monitoring on labor conditions is a highly attractive feature for multinational brands, as they lower their auditing costs while protecting their reputation.

Promoting Compliance with Labor Standards for Migrant Workers (FY08; \$900,000; 2009-2011):  
Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by Trust for the Americas

This project seeks to improve labor standards for migrant workers in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador in three ways: (1) it builds the long-term capacity of civil society organizations, including labor and human rights NGOs, to better reach out to migrant workers; (2) it raises awareness among

employers of the rights of migrant workers and builds the capacity of employer trade associations to help employers improve compliance efforts; and (3) it builds the capacity of labor ministries to improve and develop policy and enforcement mechanisms related to labor protections for migrant workers. In 2010, the project provided training and targeted support to a diverse group of 27 civil society organizations.

Promoting a culture of compliance: Awareness, capacity building and advocacy (FY06; \$2 million; 2007-2010): Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by Trust for the Americas

This project strengthened regional worker and employer organizations by raising workers' awareness and understanding of their rights and how to assert them and by building the capacity of worker and employer organizations with respect to compliance issues. It also built the advocacy and technical capacity of civil society organizations. The project, which closed in 2010, trained over 2,800 worker representatives, employer representatives, students and journalists representing 400 worker and employer organizations. To enhance sustainability and enable local organizations to continue these efforts, the project awarded 34 small grants to civil society organizations and provided individual project mentoring to execute activities in support of labor rights compliance.

A Worker-Centered Approach to Building a Culture of Labor Rights Compliance (FY06,-08, 09; \$4.8 million; 2006-2012): Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by the American Center for International Labor Solidarity—ACILS (Solidarity Center)

This project focuses on: (1) educating workers on fundamental labor rights and the use of national and international labor rights protection instruments to defend these rights; and (2) building and strengthening independent, representative worker organizations in key economic sectors. Through an informal economy program component added in 2010, the project will build the capacity of both workers and their organizations to understand, promote, and protect the rights of informal and marginalized workers. In 2010, the project provided training and mentoring for 64 independent and democratic labor unions to promote international core labor standards, and trained approximately 5,400 workers in areas including union organizing, collective bargaining, conflict resolution, equality, and non-discrimination.

Supporting Responsible Competitiveness (FY06; \$2 million; 2007-2010): Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by Business for Social Responsibility

This program worked to make the “business case” for responsible labor practices through education on labor standards and by demonstrating that these practices can have a positive effect on competitiveness in several key industries in the CAFTA-DR countries. The project, which closed in 2010, executed 15 “demonstration projects” with local producers to implement practical improvements at the company level, and disseminated the findings to other companies, government, and international buyers through executive education seminars. The project helped build a regional network of organizations to continue engaging and encouraging member companies to maintain this initiative.

Cultivar: Strengthening Labor Law Compliance in Agriculture (FY06; \$2.9 million; 2007-2011): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Social Accountability International

This project works with targeted agricultural communities in Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic to develop and implement action plans to improve law labor compliance, emphasizing occupational safety and health regulations. The project collaborates with local organizations and Ministries of Labor to strengthen mechanisms for workers to exercise their rights. The project has trained approximately 400 people on 18 farms in the three countries and has convened inter-institutional working groups and crop-specific consultative groups.

Campo a Campo: Advancing Labor Rights in the Agricultural Sector in Guatemala (FY07; \$940,000; 2008-2011): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by Catholic Relief Services

This project works with a local partner, the Social Pastorate, in the department of Izabal. By the end of 2010, the project had provided information and training on labor rights to over ten thousand workers in rural communities through community fairs, and the two Worker Rights Centers established by the project had delivered free legal advice to 753 workers, submitting 1080 cases before the relevant authorities. The project works with local organizations and the departmental office of the Ministry of Labor to strengthen mechanisms for workers to exercise their rights and to educate employers on national labor laws.

Promoting Informal Labor Rights: (PILAR) (FY07; \$990,000; 2008-2011): Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by Global Fairness Initiative

This pilot project, which closed in January 2011, focused on extending labor rights to the informal sector in Guatemala and Nicaragua. The project developed best practices and training modules for government officials on data collection and strategies to incentivize worker formalization and provided training to over 1,600 stakeholders, educating worker organizations and informal sector workers on labor rights, government benefits such as social security, and potential pathways to formalization.

Promote Tripartite Social Dialogue (FY07; \$2.97 million; 2008-2012): Administered by State/DRL, Implemented by the International Labor Organization

This project is strengthening national tripartite institutions and mechanisms for social dialogue among governments, workers, and employers to increase compliance with labor law and improve cooperation to develop common agendas and formal agreements. In 2010, the project provided assistance to help create a united sub-regional trade union platform, facilitated by the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas.

Support Alliances to Improve Labor and Environmental Standards (FY07; \$2 million; 2008-2010): Administered by USAID, Implemented by Chemonics, Inc.

This program has channeled the power of commercial alliances between companies along the value chain into encouraging producers and processors to adopt voluntary environmental and labor standards that buyers developed and/or supported. In the area of labor, the alliances between producers and buyers have included establishing baselines such as for workers' safety, undertaking diagnostics, implementing better practices, and seeking independent certifications.

**Goal: Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor**

USDOL has funded several programs targeting the elimination of child labor in Central America, both prior to negotiations of the CAFTA-DR and after it entered into force for the respective CAFTA-DR countries. Since 2005, this funding has included \$43 million in projects to eliminate exploitive child labor in the region. These efforts have removed or prevented over 43,000 children from exploitive child labor, providing them with educational and training opportunities, and aim to prevent or remove tens of thousands of other children from exploitive or dangerous conditions.

**Goal: Implement Benchmarking, Verification, and Monitoring Procedures**

Verification of White Paper Recommendations (FY05-07-08; \$11.6 million; 2006-2012): Administered by USDOL, Implemented by the International Labor Organization

This project tracks progress made on the implementation of the White Paper recommendations through extensive consultations with stakeholders, including NGOs, employers, and worker organizations, and measures it against country implementation plans designed to record progress. The Baseline Report for the ILO Verification of the Compliance of White Paper Recommendations was published in August 2007. Follow-up verification reports have been produced as verification mechanisms on the implementation of recommendations. All reports can be located at <http://verificacion.oit.or.cr/>



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