

# Safety and Health at Work



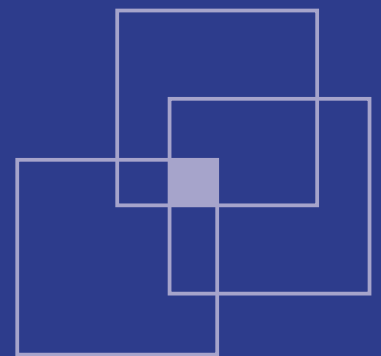
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Hopes and challenges in development cooperation

The example of an EU-ILO joint project  
“Improving safety and health at work through  
a Decent Work Agenda”



# Safety

# and

# Health

Hopes and challenges in development cooperation

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*Safety and Health at Work: Hopes and challenges in development cooperation.*

The example of an EU-ILO joint project “Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work Agenda”

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## Introduction

Each and every day 1,000 people go out to work and do not return home because they die in a workplace accident – the equivalent of four plane crashes. Thousands more die of work-related diseases. All the evidence points to the fact that occupational accidents and diseases, and the economic costs they entail, play a significant role in the spread of poverty and have a negative impact on development.

However, most of the world's work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses are preventable. Co-ordinated action at the national and enterprise levels is improving workplace safety and health, as well as directly benefiting business productivity, cost-saving and competitiveness, and this can be supported through development cooperation.

Development cooperation consists in supporting the long term economic, social, political and environmental development of developing countries. Occupational safety and health (OSH) is often viewed as a small part of development cooperation, usually through the employment or social protection lens. But OSH issues deserve more attention, be it as a specific theme or mainstreamed into other areas of focus, so far as it contributes to strengthening the national development processes.

Guided by these considerations and the provisions of the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), the European Union and the ILO's Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment – SAFEWORK – carried out a joint project on "Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work Agenda" between 2010 and 2012. Further details on the project can be found at [www.ilo.org/safework/projects/WCMS\\_149466/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/safework/projects/WCMS_149466/lang--en/index.htm). The project covered three regions through five target countries – Honduras, Malawi, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Zambia – and has shown interesting successes towards decent, safe and healthy workplaces for all.

The project was funded under the European Union's "Investing in People", an EU thematic programme supporting actions in the area of human and social development (including employment and decent work).

The challenge today is that more transition and developing countries engage in similar initiatives so that the human and economic costs of occupational accidents and diseases do not delay their development.

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# Safety and health at work: A major concern that remains largely invisible

## The human and economic burden of poor working conditions

The human toll of poor occupational safety and health (OSH) conditions is considerable. The ILO estimates that 2.34 million people die around the world each year as a result of their work from occupational accidents or work-related diseases.<sup>1</sup> This is more than 6,000 victims per day, about twice as many as in the World Trade Centre tragedy – each and every day of the year.

Occupational accidents and diseases not only entail an appalling human toll, but also account for a significant economic burden on national economies and on enterprises.

The ILO estimates that about 4 per cent of the global gross domestic product disappears through absences from work and sickness, disability and survivors' benefits.<sup>2</sup> A country with higher than average casualty rates will lose an even greater part of its national wealth – it has been estimated that this figure can reach 10 per cent for some countries. The costs are borne by workers and their families, government, and employers.

The costs to enterprises of work-related accidents and ill health are often underestimated. This is mainly because some costs may be difficult to quantify, or they go unrecognized. The direct costs to the enterprise include payments made by firms to workers who have suffered an injury or disease or to medical providers to defray treatment costs, or increased insurance contributions. But the company also has to bear indirect costs, those not covered by employment injury insurance schemes, such as primarily lost, delayed or degraded production. These indirect costs can be very significant and, although some are very hard to quantify, such as loss of reputation as a result of a poor safety record, they are certainly very real. Literature on the subject shows that there is a more or less permanent relationship between the direct and indirect costs; the ratio varies according to authors but the most commonly used is 1 to 4.<sup>3</sup>

## A cycle of neglect

Occupational accidents and diseases cause dreadful human pain and suffering, as well as of important economic losses. Yet awareness of the problem is still too low. A few dramatic cases receive public attention, such as the Bhopal or Chernobyl accidents, or the more recent Pakistan factory fire and the Rana Plaza building collapse in Bangladesh. Following the Bhopal accident in 1984, a total of over 20,000 people have died as a result of their injuries and illnesses and the accident has so far cost the owners about US\$500 million in compensation.<sup>4</sup> The accident in the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986 directly caused the death of 30 operators and firemen and in the longer term, considerable environmental and health effects. The fire that ravaged a Pakistani textile factory in September 2012 killed almost 300 workers and the Bangladesh building collapse in 2013 killed over 1100 workers.

**Occupational accidents and diseases account for a significant economic burden on national economies and on enterprises.**

1. ILO, 2011. *XIX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work – ILO Introductory Report: Global Trends and Challenges on Occupational Safety and Health*.

2. ILO, 2003. *Safety in Numbers: Pointers for global safety culture at work*.

3. In the 1950s, H. W. Heinrich established that the statistical relationship between direct and indirect cost was approximately 1:4, even though this was subject to considerable variation. Many insurance companies adopted this ratio as a general rule to estimate costs. But the literature on direct and indirect costs does not present a uniformly accepted computation method.

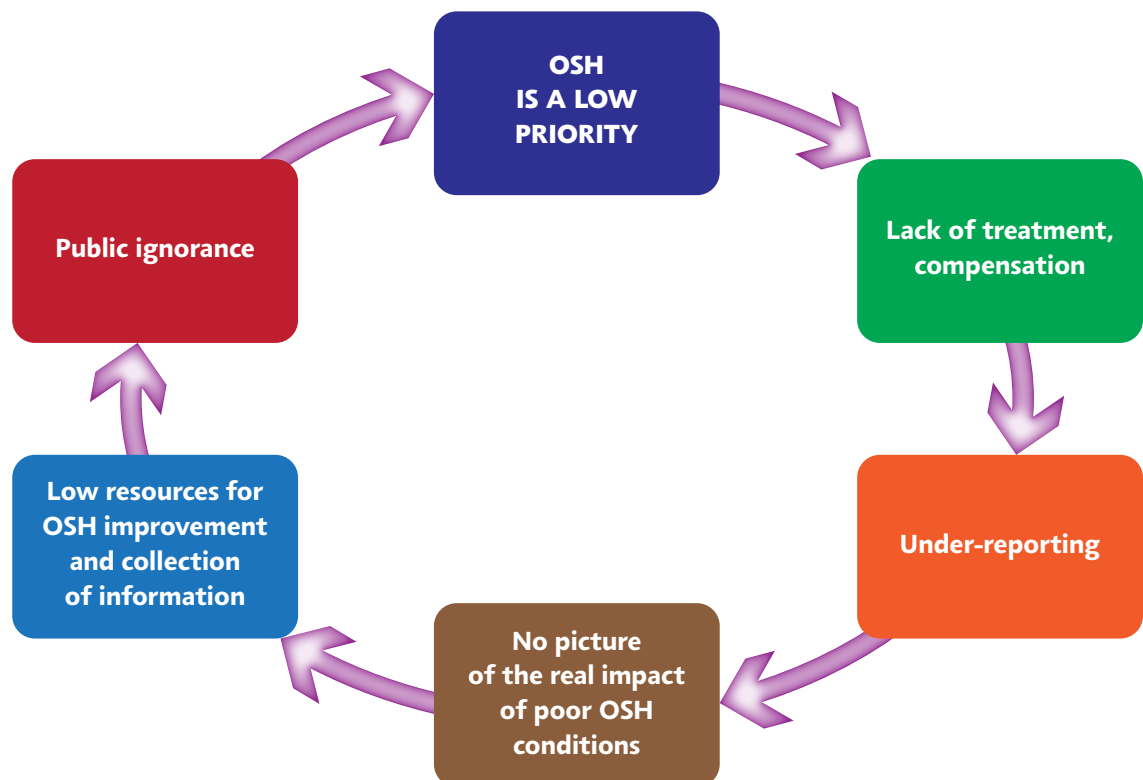
4. Bhopal Information Center – [www.bhopal.com](http://www.bhopal.com)

**Awareness  
of the problem  
is still too low.**

But the everyday reality of the majority who die, fall ill or are injured from work-related causes, goes largely unnoticed. This is probably because accidents and diseases are dispersed and most of the time socially invisible. Victims often work in small or medium sized enterprises, and suffer injuries or ill health through, for example, falling from height, being struck by workplace transport, in contact with dangerous parts of machinery, or exposed to substances hazardous to health. Thus workers die or are injured one at a time, in small towns, hardly noticed by anyone except family and friends.

In addition, in developing countries, there is often little incentive to report accidents or diseases. With poor access to treatment, often no access to workers' compensation, why bother reporting an accident, even less a work-related illness? Many occupational deaths and injuries therefore go unreported. And, of course, the countries with the highest accident and illness figures are unlikely to be those with the best-developed labour inspection and reporting structures. Even where data do exist, they may be difficult to analyse because they are compiled in different ways. Reliable statistics are therefore difficult to establish.

And so the cycle of neglect grows – from low priority through to under-reporting and a consequent lack of commitment of resources to infrastructure and gathering real information, which in turn results in public ignorance on the actual numbers and costs of occupational accidents and diseases – until we reach full circle to reconfirm the low priority given to occupational safety and health!



# Investing in occupational safety and health through development cooperation

Occupational accidents and illnesses cannot be seen as an inevitable price to be paid in the course of a country's development. Rather, creating a safe and healthy working environment will help prevent exclusion and poverty, human suffering and economic costs to governments, society, employers, as well as to victims. Integrating OSH issues in the policy agenda will therefore serve various major objectives in development cooperation. Moreover, discussions on the post-2015 Development Agenda have identified decent work – hence, including decent working conditions – as a priority for the new international development framework. Hereunder are some examples of the links that can be made between OSH and other priority areas in development cooperation.

## Fighting poverty

Poverty reduction ranks high on the UN Development Agenda. It is a major priority for many donors as well as for developing countries. The promotion of occupational safety and health should be part of the strategies towards poverty reduction. First of all because, as explained later, the high economic cost of poor working conditions may weigh on the GDP of many countries and thus hold back their development.

Secondly, the lack of OSH control measures and poor working conditions increase the number of occupational accidents and work-related illnesses, each one of which can lead to temporary or permanent incapacity to work, which in turn can lead to reliance on disability benefits – if they exist – and eventual exclusion from the labour market. It can only be seen as a veritable spiral of downward mobility and even death.

Promoting the creation of a safe and healthy working environment as part of development cooperation aimed at poverty reduction will help prevent exclusion and will maintain employability and contribute to a more productive society.

## Promoting health

Several health-related Millennium Development Goals have moved health to the centre of development theory and policy. There is little doubt that combating preventable diseases is a major task in pursuing development. There is also little doubt that the shocks generated by sudden health impairments play a significant role in the spread of poverty. The result has been increased attention and funding, especially to the “headline” diseases of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria.

While not disputing the urgency of addressing these threats to health and social progress, it is important to note that work-related morbidity and mortality are likely to account for twice the burden of each of these diseases, and possibly as much as all three taken together. The paradox is that, in an era in which the health dimension of development has gained prominence, one of the chief preventable causes of ill-health – poor working conditions – remains largely invisible and consequently under-funded.

**One of the chief preventable causes of ill-health – poor working conditions – remains largely underfunded.**

## Preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS

Occupational risks can expose some workers to HIV, such as health care workers, emergency personnel and even first-aiders on the shop floor.<sup>5</sup> Other workers can also be exposed to HIV because of the nature of their work and its impact on personal life – those in the tourism sector, transport, mining, for example. These sectors often mean isolation from families or the opportunity for casual sex. In this case, HIV/AIDS can be thought of as an occupational risk and approached in the same way as any other occupational hazard such as noise or dust.

Good OSH conditions also imply adapting the workplace to the capabilities of all workers, including those living with HIV/AIDS, allowing them to remain at work and be productive. Likewise, building on efforts to increase safety of the workplace and the health of the workforce, wellness and education programmes can be an entry point for education on HIV/AIDS prevention.

Successfully resolving HIV/AIDS issues involves the same principles and skills developed to respond to any other safety and health issue, and in this respect, OSH personnel and committees have a role to play.

## Fighting discrimination and promoting gender equality

It is often said that men die at work, whereas women get ill. While it may be true that, in a highly segregated labour market, men are more at risk of occupational accidents, the occupational risks that women are exposed to should not be overlooked.<sup>6</sup> The perception that women's work is "safe" has serious repercussions for prevention in women-dominated sectors such as health, public administration, education, agriculture and light manufacturing, such as textiles, etc. It has also led to a lack of gender perspective in areas such as OSH research or OSH standard-setting, and even in the recognition and compensation of occupational injuries that affect women.

The gender specific patterns of OSH problems cannot be seen in isolation from sector and task segregation, but also from other social concerns such as psychological stress from violations of dignity, precarious employment, discrimination or additional hours linked to family responsibilities.

Mechanic student in a vocational training and services centre, Tanzania



5. ILO, 2005. *Joint ILO/WHO guidelines on health services and HIV/AIDS*.

6. ILO campaign "Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work", 2009. Factsheet: *Providing safe and healthy workplaces for both women and men*.



Poor contracts and low status jobs, which imply, most of the time, limited training and limited involvement in decision making, are factors that also impact other vulnerable groups, within and beyond the sphere of safety and health. A young person, for example, is much more likely to become an occupational accident statistic than is an older, more experienced worker. According to ESAW (European Statistics on Accidents at Work), the incidence rate of non-fatal accidents at work per 100,000 workers is more than 40 per cent higher for workers aged 18–24 as compared to the total workforce.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore highlighting and tackling the gender dimension in OSH will benefit gender equality and the fight against discrimination in general.

**Good safety  
and health can  
result in higher  
productivity**

### **Increasing business performance**

Good safety and health is good business. Enterprises that actively seek good working conditions for their workers observe that this is good for labour relations, for worker motivation and morale, and can result in higher productivity, with a reduction in sickness absence and retention of skilled workers. They can also promote themselves as socially responsible and meet the expectations of customers or larger enterprises worldwide.

In addition, for micro, small and large sized enterprises alike, the economic benefits linked to putting in place good OSH management systems outweigh the costs involved. Evidence shows that the cost of accidents is much higher than the cost of the measures which would have prevented them. Recent regional research in Europe concludes that the average cost for a minor accident is 16 times higher than the cost of the related preventive measures and that, for serious, very serious or fatal accidents, this proportion is 48 times higher.<sup>8</sup>

OSH investments do not have to be large or costly – and they can result in higher productivity. The ILO has decades of experience with its WISE, WIND, and WISCON<sup>9</sup> methodologies which aim to link higher productivity with a better place of work. They are aimed at small enterprises and can complement other programmes designed to develop and support small and medium sized enterprises.

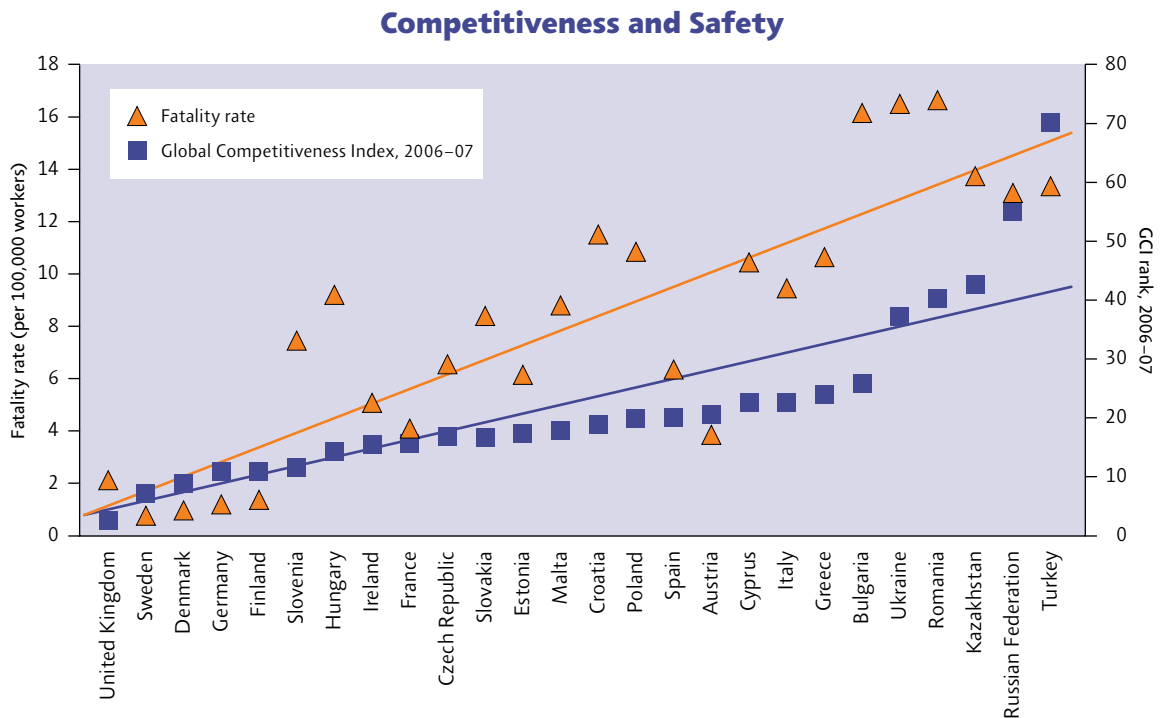
7. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2007. *OSH in figures: Young workers – Facts and figures*.

8. *Estudio del coste económico de los accidentes de trabajo registrados en la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja*, Instituto Riojano de Salud Laboral (IRSAL, 2008), cited in The foundation for the prevention for occupational risks, 2012. *Estudio sobre los costes de la no prevención. Informe de fuentes secundarias*.

9. WISE stands for Work Improvements in Small Enterprises, WIND stands for Work Improvements through Neighbourhood Development, and WISCON for Work Improvements in Small Construction sites. These are participatory methodologies which link improvements in working conditions to gains in productivity. WISE is aimed at SMEs, while WIND is aimed at development in the agricultural community and WISCON is aimed specifically at the construction sector.

## Increasing national competitiveness

National competitiveness benefits from good OSH management. Data from the World Economic Forum and the Lausanne International Institute for Management Development (IMD), coupled with data from the ILO, indicate that there is a strong correlation between national competitiveness and the national incidence rates of occupational accidents. As the graph below shows, increases in the fatality rates (pink squares) follow poorer ranking of the country (blue triangles) on the Global competitiveness index (GCI).



## Working towards sustainable development

Sustainable development implies that workers are protected and remain employable. And for this, OSH cannot remain merely in the realms of the technical. It has to be taken on board at the highest political level, which means within social and economic development strategies. Economic conditions impact on workplace accidents and diseases and these have an impact on the economic prospects of workers, enterprises and society as a whole. They can't be treated separately by different institutions and policies.

If the aim of any country is sustainable economic development then countries will have to factor in the high cost of occupational accidents and diseases in the quest for higher productivity as well as economic and social renewal. Development cooperation, in whatever priority area, also has to take it into account.

# Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work Agenda – Highlights on a joint EU-ILO project

The project “Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work agenda” was developed to better address occupational safety and health as a vital component of decent work. It was implemented between 2010 and 2012 across three regions, targeting five pilot countries: The Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in Eastern Europe, Honduras in Central America and Malawi and Zambia in Southern Africa.



The target countries were selected by the ILO and the EU on the basis of their national commitment to improve safety and health at work, as witnessed by the formal agreements between governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations in the Decent Work Country Programmes.

The project was implemented in close collaboration between the ILO and the European Commission’s DG DEVCO in Brussels, as well as with the Delegations of the European Union in the target countries of the project.

Convention No. 187 aims at promoting a preventive safety and health culture and progressively achieving a safe and healthy working environment. It requires developing, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, a national profile, policy, programme, and system on occupational safety and health.

- National profiles are situational and needs analyses on OSH in a country. They provide a snapshot of the situation, and constitute the baseline on which to measure progress.
- National programmes are tripartite agreements on the priorities that have to be addressed. They include time-bound measures to improve occupational safety and health, enabling a measurement of progress.
- National systems provide the infrastructure for implementing a national policy and programme on OSH, such as laws and regulations, authorities or bodies, compliance mechanisms including systems of inspection, and arrangements at the level of the undertaking.



In these target countries, as in many countries around the world, safety and health at work are a major concern. The project aimed to incorporate occupational safety and health (OSH) at the highest level in national political agendas. The project's strategy was to promote a systematic approach to OSH, guided by the provisions of the ILO Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

Important results were achieved in the target countries, which have laid the groundwork to reach the development goal of the project, i.e. a reduction in the number of occupational accidents and work related diseases.

As part of the results achieved in the five target countries in cooperation with the national tripartite constituents:

- A national dialogue process on OSH is established and functioning in the five countries. Tripartite national bodies responsible for the coordination of OSH issues were set up, reinforced or promoted in the target countries, in relation to the steering committee of the project. Their members include employers' and workers' organizations, ministries (including Labour, Social Security, Health, Mines, Budget, Agriculture, etc.) and other stakeholders such as academicians, have gained a common knowledge on OSH through the many training sessions in which they participated. They have agreed on a situational needs analysis on OSH in the countries via the national profiles on OSH that were developed in a tripartite manner and adopted. They have learnt to work together through project activities, such as designing and supervising awareness raising campaigns, often in relation to the ILO World Day for Safety and Health at Work.
- National programmes on occupational safety and health were developed in a tripartite manner. They were officially launched in Malawi, Honduras and in Ukraine, with good visibility thanks to the communication by high level decision-makers. In Moldova, it was endorsed by tripartite partners and is being examined by the Cabinet of Ministers before it can be passed as law, while Zambia is now developing its own programme.

**It is important that more transition and developing countries engage in similar initiatives**

- Members of the steering committees and/or national coordinating bodies on OSH as well as higher level decision makers, including Parliamentarians, the Ministers in charge of Labour and Health, Vice-Presidents in some countries, are now highly motivated to keep working towards the implementation of the national programmes on OSH (or their draft versions) and increasing the priority given to OSH issues. They have started mobilizing the necessary resources, funds and personnel, as well as establishing working groups on priority topics. For instance, a result of the project, both OSH departments in the Ministries of Labour in Zambia and Malawi saw their budget increase, as well as the staff and number of vehicles in the case of Zambia. In Moldova, a new unit dedicated to OSH was created and staffed.
- In the five target countries, several institutions (training institutes, OSH inspectorate, Trade Unions, Associations of employers) have integrated risk assessment and management in their regular work and curricula and have started to deliver their own courses on risk assessment and management, ensuring sustainable dissemination of methodologies to improve risk assessment and OSH management at the workplace. It is interesting to note that labour and OSH inspection services also received training to ensure efficient and effective OSH inspections could be undertaken. Included within their role now, they also provide advisory and support services to enterprises with regard to risk assessment and OSH management.

The project also resulted in the development of:

- Global advocacy and awareness raising papers: “Estimating the economic costs of occupational injuries and illnesses” and “Improvement of national reporting, data collection and analysis of occupational accidents and diseases.”
- A global video raising awareness on work-related accidents and diseases and demonstrating ways of preventing them, making use of the project activities as concrete examples of how the ILO can support countries at the national and enterprise levels.

The challenge today is that national stakeholders in the target countries pursue their joint efforts to ensure that safety and health programmes are implemented and reach the concerned beneficiaries. It is also important that more transition and developing countries engage in similar initiatives so that the toll of occupational accidents and diseases does not impede their development process.





# Highlights

## 1. Development of national profiles and national programmes on occupational safety and health

In order to provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of the occupational safety and health situation in the target countries, national profiles on OSH were developed, in consultation with government, employers' and workers' organizations. The objectives and methodology were first presented in a tripartite workshop in each country, in order to ensure collaboration of all actors in the data collection process. The draft national profile was then circulated, discussed and endorsed during tripartite workshops. This process fostered the commitment of all stakeholders and allowed for consensus to be built on the strengths and weaknesses of the national OSH system and on the national priorities for action.

The information collected in the profile served to inform the national programme on OSH. The development of these programmes also involved a tripartite consultative process. Key stakeholders were first trained to make sure that they gained a clear and common understanding of the major concepts in occupational safety and health and of the process for the design, monitoring and evaluation of a national programme on OSH. The first draft of the programme was generally developed by the ministry of labour or the institution in charge of OSH, followed by tripartite meetings to discuss and refine the draft programme. A final version was then approved by all the representatives.





The process for the official adoption and launch of the profile and programme differed from country to country, reflecting the more or less complex administrative processes to get the signatures or go-ahead from ministries. The national programme in Ukraine, for example, was passed as a law, whereas in Malawi, it was directly launched by the Vice-President once the tripartite partners had signed it.

Examples of the priority areas of Action for Malawi, which were included in the Malawi national occupational safety and health programme 2011–16:

- Creation of a national tripartite committee on OSH
- Review and harmonisation of OSH legislation
- Formulation of specific regulations for high risk sectors, including the informal economy
- Capacity building, including training of inspectors
- Formulation of inspection guidelines
- Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS and occupational TB prevention at the workplace in cooperation with the OSH services
- OSH advocacy and awareness campaigns
- Scaling up OSH training in educational and vocational training institutions
- Reviewing the current system of recording and reporting of occupational injuries.

## 2. Reinforcement of national coordinating mechanisms on OSH

The process for the development of the national profile and programme on OSH reinforced the national coordinating body on OSH in the countries where it existed, and fostered its creation in others.

The project set up national tripartite steering committees in the five target countries. In Honduras, the steering committee was based on the existing national commission for safety and health at work (CONASATH). In the other countries, the structures were created specifically to overview the implementation of the project, drawing on other existing coordination mechanisms, such as the national labour council, as appropriate. The steering committees consisted of ILO constituents (Ministry of Labour, employers' and workers' organizations) and other ministries (Ministry of Health, Mines, Agriculture, Finance, etc.) as well as of training institutes, universities, associations of employers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Most of the members of the national steering committees of the project were involved in the development of the profiles and programmes as well as in the other activities of the project and therefore gained a good overview of the OSH situation in the country and better knowledge of measures to improve OSH. As a result, they were motivated and convinced that establishing a permanent coordinating body to promote OSH issues and ensure the implementation and monitoring of the programme was necessary.

In 2012 in Malawi, the members of the national steering committee of the project expressed the wish to become organized into a permanent structure for reviewing OSH issues. In Honduras, the national tripartite OSH coordinating body was reactivated. In Zambia, the project facilitated dialogue between the institutions that will prompt the appointment of the OSH Board.



National tripartite steering committee meeting, Republic of Moldova



### 3. Examples of networks of trainers on risk assessment and management

Identifying hazards and managing risks are key steps to improving safety and health at the enterprise level. In the five project countries, networks of trainers on risk assessment and management were created. First, the project trained trainers on risk assessment and management, targeting representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, occupational safety and health specialists of small, medium and large sized companies, labour and OSH inspectors, and trainers from various training organizations. Then some of the trained trainers facilitated, under observation, what they had learned. The methodologies taught depended on the focus of the workshop, itself reflecting the occupations of the participants, and the sector and size of the enterprises targeted. These courses enabled the trained trainers to practice and improve their skills, as well as to increase the risk assessment capacities of the employers and shop floor workers in the selected pilot workplaces.

In Ukraine, the OSH training institute has now integrated risk assessment and management in its general curricula. A leading trade union and two major industrial companies have also developed further modules in order to provide regular courses to their members.

In Moldova, several of the trained trainers who had participated in the courses organized by the project, received further advice and assistance as they developed a specific curriculum of courses on risk assessment and OSH management systems for their own organizations. These organizations, which include the OSH training institute, a trade union confederation, a large organization of the private sector and the labour inspection service, are currently piloting the courses for their members.

In Honduras, the national institute for professional training (INFOP) has led various trainings in partnership with the inspectors of the ministry of labour and the social security institute and now offers risk assessment courses for small and medium sized enterprises in the agricultural sector. The National Association of Industrial Producers (ANDI) has also set up a Diploma Course on the prevention of work-related risks in the two main cities of Honduras.



Risk assessment and management training, Ukraine

#### 4. Improving inspectors' capacity for advisory and support services in Zambia

In Zambia, OSH inspectors are now delivering one day training courses on risk assessment and management to enterprises on a regular basis. This is part of their support in getting enterprises to improve their OSH practices, in addition to their usual inspection services relating to compliance verification.

The OSH inspectors participated in a five day training of trainer's course, and then organized one-day pilot courses on risk assessment and management in three enterprises (cement, steel, and manufacturing industries) in the surroundings of Lusaka.



OSH Inspectors conducting risk assessment training in a manufacturing enterprise, Zambia

By the end of the three on-site training sessions, a total of 43 workers from the three enterprises were trained in risk assessment and management. All participants showed great interest in the training, even if the three companies were at different levels of understanding and development in occupational safety and health.

Drawing from this experience, OSH inspectors in Zambia deliver training sessions that comprise formal lectures and practical group work to introduce the concept of risk assessment and how to rate the level of risk. Whenever possible, the participants apply the assessment methodology to identify hazards and evaluate the risks in their own workplaces. They are divided into groups to carry out a practical risk assessment exercise in one of their warehouses and establish a hierarchy of the most urgent risks to address as well as a series of measures that should be taken to eliminate the hazards or reduce the risks to acceptable levels.

A great demand for this type of training has been reported in Zambia, from all types of enterprises. In the first six months after the pilot trainings, more than 30 private enterprises had already requested the OSH department in the Ministry of Labour to run the one day course for their management and shop floor staff. In addition, more than 200 personnel from 20 private enterprises have been trained by inspectors in modern risk assessment and management techniques in Zambia based on this method.

## 5. Nation-wide awareness raising campaign in Honduras

An awareness raising campaign in Honduras was designed with the participation of all the institutions that are members of the national tripartite coordinating body on OSH (CONASATH), including the employers' organization, trade unions, Ministry of Labour, social security institute, universities, etc.

The campaign aimed at sensitizing and educating the public on occupational risks and their consequences on the health and life of workers. On the basis of national statistics on occupational accidents and diseases, the CONASATH chose five high risk economic sectors as targets for the campaign: agriculture, construction, manufacture, diving, and commercial services. For each of these sectors, communication material was created, including TV and radio slots, and press and street advertising.

Members of the CONASATH worked together to agree upon the main messages to be conveyed and how to harmonize the terminology to reach out to the vast majority of the population.



In order to make the campaign more lively, cartoon characters were designed to symbolize the Honduran worker. The hero, Chico, abbreviation of the very popular name Francisco, is easy to relate to. He shows his two friends Juancho and María how to do things right to prevent accidents and diseases. These characters were inspired by the wordless NAPO films created by EU-OSHA, but were largely adapted to the national context, and to the needs and expectations of the local stakeholders in Honduras. They now feature on all the products developed by the CONASATH, including the national profile, national programme, and information brochures, in addition to other advertising material.

Street poster: Prevention in the construction sector, Honduras

As a consequence, OSH in Honduras now has a face, Chico, and the products of the coordinating body on OSH have a clearly recognizable design. They are widely publicized throughout the whole country.



## 6. World Day for Safety and Health at work in Ukraine

The World Day for Safety and Health at Work, celebrated every 28<sup>th</sup> of April, is a platform for thematic OSH campaigns around the world. It is also an opportunity to convey the OSH message through important events and to disseminate promotional material.

In 2012 in Ukraine, the tripartite ILO constituents organized various events, including a campaign on “Labour Protection through the eyes of children”. This campaign was conducted by the State Service on Mining Supervision and Industrial Safety of Ukraine and all the social partners, with the support of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, in order to raise awareness on prevailing OSH problems in Ukraine.

A competition was launched for the best drawing done by children on the theme of occupational safety and health. The members of the jury – representatives of the State Service on Mining Supervision and Industrial Safety of Ukraine, the Federation of the Trade Unions of Ukraine, the Federation of Employers of Ukraine, the State Social Insurance Fund against Occupational Injuries and Occupational Diseases, other relevant ministries and institutions and the national project coordinator – identified the winners according to three different age groups. An official ceremony announcing the winners was organized to award the prizes.

One of Ukraine’s winning posters used for the World Day for Safety and Health at Work

Among the more than 25,000 pictures received, the best ones were used for awareness raising materials such as posters, calendars, etc., and distributed among social partners and enterprises.



## 7. Sensitizing high level decision makers: Parliamentarians

In Ukraine, Zambia and Malawi, the project organized meetings with members of Parliament to encourage them to include occupational safety and health on the national and political agendas and in national development plans, with the aim to securing further resources for OSH.



ILO addressing  
Ukrainian Parliament, 2010

In Malawi, the workshop's participants were drawn from two Parliamentary Committees and senior officials from the Ministry of Labour. The questions raised by the parliamentarians demonstrated their interest and enthusiasm for OSH issues. As a consequence, they advocated for enhanced institutional capacity and increased resource allocation to OSH institutions. A second and similar meeting was then organized on the request of and by Malawi authorities to inform a third Parliamentary committee.

Parliamentary meeting, Malawi, 2012



## 8. Improving national systems for the reporting and notification of occupational accidents and diseases

Around the world, and in particular in developing and transition countries, figures and statistics on occupational accidents and diseases tend not to reflect the actual situation in this respect. This is due to the wide-spread under-reporting of occupational accidents and diseases as well as to the diverse and often inconsistent means of recording and notifying occupational accidents and diseases at the national level.

In Malawi, Moldova, Zambia and Ukraine the project conducted national studies to analyse the existing national systems for reporting and notification of occupational accidents and diseases and make recommendations on their improvement. These studies were then discussed and adopted by national tripartite constituents. In the case of Moldova, the main recommendations of the study were immediately included in the draft national OSH programme for 2012–16.

Consequently, these countries are now working on implementing a coherent national system that is in harmony with international standards and practice for the collection, recording and notification of data concerning occupational accidents and diseases. This is key to planning effective global, national and enterprise level preventive programmes and in understanding trends and emerging challenges in the area of occupational safety and health.



Study on the system for reporting and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, Republic of Moldova



## 9. Raising awareness on the costs of poor OSH conditions at national and enterprise levels

In all target countries of the project, several workshops were organized to work on the methodologies to calculate the real costs of accidents and diseases for an enterprise. These workshops gathered many representatives of medium to large scale enterprises as well as employers and government representatives. Seminars on costs of poor OSH conditions were also organized to reach government officials and the members of the project steering committee or national coordinating body on OSH. When targeting government officials, the meetings not only concentrated on the economic costs of poor OSH management at national level, but also explained the various methods to calculate the costs at enterprise level and how to proceed to a cost-benefit analysis. Both types of meetings were very much welcomed by all participants and considered as eye openers on the benefit that enterprises and governments can reap from investing in prevention of occupational accidents and diseases.



Director of Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi, Labour Commissioner and President of the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions discussing OSH costs at enterprise level

As a consequence, in Malawi, the tripartite partners decided that a brochure on how to calculate the costs of occupational accidents, based on real, but anonymous, figures for a Malawian enterprise, would be produced and disseminated among enterprises, organizations of employers and the chamber of commerce. In the Ministry of Labour, the OSH director declared that he was considering sending an informative note to any enterprise in which an accident had been investigated in order to highlight the costs of the particular accident to the enterprise.

## 10. Ratification of OSH conventions

**Moldova** ratified ILO Convention No. 187 in February 2010. As a follow up to the project, the Moldovan authorities have expressed their wish to ratify the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161). They have requested the ILO's technical assistance for a feasibility study on the ratification of this Convention and on reforming employment injury benefits.

**Ukraine** ratified three OSH Conventions in the course of the project: the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174), and the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176). The future ratification of ILO Convention No. 187 has also been agreed among ILO constituents, and was included in the Resolution of the Parliamentary Hearings in 2011, as well as in the General Agreement on regulation of the main principles and norms in social and economic policy and labour relations in Ukraine (2011).



Ukrainian booklet gathering major ILO conventions on occupational safety and health

During the awareness seminar that was held for Members of Parliament (MPs) in **Malawi** in February 2012, the Government committed to the ratification of the major ILO Conventions on OSH, including Convention No. 187 and was strongly supported by the 33 MPs in attendance. The MPs further expressed their willingness to support a budget increment to the Ministry of Labour for purposes of enhancing OSH. Today all the partners of the project are highly motivated to develop an OSH policy in order to prepare for the ratification of ILO Convention No. 187 and are seeking technical assistance and funding in this perspective.

In March 2011 in **Zambia**, during the official opening of the training workshop on the development of a national OSH programme, the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Security committed the Government to the ratification of Convention No. 187. The approach taken by the Government with regards to the ratification process is to put in place the key requirements of the Convention prior to ratification. To this extent consultative processes regarding the formulation of a national OSH policy have begun under the leadership of the national project coordinator.

**Honduras** has not yet ratified ILO Conventions No. 155 and No. 187 but the project has put in place the basic requirements that would allow for ratification, and the issue is now on the agenda of the national coordinating body on OSH, the CONASATH.



Occupational accidents and illnesses cannot be seen as an inevitable price to be paid in the course of a country's development. Rather, creating a safe and healthy working environment will help prevent human suffering, exclusion and poverty, and will also benefit business and the national economy by increasing productivity, cost-savings and competitiveness. It will contribute to longer term economic, social, political and environmental development. Integrating OSH issues in the policy agenda, be it as a specific theme or mainstreamed into other areas of focus, will therefore serve various major objectives in development cooperation.

Guided by these considerations, the European Union and the ILO's Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment (SAFEWORK) carried out a joint project on "Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work Agenda" between 2010 and 2012. The project covered three regions through five target countries: Honduras, Malawi, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Zambia. It has shown interesting successes towards decent, safe and healthy workplaces for all.

The DVD accompanying this brochure gathers the main publications of the project as well as a video demonstrating ways to prevent work related accidents and diseases.



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