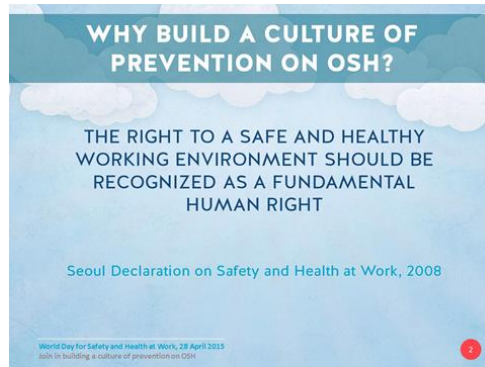




**JOIN IN BUILDING A CULTURE  
OF PREVENTION ON OSH**

WORLD DAY  
FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK  
2015



Promoting safety and health at work is the responsibility of society as a whole and all members of society must contribute in achieving this goal by ensuring that priority is given to occupational safety and health in national agendas and by building and maintaining a national preventive safety and health culture. The Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work was adopted in June 2008 on the occasion of the XVIII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work. This Declaration recognizes for the first time that safety and health at work is a fundamental human right.



According to the ILO global estimates, **every year**:

- **2.3 million workers die** from occupational accidents and work-related diseases;
- **over 313 million** workers suffer **non-fatal occupational injuries**.

This means that that **every day** approximately:

- 6,400 people die from an occupational accident or diseases;
- 860,000 people are injured on the job.

Occupational injuries and diseases cause immeasurable human suffering to victims and their families. The human costs of this daily adversity are far beyond unacceptable.

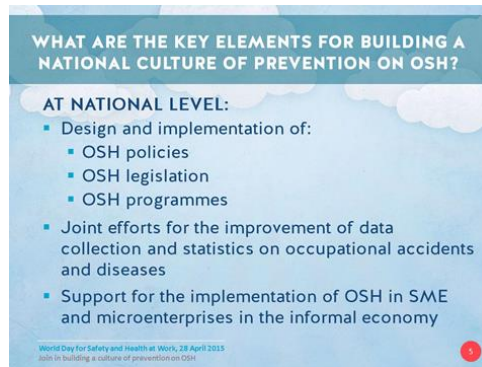
Moreover, they impact negatively on enterprises' efficiency and productivity, and entail major economic losses for society as a whole.

**4% of the global GDP** (roughly 2,8 trillion US dollars) is drained off annually by costs such as lost working time, workers' compensation, interruption of production, and medical expenses. This is a colossal figure that is over 20 times greater than official development assistance.

## WHAT IS A CULTURE OF PREVENTION ON OSH?

It is one in which:

- the right to a safe and healthy working environment is respected at all levels
- all stakeholders actively participate in securing a safe and healthy working environment through a system of defined rights, responsibilities and duties
- the highest priority is accorded to the principle of prevention



**A national OSH policy should:**

- Reflect the commitment of national authorities and social partners;
- Define the respective functions and responsibilities of public authorities, employers, workers, and other social actors for the implementation of the national OSH strategy.

**National legislation on OSH should include:**

- Scope, coverage and exclusions;
- Institutions involved and programmes;
- Employers' duties and responsibilities;
- Workers' rights and duties;
- Collaboration between workers and employers;
- Assessment and management of hazards and risks;
- Recording, notification and investigation of accidents and diseases;
- OSH inspection and enforcement.

**National OSH Programmes should aim at:**

- Promoting the development and maintenance of a culture of prevention on OSH;
- Identifying priorities for action at national and sector level to prevent occupational accidents and diseases;
- Bringing about the continuous improvement of weak or ineffective elements of a national OSH system, through both monitoring and evaluation.

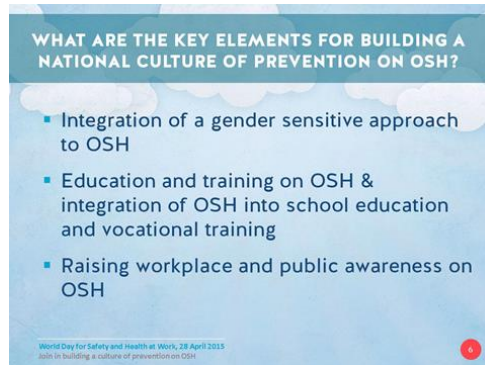
**Data on work-related accidents and diseases is critical for prevention, and in particular:**

- To provide countries with more reliable indicators of the effectiveness of national OSH systems;
- To identify which areas and sectors need to be given higher priority.

The collaboration between different institutions and bodies is essential to improve national reporting, data collection and analysis of occupational accidents and diseases, in particular:

- Ministry of labour;
- Ministry of health;
- Social security.

The progressive extension of OSH to support those enterprises and sector where it is not fully developed, such as **small and medium size enterprises** (SME) and **microenterprises** in the informal economy and in agriculture is an integral part of building a culture of prevention.



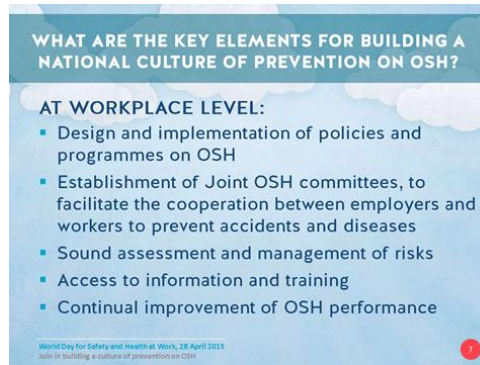
### **A gender sensitive approach to OSH**

- Acknowledges and makes visible the differences between men and women workers, in order to identify specific hazards and risks and implement effective solutions;
- Allows developing effective and inclusive OSH policies and preventive strategies.

### **The integration of OSH into education**

- Ensures a future with a workforce and society aware of the need to protect their safety and health and that of others;
- Enables students to adopt positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Develops competences (knowledge, skills and abilities) to identify hazards and risks and find solutions;
- Reduces occupational accident rates among young workers.

**Raising workplace and public awareness** contributes in building a prevention culture on OSH and can be done through various means such as workplace, sector or national campaigns, panels, symposia, congresses, special events, social media, etc.



A **workplace OSH Policy** should reflect:

- The company's mission, vision and values on OSH;
- Clear commitment of the employer to assess and manage hazards and risk and implement preventive and control measures;
- Roles and responsibilities on OSH from all those involved within the enterprise.

In fulfilling his/her duties the employer should:

- Design an **OSH programme** which should include, the assessment and management of hazards and risks; the monitoring of the working environment, occupational health surveillance and the implementation of preventive and control measures;
- Provide Occupational Health Services;
- Incorporate health promotion measures.

**Joint OSH Committees** are bipartite committees, with equal representation of workers and employer.

The objectives of a Joint OSH committee are:

- Provide a platform for good communication, coordination and cooperation between workers and employers;
- Ensure the participation of workers in the implementation of OSH preventive and control measures.

**Risk assessment and management** aim at the anticipation, recognition, evaluation and control of hazard and risks, through preventive and protective measures.

It is important in this process to take into account the new hazards and risks, such as:

- Musculoskeletal disorders, due to increase of sedentary work, prolonged standing at work, the growing use of computers and automated systems, poor ergonomic conditions;
- Mental health disorders (work-related stress, burnout, etc.), due to changes in work organization and labour relations, flexible and precarious employment, increased pressures to meet the demands of modern working life.

Providing **access to information and training on OSH** to workers allows them to better contribute with the employer in fulfilling his/her obligations and actively participate in the implementation of preventive and control measures; it improves the enterprises performance and the working climate.

**The continual improvement of OSH performance** can be achieved through an adequate **OSH Management System**. An OSH Management System is a logical, stepwise method to decide what needs to be done, how best to do it, monitor progress toward the established goals, evaluate how well it is done and identify areas for improvement.

To be effective, an OSH Management System should be integrated and aligned with other systems within the company.



Building and maintaining a culture of prevention on OSH requires the active participation of many partners, but among them there are a number of key stakeholders, namely:

- ILO
- Governments and National authorities
- Employers and their organizations
- Workers and their organizations/Trade Unions
- OSH Specialists and their Professional Associations
- Social Security Institutions





The promotion of decent, safe, and healthy working conditions and environment has been a continuous objective of the ILO since it was founded, and remains relevant today.

*“Protecting workers against sickness, disease and injury related to their employment”* is stated as a priority area of action for the ILO in the Preamble of its Constitution (1919).

This principle was reinforced in 1944, when the relevance of the ILO was reasserted in the *Philadelphia Declaration*:

*“The Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organization to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve: ... (g) adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations; ...”*

It was further strengthened with the Seoul Declaration adopted in 2008 which states the right to a safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental labour and human right.



The following ILO Core conventions on OSH guide ILO policy and action in this field.

- The **Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)**, and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 164) set out the basic principles for a national and enterprise level policy and strategy for the implementation of OSH preventive and protective measures.
- The **Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)** and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 171) provide for the establishment of occupational health services at national and enterprise levels, designated to ensure the implementation of the OSH policy and relevant preventive and control measures, including health surveillance and emergency response.
- The **Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)** and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 197) complement the previous core standards and strengthen the requirements for a national structure and relevant stakeholders responsible for implementing a national and enterprise level policy for safe and healthy working environments; as well as the steps to be taken to build and maintain a preventive safety and health culture at the national level.

Furthermore, there are **more than 70 standards** related to OSH, dealing with:

- General protection measures, such as the control of air pollution, noise, and vibration in the working environment;
- Protection in specific branches of economic activity, such as agriculture, mining and construction;
- Protection against specific risks; as prevention of occupational cancer, radiation protection, safety in the use of chemicals, and the prevention of major industrial accidents;
- Protection of specific categories of workers.

These are accompanied by codes of practice and technical guidelines providing for an international OSH framework for action.



**National legislation** should provide for a national framework for action on OSH.

ILO has a number of legal databases including **NATLEX** on national legislation and the **Global database on OSH legislation – LEGOSH** which has been developed to assess national law on OSH and help stakeholders to make better-informed decisions.

The LEGOSH database:

- Identifies the main laws governing OSH in ILO Member States;
- Acts as a driver for better OSH legal requirements at the country level.

To ensure the participation in OSH governance of employers' and workers' organizations, most countries have established **Tripartite National Councils or Committees** on OSH in which most of the ministries and institutions involved on OSH and ILO social partners are represented.

Employers' and workers' organizations should collaborate with the competent authorities, in the development of comprehensive **national OSH policies and programmes** and the design of appropriate tools for the assessment and improvement of the national OSH system.

To monitor **compliance** with OSH legislation an effective inspection system should be established. Also, mechanisms to promote voluntary compliance based on collective agreements, existing International Labour Standards and good practice on OSH should be in place.



Good governance on OSH implies the active participation of social partners in national tripartite bodies on OSH.

The key elements of a culture of prevention in the workplace are linked to the responsibilities of employers to protect workers' health and life (*see slide 6*).

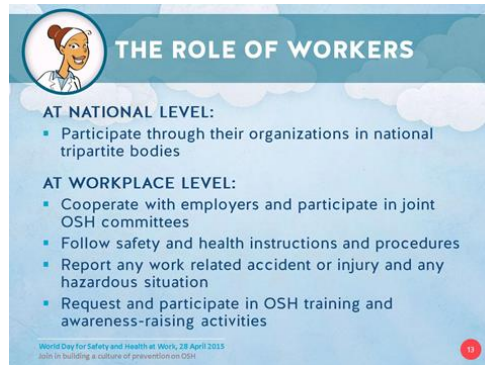
This is why, **an enterprise's OSH policy** should:

- Reflect the commitment of the employer to protect workers' health and safety;
- Comply with OSH legislation, voluntary programmes and collective agreements.

To promote **workers' participation on OSH**, employers should:

- Establish Joint OSH Committees;
- Consult, inform, and train workers on OSH;
- Involve workers in the implementation of preventive measures.

Employers are also responsible to **organize the occupational health services** responsible for the implementation of the workplace preventive programme.



Good governance on OSH implies the active participation of social partners in national tripartite bodies on OSH.

At workplace level, **participation in joint OSH committees** to collaborate at the implementation of preventive measures, concerning the working environment, working conditions, work content and work organization contributes also to the improvement of their working life.

In particular, workers through their representatives should **cooperate with the employer** to:

- Design OSH Policy;
- Conduct risk assessment and management;
- Conduct walk-through surveys;
- Implement preventive and protective measures;
- Inform workers about OSH issues.

Workers should **report**:

- Any accident or injury in the course of or in connection with work;
- Any situation which they have reason to believe could present a hazard and which they cannot themselves correct;
- Withdraw from any situation which could represent an imminent and serious danger.

Participate in safety and health **training and awareness-raising activities** is both a right and a responsibility of workers.



The ILO **Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)** lists the function that an occupational health services should undertake for ensuring a healthy and safe working environment for all.

These include:

- Risk assessment and management;
- Monitoring of the working environment and working practices which may affect workers' health;
- Advice on planning and organization of work;
- Advice on occupational health, safety, hygiene and ergonomics as well as on collective and individual protective measures and equipment;
- Design and implementation of preventive programmes for the improvement of working practices;
- Collaboration in providing information, training and education;
- Organizing first aid and emergency treatment;
- Design, establishment, implementation, and management of workers' health surveillance schemes that will facilitate preventive action;
- Referral to health care and rehabilitation.

The **ICOH International Code of Ethics for Occupational Health Professionals** sets out:

*The duties of occupational health professionals include:*

- **protecting** the life and the health of the worker,
- **respecting** human dignity and
- **promoting** the highest ethical principles in occupational health policies and programmes.



**Reporting on occupational accidents and diseases** is done mainly for compensation purposes through the social security structures. Support for the strengthen of reporting, data collection and analysis of occupational accidents and diseases by social security institutions in collaboration with ministries of labour and health would allow to go beyond compensation and improve preventive strategies at national and enterprise levels.

For this purpose, social security institutions should:

- Collaborate with ministries of labour and health in the development of an adequate reporting and recording system;
- Maintain a database on risk exposure for health surveillance purposes;
- Promote workplace prevention among members and enterprises covered.

**To improve the systems for compensation and treatment and facilitate the return to work after injury or illness**, social security institutions should:

- Improve referral for treatment of occupational diseases;
- Update national list of occupational diseases and improve national structures for identification, recognition and compensation;
- Establish mechanisms for work reinsertion of workers after rehabilitation and alternative employment for those with disabilities but still able to work in collaboration with ministries of labour, employers' and workers' organizations.

**Link insurance premiums to safety and health performance:**

- Provide incentives for employers to boost preventive activities in the enterprise;
- Promote compliance with OSH within hazardous sectors through premiums.

Social security institutions also have an important role to play in **disseminating information on OSH** and **promoting workplace health** and a culture of prevention. They could:

- Incorporate in the institutional strategy and policy of social security the prevention of accidents and diseases;
- Work in partnership with all stakeholders;
- Stimulate workplace health promotion through incentives;

Provide support to workplaces and health services.



Building a culture of prevention on OSH is a dynamic process that requires the commitment of key stakeholders and the participation of society as a whole.

For this purpose, raising awareness on OSH is essential.

For the World Day of Safety and Health at Work 2015 the ILO has designed an interactive microsite available in English, Spanish and French.

Here you will find:

- Many useful information, including the role of each stakeholder in building and maintaining a prevention culture on OSH, training materials and other practical tools;
- More detailed information on key aspects and trends on OSH;
- A campaign kit to organize your event which includes a PPT presentation, a Prezi presentation, the poster and a brochure presenting the site, which you can download for your event.