

The ILO

The International Labour Organization was founded to ensure everyone the right to earn a living in freedom, dignity and security, **the right to decent work**. Injury and disease do *not* "go with the job".

Work is the fundamental means for income generation. Provision of reasonably paid and safe work is the only long-term solution to overcome poverty. Hazardous working conditions are leading to serious occupational accidents and diseases causing untold suffering to the victims, and loss of income for the whole family.

Poor working conditions relate closely to poor productivity and low quality. Serious enterprises, small and big, stay in business in a competitive world, only by producing quality products in a good working environment.

The numbers of work related deaths and accidents are unacceptably high

Every year worldwide occurs:

- **1,2 million deaths due to work**
- **250 million occupational accidents**
- **160 million occupational diseases**

The cost to the society is enormous, not to mention the human suffering

The cost of one accident in the industrialised world is estimated to:

- **4500,- USD/accident (Finland)**

For example, poor working conditions in Germany only cost the society 25 000 mill USD

InFocus Programme *SafeWork*

ILO's InFocus Programme SafeWork is designed to respond to the **right to decent and safe work**. The goal of SafeWork is to improve the coverage and effectiveness of labour protection for all.

Its primary objectives are:

- (a) to create world-wide awareness of the dimensions and consequences of work-related accidents, injuries and diseases;
- (b) to promote the goal of basic protection for all workers in conformity with international labour standards; and
- (c) to enhance the capacity of member States and industry to design and implement effective preventive and protective policies and programmes.

The programme has four goals, each elaborated on separately, and include advocacy, building of the knowledge base, capacity building for constituents and support for direct action programmes.

Showing that protection pays.

Protecting workers in hazardous conditions.

Extending protection.

Promoting workers' health and well being.

For details see

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/mandate.htm>

ILO/SafeWork - International knowledge base on OSH

ILO-SafeWork has created and is maintaining an International knowledge base for promotion and support of National SafeWork Programmes. It utilises the international ILO/CIS information network, which disseminates, i. a. ILO Conventions and Recommendations, multi-lingual data bases on hazardous chemicals and occupations, publications, such as Codes of Practices, Manuals and Guidelines, including the new, fully revised ILO Encyclopaedia of Occupational Safety and Health, the new publication on Labour Inspection, the new Code of Practice on OS&H Management Systems, etc.

The ILO has produced numerous conventions related to safety and health at work. The generally most relevant are:

Guiding policies for action

[The Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 No. 155](#)

[The Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 \(No.161\)](#)

Protection in given branches of economic activity

[The Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 \(No.167\)](#)

[The Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 \(No. 176\)](#)

Protection against specific risks

[The Chemicals Convention, 1990 No.170](#)

[The Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 \(No. 174\)](#)

[Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 No.115](#)

Labour inspection

[Labour Inspection Convention, 1947, No.81](#)

[Labour Inspection \(Agriculture\) Convention, 1969, No.129](#)

Within the ILO regular resources SafeWork is providing advisory services on International Labour Standards and their transposition and application into national law and practice.

These Conventions are accompanied by more detailed Recommendations and in several cases also by Code of Practice or Guidelines. The application of these into practice has improved working conditions in several countries by strengthening their OSH capacity. Technical co-operation projects utilise this knowledge base in training and information, in applying and adapting the ILO material into the national regulations and advocating for improved working conditions at workplaces.

ILO/SafeWork - sharing experience and expertise

The ILO on its own, being the specialised UN agency on labour issues, is basing its operations to increase the coverage of labour protection for all, on tri-partism and free information sharing to achieve the fundamental right to safe work.

ILO/SafeWork has build up an international reputation of reliability and credibility, relevance and expertise and can provide continuity and a collective memory. SafeWork has long-term direct contacts to the OSH administrations world-wide and to OSH experts in the field.

International Labour Organisation ILO - InFocus Programme SafeWork			
Tri-partism and co-operation		Information collection and free sharing	
The fundamental right to safe work is the target, the solutions are found in tri-partite co-operation		ILO, SafeWork and CIS knowledge base, available for all programmes, is formidable and up-to-date	
Reliability	Credibility	Relevance	Continuity

The ILO has worked for over 80 years to improve the conditions of work at the work places. The activities of SafeWork are **relevant**, because of the long-term direct contacts with the constituents; the initiatives for assistance come directly from national counterparts. ILO/SafeWork is basing its work on the co-operation between government, workers and employer; all parties unanimously agree upon the ILO standards. Therefore, the ILO advice is seen as **reliable** and acceptable for all parties involved. SafeWork's policy to blend international and national OSH expertise in technical co-operation projects leads to **credible** and practical solutions, which combined with the national commitment produce sustainable results. SafeWork's international knowledge base and long-term work provides a **continuity** and a collectives memory, supported with cross-fertilisation between geographical regions, languages and industries, that comes up with fresh and innovative approaches.

SafeWork provides a forum to share information and new issues; to facilitate interaction between industrialised and developing countries. Information grows by sharing.

InFocus Programme SafeWork *Technical Co-operation*

Workers in many industrialised countries run a comparatively low risk to be the victims of occupational accidents; in some industries the targets are even set for **zero accidents**. Most injured workers have access to immediate medical care and an economically secure future.

Their fellow workers in developing countries are exposed to many times higher risks of accidents. In stead of care and rehabilitation, many victims of poor working conditions face loss of job and income; in one stroke they may change from breadwinners to beggars. An occupational accident can be a disaster for a whole family.

There is a moral obligation to share experience and information, thus assisting the developing countries to improve the **coverage and effectiveness of labour protection for all**. This is what technical co-operation is about.

Aim of technical co-operation

SafeWork technical cooperation aim at assisting the recipient countries to

- to strengthen their occupational safety and health capacity through the application of ILO standards, codes and guides, as well as through improved information, statistical tools and methods on safety and health;
- to develop and launch national programmes of action for selected industries and hazardous agents.

SafeWork utilises **a network of OSH expertise networks**.

The InFocus Programme SafeWork is facilitating co-operation and working with the experts in these networks to, on one hand, elaborate international standards and instruments to establish the minimum level that should be reached and maintained, on the other hand through technical co-operation, to assist to implement these instruments at the national level with the aim to improve working conditions at the work place.

These tri-partite experts' networks has the knowledge base and

- know how to improve working conditions; the world-wide network of experts can
- show how to put that into practice at the workplace.

ILO special expertise in OSH			
OSH expert presence in the field	Direct contacts to national OSH actors	Practical experience	Continuity and collective memory
Inter-departmental cooperation (ACTRAV, ACTEMP, SECTOR) ILO Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT's) with OSH experts, workers and employers representatives Sub-regional networks of experts and national correspondents CIS National Centre network of OSH information centres National networks of OSH information centres Donors' partnership network Net work of OSH expert organisations and institutions Expert network on specified issues Virtual working groups			

The SafeWork approach is two-tiered

Initial inventory, systems analysis	
Standard setting	to identify the problem, its solutions and the methods of implementation (to produce an ILO instrument and a plan of action);
Implementation	to assist the constituents to put it into practice, by means of the SafeWork global technical co-operation programme
Monitoring, supervision, reporting	

A National SafeWork Programme in a country or a sub-region, requires an initial country inventory to establish it and follow-up monitoring to ensure sustainability

This integrated approach takes place in partnership with donors, utilising the donor country’s experience and specific interests as well as mobilising external resources to ILO’s own to enable both standard setting and practical implementation. A Donor country's development strategy and policy can include geographical and political targets; specific OSH fields, and relate to the OSH expertise in the donor country:

To create safe work, every country needs a **holistic OSH system** comprising at least four basic elements:

- a regulatory OSH framework, minimum requirements based on ILO standards, which govern working conditions and OSH;
- an implementation structure, including enforcement and advisory services, OSH management systems, social partnership (bi-partite action) at sector and enterprise level, voluntary schemes, etc.
- labour protection expert services, covering information, knowledge and skills on occupational safety, occupational health and new hazards and the working environment
- a monitoring system, measuring the level of working conditions, compliance with the regulatory framework, the performance of the enforcement system and giving feedback for future priority setting.

The presence, level, coherence and consistency of these elements in individual countries, even within a country, varies on a very large scale. The capacity of an individual country to benefit from technical co-operation can also fluctuate, based on its infrastructure and local administration, caused by local or regional unrest or changes in political priorities and commitment. This has to be reflected in the design and flexibility of technical co-operation programmes.

SafeWork technical co-operation aims towards the establishment of rolling National SafeWork programmes for the individual countries. The comprehensive and cohesive model national programmes will combine all the elements mentioned above.

The steps to elaborate National SafeWork Programmes include

- ❖ an initial inventory of the basic elements; regulatory frame, implementation, services and monitoring
- ❖ a needs assessment and system analysis to determine
 - the need to improve legislation and advocate OSH;
 - what the existing implementation resources can do and what assistance they need;
 - the need for capacity building and knowledge management, including international information;
 - the base and need for upgrading of knowledge and skills of the national labour protection service;
 - specific priority areas;
 - the monitoring system and its appropriateness for the planning process;
- ❖ drafting of a National SafeWork Programme combined with a realistic plan of action.

Based on a commitment of the participating country and a realistic and flexible drafting process, the Programme can support national activities as well as technical co-operation interventions.

SafeWork and Donor Partnership

The InFocus SafeWork technical co-operation programme recognises the need for a partnership with the Donor. A partnership based on the Donor country's strategy and policy for development programmes, its priorities and specific desires based on the ILO SafeWork's solid foundation is an ideal blend.

A successful combination of priorities and needs of recipient country, Donor and InFocus SafeWork experience and resources results in

- relevant objectives of technical co-operation programmes,
- close interaction with on-going activities in the participating country,
- effective and efficient execution building capacity in local experts and institutions,
- sustainability and follow-up actions through ILO's continuous presence as well as
- cross-continent interaction and multiplier effects via SafeWork's information dissemination network

InFocus Programme SafeWork's partnership with the Donors takes place on a multitude of levels, such as:

- ❖ **Framework agreement:** SafeWork and the Donor country agree on a 3-4 year Framework Policy on technical co-operation covering a variety of OSH Programmes. The Donor specifies, jointly with SafeWork, programme areas, objectives, involved countries and specific interests. SafeWork executes the programmes and the Annual Report is evaluated and future activities agreed on with the Donor
- ❖ **Country Project:** SafeWork prepares a programme or country project proposal and contacts a Donor (which often has indicated an interest in advance) for funding
- ❖ **Assigned experts:** The Donor provides an expert (home based or ILO based) for training by SafeWork. A Donor funded project is executed through SafeWork utilising the trained expert
- ❖ **Design projects:** SafeWork identifies a problem in a country, drafts a project plan and establish contacts between the recipient country and the Donor. The Donor country can fund a project for SafeWork execution, make a bi-lateral project or send an expert to assist the country in question
- ❖ **Problem solving:** SafeWork identifies the problem and selects a suitable expert for co-operation/assistance, which is sent to the recipient country with Donor funding
- ❖ **Fellowships:** SafeWork identify experts from developing countries, which could benefit from sharing of information, experience or short term training and find a Donor to fund fellowships

Indicators for monitoring and evaluation of success

Improving working conditions is a long term task, influenced not only by national and international SafeWork efforts, but largely depending on the social and political situation of a country, level of economic activities, cross-border transfer of technology and capital, etc.

The implementation level and ratification of ILO OSH Conventions, Codes of Practice and Guides are effective means of checking, which steps a country has taken on the road towards good working conditions. In a short-term period, however, these indicators are too "crude". SafeWork is in the process to work out finer indicators, which enable to measure the trend and progress in a shorter time frame. These relate closer to the practical implementation of the content of the conventions, etc. and relate also to available OSH resources, selected measures of working conditions and occupational accidents and diseases.

Present SafeWork indicators

- ratified OSH conventions
- applied ILO standards
- applied ILO Codes of Practice
- launched national SafeWork sector programmes
- improved coverage of OSH statistics

The new indicators are also a more exact measure for the evaluation of a technical cooperation project and will be included in the project output indicators and used as measurement for improvement of safety and health at work and for project evaluation purposes.

SafeWork technical co-operation strategy

The long term strategy of ILO InFocus Programme SafeWork is to assist the constituents, at their own initiative, on the level and within the priorities specific for their needs, to establish and improve the four basic elements to an operational OSH system. For this purpose SafeWork aim at drafting National SafeWork Programmes.

The medium term strategy is to advocate safe working conditions; to place the health and safety of all workers on the international and national agenda,

- by improving recording and notification systems to display the true dimensions and consequences of work-related accidents, injuries and diseases;
- by creating reliable monitoring methods and positive indices of good working conditions;
- by identifying hazardous and poor working conditions and
- presenting a knowledge base of best practices and solutions.

However, the long term commitment of SafeWork to promote the constituents' holistic OSH system of four basic elements, manifested in National SafeWork Programmes, is a continuous feature.

The targets in SafeWork for 2002-03 are to assist the constituents

- to strengthen their occupational safety and health capacity through the application of ILO standards, codes and guides, as well as through improved information, statistical tools and methods on safety and health;
- to develop and launch national programmes of action for selected industries and hazardous agents.

Improved coverage and effectiveness of labour protection for all

SafeWork technical co-operation assists the recipient countries to build their own National SafeWork Programme and plan of action, based on the needs of the country, on the priorities of its government and social partners and its specific industries and traditions.

The National SafeWork Programme needs to be founded on a sound and solid base, a holistic OSH system. The building blocks used to build the national programme are selected based on the country's own needs and priorities.

The Programme and plan of action, to which the government has committed itself and which is based on available resources, is a realistic and sustainable means to improve working conditions. It also defines the bottlenecks, which needs international technical co-operation.

National Safe Work Programme

Building blocks of the National SafeWork Programme structure:

- ILO Conventions and Recommendations
- ILO Codes of Practice
- ILO Guidelines
- ILO/WHO Training manuals
- ILO/WHO chemical safety cards
- Inter-regional and sub-regional guides
- National laws and regulations
- Good practices

ILO Convention No 155 Occupational Safety and Health

OSH policy
&
action plan

resources,
knowledge
&
skills

information,
exchange of
experience

SafeWork Technical co-operation programmes

Strategic alliances

Strategic alliances

