

# FINAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

PROJECT NUMBER: INT/95/M10/DAN

PREPARED BY: Dr. Yuri VESSELOV  
Project Manager

PERIOD REVIEWED: 01.03.2000 – 31.12.2000

DATE: 05.01.2001

## EFFECTIVENESS

The development objective of the project is sustainable and continuous provision of relevant occupational safety and health conditions at small enterprises through the enforcement of a national policy aimed at substantial reduction of occupational injuries and diseases in the informal sector of Belarus. A major part of small enterprises and self-employed inhabitants form the part of Belorussian informal sector according to the System of National Accounts (SNA) adopted in 1993. Occupational safety and health in this sector were beyond the control of governmental bodies before the project realization. Although official statistic methodology recognizes small enterprises and self-employment as representatives of the private sector, which includes also medium and large-scale enterprises. Classification of occupational injuries and diseases do not follow the division of the economic units, i.e. individual businessmen, small-, medium- and large-scale enterprises. Monitoring of the informal sector had not been conducted before the outset of the project. Some research activities implemented by employers' associations under ILO technical assistance revealed unsatisfactory occupational safety conditions in the informal sector. Therefore, the immediate objectives of the project were generally aimed at:

- (i) institutional support of social partners at national and local level;
- (ii) sustainable and continuous prevention of occupational hazards through the implementation of research, information, educational and consulting activities within the project.

Project manager and experts elaborated the activity schedule of the project backed up with adequate budget allocations. The project strategy was based on three major principles:

- (i) set-up of information database through the collection of available up-to-date information
- (ii) target-oriented researches of occupational safety and health environment at small enterprises and in self-employment;
- (iii) elaboration and implementation of training programmes and seminars for beneficiaries of the project.

For the period reviewed the immediate objectives have been accomplished. Available budget allocations made it possible to fulfill all the activities envisaged by the workplan for the year 2000. The participation of National Information Center for occupational safety and health (NIC OSH) contributed positively to the project implementation. NIC OSH was established in 1999 and now it plays a significant role in dissemination of information on

occupational safety and health in small business sector and in self-employment. The international seminar held in February 1999 under ILO assistance in Minsk drew attention of social partners to the problem of safe work in the informal sector. Therefore, the project had a nice start-up background as regards the involvement of concerned parties. At the beginning stage the mechanism of institutional support was established under supervision of National Coordination Committee (NCC) which was headed by deputy Minister of Labour. NCC members represented various tripartite institutions and entrepreneurial associations. The project activities experienced constant NCC supervision and, if necessary, relevant modifications. Elaboration of the national policy aimed at the provision of safe and healthy work conditions in the informal sector was a special concern of NCC. As a result, a pilot programme on occupational safety and health at Minsk small enterprises has been introduced.

The information capacity of NIC OSH has been significantly improved to contribute into the formulation of national occupational safety and health system at small enterprises, including self-employment.

Social partners, concerned NGOs and other institutions involved in the project were constantly informed on project activities and their impact on achievement of development objective of the project – substantial reduction of occupational accidents, injuries and diseases in small business sector, including self-employment.

Information materials, training manuals and programmes have been developed on the base of existing labour legislation, regarding up-to-date international experience in the area of labour protection. They attracted the public attention to the issue of safe work and industrial hygiene.

National and local authorities have been addressed to make more efforts in the formulation and implementation of target training programmes concerning occupational safety and health in small business sector, including self-employment.

The system of evaluation and analysis of the training seminars allowed to identify how the training meets the needs of managers and specialists of small enterprises. Training programmes were based on demand-driven basis thus resulting in increased effectiveness of the training in OSH area.

The developed instruments for study and analysis is an effective tool for processing and classification of statistic data within the single database on OSH at small enterprises. It permits to track tendencies in the OSH field and serves as a springboard for decision making on the activities within the national policy and regional programmes on occupational safety and health at small enterprises, including self-employment.

The pilot programme was adopted and recommended for test implementation at the local level in order to be multiplied in all the regions of the country in the future.

As the project funds became available in March 2000 (not in February 2000 as it was envisaged by the workplan) and the date of the ILO expert's mission has been changed, start and completion dates for some activities have been changed.

The project has succeeded in creation of an expert team and its fruitful training and research work.

The project has benefited greatly from establishment of links with Russian Labour Protection Center (Director Mr. Vladimir SHLYKOV) through information exchange.

Recommendations of the ILO international expert Mr. Eva GINDRE on application of international experience in the area of safety and hygiene have proved to be particularly useful in the organization of effective and appropriate training for target groups of managers and specialists of social partners` institutions.

Beneficiaries and direct recipients of the project are managers and specialists of labour and employment promotion organizations, trade unions, employers associations, business support centers and small enterprises (individual businessmen).

9 seminars have been held for these target groups in NIC OSH. Duration of one seminar – 24 hours (3 working days). Total number of the participants – 230.

- 2 groups comprised of managers and specialists of business support centers and small business incubators;
- 5 groups comprised of managers and specialists of small enterprises;
- 2 groups comprised of specialists of trade union associations.

In September-November 2000, similar seminars were held in Borisov, Novogrudok and Baranovichi. Extra 120 participants have obtained information concerning the provision of OSH in services, trade and agriculture.

Each participant received a set of training manuals issued within the project, information materials (bulletin and information paper) on project activities and a certificate confirming re-training on occupational safety and health. A questionnaire for each participant was prepared and applied to assess the quality of the seminars.

The questionnaires and opinions of the participants were considered when developing recommendations on the formulation and implementation of regional labour protection programmes for small business and self-employment. These recommendations were discussed at the meeting of National Coordinator, Project Manager and Mayor of Minsk Mr. Mikhail PAVLOV. As a result Mayor's Decree "On the creation of a working group for the formulation of a programme on occupational safety and health at small enterprises of Minsk city" was issued. National project experts were included in this group. The programme was developed in 2000 and submitted to Mayor's Office for execution.

Considering relations with other national CIS centers and "Danida" Programme to be of a great importance for NIC OSH activities, the Center was provided Internet access at the expense of envisaged allocations. International ILO expert Mrs. Eva GINDRE contributed very valuable information on occupational safety and health experience in Western European countries during the first seminar. She assisted in the formulation of the concept and efficiency criteria for a training course on safe work at small enterprises. The course was developed by joint efforts of Mrs. GINDRE and national project experts and approved by the government executing agency and Supervising Committee for safe work in industry and nuclear energetics. In September 2000, NIC OSH commenced the implementation of the course for directors and specialists of Minsk small enterprises.

One of the key components of the project is follow-up activities for the participants of the seminars. All of them were able to receive necessary consultations from the project experts. The consultations were organized after each seminar at the premises of NIC OSH.

Training missions to regions have not been envisaged in the original activity schedule. However, after review and evaluation of the implemented seminars it was proved relevant to combine regional monitoring and training seminars into one activity. This step permitted to

involve new beneficiaries into the project and initiate policy-making process in regions as regards development of local occupational safety programmes and initiatives. Such a combination allowed to save some budget funds which were directed to the training of new beneficiaries.

## RELEVANCE

The project needs are still valid and relevant to the project strategy. An in-depth informal sector study is needed to collect and analyze data on accident causes, occupational injuries and diseases, to classify this information corresponding to sectorial, regional and other criteria. The information database should reflect the structure as well as the content of the informal sector in regions. It also has to take into account such influential factors as alcoholism, drug addiction, gender issues etc.

Only adequate and valid information on employment in hazardous industries may prevent growth of occupational injuries and diseases in the informal sector, where occupational risks are too high. Special emphasis of the project was made on strengthening of labour inspection capacity in regions, i.e. promotion of consulting and training activities. Participation of managers and specialists from regional Business Support Centers (BSC) in the training encouraged them to expand the activities of their organizations in the field of occupational safety and health. Up-to-date information and methodological facilities of the project ensured effective dissemination and application of advanced methods and standards concerning occupational safety in branches of the informal sector. For instance, since July 2000 Baranovichi BSC "Business Center" in cooperation with a local labour inspection has been conducting regular seminars on occupational safety and health management in small business sector, especially in such areas as construction, services, repairing etc. These seminars are based on the training manuals and methods developed within the project.

According to the existing legislation local authorities should provide small enterprises and individual businessmen with information on occupational standards and regulations. However, they fail to do this due to the lack of financial resources. Therefore, the project objectives concerning information support to local authorities may be regarded as relevant.

To ensure media coverage of the project activities and outputs, NIC OSH concluded agreements on cooperation with major magazines dedicated to labour protection ("Industrial Safety" and "Labour Protection"). For the reported period they published six articles of the project manager and one interview with the National Coordinator of the project. NIC OSH also concluded non-commercial agreements on cooperation with main employers' and trade union associations to inform them on the project activities and the work of NIC OSH. Among them:

- Belorussian Union of Businessmen and Employers
- Belorussian Trade Union Federation
- Commercial bank "Priorbank" and others.

A special radio interview on the activities of NIC OSH was introduced to the public in May 2000 and received some positive feedback.

## **EFFICIENCY**

The project results for the reported period are surely justified by the budget costs. Awareness of concerned authorities and tripartite institutions has been achieved through wide media coverage and target dissemination of information bulletins. The ratio "costs to outputs" is significantly efficient.

The developed training programmes and manuals for managers and specialists of small business sector will allow to implement regular and effective training courses. Budget allocations for these purposes are justified by intangible but very important results such as improved occupational safety conditions for workers.

Information database based on monitoring outputs permitted to identify the most hazardous industries and activities in the informal sector. Regional and local labour inspections started to apply new approaches towards occupational safety control in the informal sector. They conduct studies, workshops, so-called "occupational safety days", exhibitions of personal protective equipment etc.

Project recommendations on strengthening informal workers protection have been transformed into a pilot Programme on occupational safety and health at Minsk small enterprises. For the first time, we may observe cooperation between social partners which are trying to promote occupational safety in the informal sector. A great part of informal employees experiences influence of occupational risks. Thus, budget allocations directed to prevention of these risks are justified by their impact on health and lives of workers.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

The withdrawal of external funds will not harm positive results and project effects. They will be multiplied through the implementation of the pilot Programme on occupational safety and health at Minsk small enterprises. In 2001 the Programme will be aimed at the continuation and further development of the project activities. The Programme will serve as a catalyst for local initiatives throughout the country. This approach was adopted by the State concept for occupational safety development developed by social partners in cooperation with project experts in 2000.

The methodology of regional programmes development elaborated within the project will be institutionally strengthened through establishment of local labour protection committees. Local tripartite bodies on social and labour relations identified responsibilities and duties of these committees. Many participants of the project seminars became members of regional labour protection committees. The committees select and certify regional training centers on occupational safety and health. Inter-regional labour inspections in cooperation with above committees organize training activities and examination of trainees. Quality and effectiveness of the training are ensured by up-to-date training facilities developed within the project. The national personnel trained within the project seminars will surely contribute to successful development of the activities initiated under the project because many of the trained specialists are involved in the work of local authorities and business support institutions. They will be active decision-makers in elaboration of regional occupational safety programmes and initiatives.

## **SPECIAL CONCERNS**

The project was implemented in the frame of the objectives and initiatives of ILO "SafeWork" Programme. Special emphasis was made on the provision of safe occupational conditions in the informal sector, which had been beyond the control of state authorities before the project realization.

The project has undertaken practical steps towards promotion of ILO standards in the field of occupational safety and health. All the programmes and initiatives developed and implemented within the project are in full conformity with ILO Recommendations and Conventions concerning basic human rights. The project envisaged the application of ILO standards when developing support facilities for vulnerable groups involved in the informal sector of the economy. In particular, Programme on occupational safety and health at Minsk small enterprises absorbed key provisions of International Labour Standards.

Gender analysis was regarded as an important component of the monitoring activities within the project. Industries and occupations which are especially harmful for woman labour have been identified and recommended for deliberate treatment by regional authorities through the enforcement of special programmes and initiatives.

The project design has not envisaged any environmental studies or environment-oriented activities. However, a circumstantial effect was observed due to the inclusion of some environmental issues into the training course on occupational culture.

## **FINDINGS, RECOMMEDATIONS and LESSONS LEARNED**

The following conclusions may be listed at the final stage of the project:

- the project document clearly and fully reflects coherent issues concerning the provision of occupational safety and health in small business sector;
- qualified personnel, experts, adequate technical and financial resources, assistance from concerned parties and "SafeWork" Programme are available to provide appropriate execution of the workplan;
- the application of program-oriented and expert-pool strategies proved to be relevant to the project objectives and allows to promote project outputs;
- significance and adequateness of the project in transformation environment is remarkable, however, it may be strengthened at the final stage through the enforcement of relevant policy at local level and nation wide. Recommendations on the formulation of the national policy are presented in the pilot Programme on occupational safety and health at Minsk small enterprises;
- social partners and concerned parties are aware of occupational safety issues in the informal sector;
- monitoring activities have been implemented and relevant data processing instruments have been developed to record and analyze statistic information;
- information database have been established to provide regular issue of NIC OSH bulletins for social partners and small enterprises;

- training programmes and manuals have been developed for the training of informal employers and governmental officials;
- recommendations and guidelines concerning organization of occupational safety audit have been formulated to be applied in regions;
- introduction of up-to-date information technologies and Internet will allow to disseminate successful experience on application of preventive measures in the informal sector.

The lessons learned from the cooperation between the project and tripartite institutions in the field of policy making may be transformed into the following recommendations:

First, employment growth, especially among women, in the informal sector should be relevantly reflected in regional programmes/initiatives aimed at the training on occupational safety and health. At the preliminary stage training centers, trainers and training programmes should be certified and accredited at local labour authorities. Module and distant training technologies, multi-media facilities will permit to conduct continuous training and periodical assessment envisaged by national standards in the field of occupational safety training.

Application of up-to-date information technologies and facilities in the training, consulting and supervisory activities will surely contribute to promotion of safe work in small business sector. Special study and evaluation of potential training methods and technologies, which may be applied in the training for informal employment, are needed to resolve the issue.