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Glossary

KAB  Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour
ITC-ILO  International Training Centre of the ILO
OSH  Occupational Safety and Health
PPE  Personal Protective Equipment
ToT  Training of Trainers
TVET  Technical and Vocational Educational and Training

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Young workers suffer the highest rate of work-related injuries of any age group. This is due to many factors, including their limited work experience and training, lack of awareness of safe work practices and assignment to hazardous tasks. Addressing this problem requires a comprehensive and integrated approach, including the closing of key data gaps, improved legislation, policies and programmes, enhanced OSH technical capacity and stronger youth engagement.

The ILO’s SafeYouth@Work Project, launched in 2015, brought together OSH experts, government officials, workers’ and employers’ representatives, and other stakeholders such as educators and civil society to advance and promote OSH for youth. Covering eight countries over four years, the Project conducted intensive advocacy, research, policy and legal support, capacity building and data collection on the specific OSH concerns of young workers. Critically, the Project focused on bringing youth to the table,
including their voices in public outreach to promote a culture of prevention. The Project focus on advancing young worker safety and health is a key element of the ILO’s Flagship Programme Safety + Health for All and contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 8.

While the Project concludes at the end of 2019, its achievements represent an important step towards improving young worker safety and health and provide a starting point for future work by OSH authorities, the social partners, and young OSH advocates the world over. This collection of impact stories captures the highlights of the Project, and it is our hope that it will inspire further work to improve OSH for youth.

Vera Lúcia Paquete-Perdigão
Director
Governance and Tripartism Department
International Labour Organization
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Viet Nam

I found the SafeYouth@Work Project very useful. To promote the achievements [to date], we shall certainly maintain these activities, as hundreds of trainees will continue to receive multiple training courses in their areas of expertise. I believe thousands of people will benefit from these measures.

Ha Tat Thang
Director, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Work Safety

We haven’t had ‘young workers’ in our ‘OSH dictionary’ for many years. However, we now feel more confident to start a conversation on young workers as we have a better understanding.

Nguyen Thi Thuy
Deputy Head of Information, Advocacy and Training Division, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Work Safety

Indonesia

The participation of Indonesian youth in promoting OSH is crucial. About half the 130 million population is under the age of 30. Many young workers in Indonesia work in sectors with a high risk of workplace accidents and disease, such as the construction sector.

The advancement of technology has brought new types of employment and professions. Therefore it is important for young people to have the right skills, competence and expertise so that they can adjust to today’s fast changing world.

Muhammad Hanif Dhakiri
Minister of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia
The Philippines

I congratulate the International Labour Organization for the successful undertaking and conclusion of the SafeYouth@Work Project. This Project helped advance our government’s Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policies, and it facilitated the raising of awareness of rights of workers to know, to refuse unsafe work, and to report accidents.

But even against the backdrop of these positive initiatives, more remains to be done. Compliance is a recurring problem in the implementation of all OSH policies and programmes. Hence there is a need for measures to help ensure the sustainability of what we have jointly undertaken. We foresee better prospects for safety and health, especially for our young workers through the development and inclusion of OSH in the basic education curriculum, and the use of online games in the government’s continuing OSH awareness campaign. We look forward to future collaboration with the ILO.

H.E. Secretary Silvestre Bello III
Department of Labor and Employment

Myanmar

Thanks to ILO we have strengthened our labour surveying and data projection practices. In 2019, for the first time, the Labour Force Survey includes specific questions on safety and health, occupational injuries and diseases, and overall OSH awareness.

Sandar Aye
Director, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

OSH can only be successful when all stakeholders and the public are interested and engaged in OSH knowledge and awareness. We have received important support from ILO in building knowledge and raising awareness on OSH, including support for Myanmar’s first ever Safety and Health at Work Day, launched 28 April 2018.

U Soe Win Sein
Director, Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
Argentina

The SafeYouth@Work Project has helped to illustrate that in our country young people constitute a risk group from the point of view of occupational safety. The incidence of accidents at work and occupational diseases in young people of both sexes is around 50 per cent higher than that of workers aged 25 years and over.

In this context and based on the commitment and synergies achieved with the ILO in the framework of the SafeYouth@Work Project, different areas of government and institutions of employers, workers and youth have come together to work towards improving the health and safety of young people.

This joint work has been established as a priority agenda item for the Superintendence of Occupational Risks and for the State. We believe that the work, health and safety of adolescents and young people requires special attention and actions that will lead us to rethink the tasks of prevention, promotion, training and supervision, recognizing that to achieve a decrease in occupational accidents and diseases will require that these protagonists of the future of work internalize a preventative culture and are given the opportunity to incorporate themselves into safe and healthy work environments.

Gustavo Darío Morón
Superintendent, Superintendence of Occupational Risks, Ministry of Production and Labour
Zai, a young welder from the Philippines, believes women can do anything that men can do. The youngest of ten siblings, Zai is keen to prove herself and to help her parents financially. She also knows that for workers like herself, making it home safely to her family at the end of the day means she must avoid dangerous shortcuts.

When Zai entered the welding trades programme, seen primarily as a male domain, the transition was not easy. Walking into her welding class for the first time – with only five women out of 45 students – was intimidating.

In addition to the challenges for a woman in the sector, the 23-year-old welder has faced serious hazards and risks in the course of doing her job. She has suffered electrical shocks and burns, and seen others fare worse.

While work hazards for welders are uncommonly high, a SafeYouth@Work survey of young workers in the sector
revealed that many believe that complying with OSH rules takes too much time and that accidents only happen to “unlucky people”.

“Working under pressure, taking shortcuts, and working while ill or under the influence of alcohol are experiences common to pretty much all young workers. A concerted effort to confront and challenge these beliefs is needed to reduce the prevalence of these risky behaviours” explains Wayne Bacale, ILO Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

Zai is just one of the remarkable young workers taking safety and health into her own hands, with the support of the SafeYouth@Work Project. She forms part of a cohort of young workers who have learned to design and carry out OSH training in their workplaces and communities under the Project. She has already developed a training programme for the Association of Pinay Technical Skilled Workers, of which she is a member along with over 500 other women. She has also developed safety and health

“Being a welder is tough. Women can do anything men can do, but what matters is that I go home safe for my family.”

– Zai, young female welder
Championing safety and equality

awareness training for local primary school students.

“Being a welder is tough. Women can do anything men can do, but what matters is that I go home safe and alive for my family. Most of the young people I know think only of earning money and buying the latest fashion. We often take dangerous shortcuts”, says Zai.

54% of younger workers surveyed reported taking risks to expedite their work

29% of young workers reported using machinery or equipment they are neither familiar with nor have been trained to use safely

30 representatives from workers’ organizations and trade unions have been capacitated as OSH trainers
Young workers as agents for change

In Myanmar significant strides have been made in mainstreaming occupational safety and health (OSH) into technical vocational education and training (TVET) programmes for the agriculture and construction sectors. Nevertheless, many challenges remain.

Agriculture is a major employer in Myanmar, including young people. Nearly half of the youth labour force works in this sector. It is also one of the most hazardous sectors for workers of all ages, owing to the nature of the work, the lack of job training and a large number of low-skilled, seasonal and migrant workers.

A survey carried out by the SafeYouth@ Work Project in Myanmar indicated that the vast majority of young workers in the agricultural sector receive no OSH training. A key barrier identified was the lack of OSH instruction and awareness available from vocational training institutions.

Yan Naing Soe, a 23-year old worker, has seen how unsafe and unhealthy workplaces can cause severe injuries and illnesses. Yan has worked in a coffee production plant since he was 17. In six years on the job, he has seen many work-related accidents injure and, in one case, kill a co-worker. He recounts how new equipment was originally delivered with
a protective cover, but its use was left to operator discretion and later used without the cover installed. This resulted in a worker losing his hand while operating the machine. Yan says young workers also tend to try and do the job more quickly, often leading them to take risks. Many injuries also occur when workers carry heavy loads in incorrect ways; these risks are less immediately apparent, but over time are very harmful.

Seeing these conditions, Yan decided to become a young worker safety and health advocate, or OSH Youth Champion, and through training provided by the SafeYouth@Work Project he has become a safety and health trainer. As part of the training, participants were instructed in Myanmar’s new OSH law and the respective responsibilities of employers and workers, including how the law protects young workers and their right to a safe workplace.

“The training opened my eyes,” Yan says, “I can see now how important it is that we [young workers] work together with

“Through OSH training, we will save the lives of many young workers.”

– Yan Naing Soe, SafeYouth@Work Champion

Agriculture

Government – Youth
employers and the government to make workplaces safe for everyone.”

Today Yan serves as Chair of a Youth Committee in his factory and conducts OSH awareness-raising activities among his peers. He says that there are many young people passionate about safety and health but who are not able to participate in existing safety committees in factories. He sees this as his next challenge: “Supporting young workers in joining the conversation and improving the effectiveness of OSH system implementation on the ground is key” he says.

As a trainer of trainers on OSH, Yan is optimistic: “I see that my colleagues are now more aware of risks and of how to protect themselves. I believe that through this kind of training we will save the lives of many young workers currently in unsafe working environments. Knowing what I do now about young worker safety and health, I am confident we can better prevent accidents and injuries in our workplaces”.

OSH curricula introduced by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions

6,280 students and 453 teachers benefit from new OSH training
Youth Champions take the lead on OSH education

In the Asia-Pacific region many people start work at a very early age. Often, they work in hazardous and exploitative jobs to help earn income for their families.

Tran Thuy Duong acknowledges that occupational safety and health (OSH) was not always a priority for her. “Previously, I only cared about finding a well-paid job after graduation. Occupational safety was not on my mind”, says the Foreign Trade University student and SafeYouth@Work Champion from Viet Nam.

“I used to think it was just an issue for workers in craft villages or on construction sites. I never thought that occupational safety also challenges people working in offices”, she says.

What changed her personal and professional outlook was an opportunity to join the 2017 SafeYouth@Work Congress in Singapore. The event aimed at helping put youth vision and voice at the centre of discussion on preventing workplace accidents and diseases.

The SafeYouth@Work Congress, held in the context of the 2017 World Congress for Safety and Health at Work, was an opportunity for youth to crowd-source
creative solutions for dealing with OSH issues. Tran was one of SafeYouth@Work Champions from around the globe who contributed ideas to raise awareness on creating a preventative culture of safety and health for young workers.

Empowered by the experience, Tran launched an education project entitled “OSH4ALL”, on her return from Singapore. The project provides fundamental OSH education for primary and secondary school students. Students can now be better prepared to protect themselves against hazards and risks they may face today and in the future. “With the support from the SafeYouth@Work Project team I have established a group of student volunteers to share knowledge on OSH issues with other students and younger children, to foster a culture of prevention from an early age”.

Thanks to Tran’s leadership, the volunteer youth group plans to extend its network by recruiting and training more volunteers and delivering more OSH training and orientation for young students in primary and secondary schools in Hanoi. ■
Youth Champions take the lead on OSH education

86% of young agricultural students surveyed believe they do not need OSH training

OSH education programme for primary and secondary students initiated by youth OSH champions

20% of young construction workers surveyed reported not receiving training for PPE usage

A minority of young workers surveyed report regularly following instructions or asking a more experienced worker for help
Building OSH into vocational training programmes

While immediate efforts to improve OSH conditions are critical, Dao Trong Do also believes that educating future generations on occupational safety and health (OSH) and providing young workers with decent and safe employment opportunities is indispensable for advancing social and economic development in the long term. To do this, “Governments, employers and workers need to build, implement and continuously strengthen a culture of prevention”, he says.

Dao is a Deputy Director of the Continuous Training Department, Directorate of Vocational Education and Training at the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs. He is a passionate OSH advocate, and through education he seeks to foster a culture of prevention in Viet Nam.

With support from the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project, Dao developed a Training of Trainers (TOT) programme on OSH to provide vocational teachers
with knowledge and understanding of workplace hazards and risks. The programme also addresses preventative measures to protect the safety and health of young workers, using newly developed OSH training materials.

“The training materials consist of illustrations and practical knowledge relating to manufacturing and production. Vocational training students have the opportunity to practise identifying hazards in production establishments or workshops”, Dao explains. In addition, participants are provided with essential knowledge on the rights and duties of workers under the new OSH Law. Trained trainers, in turn, will deliver subsequent OSH instruction to vocational students to equip them with the tools they will need for safe and healthy work experience.

The training uses an interactive and participatory learning approach to hold the participants’ attention and maintain their focus. Presentations, group work and on-site visits are used in combination with case studies and real-life experience-

“With the skills I have learned, I can confidently identify hazards and handle them to protect myself and my co-workers.”
– Nguy Thi Thanh Vy, Vocational Student
sharing from enterprises to help participants better understand the breadth of topics.

“With the skills I have learned, I can confidently identify hazards and handle them to protect myself and my co-workers”, says Nguy Thi Thanh Vy, one of some 400 vocational students who have participated in the pilot training.

Based on the success of the initial pilot, the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training has issued a directive to mainstream the OSH materials in vocational school curricula nationwide.

Deputy Director Dao is highly optimistic about the long-term success of the SafeYouth@Work initiative: “We will keep working with the ILO, and we will expand the use of the materials to other occupations so that more vocational training institutions and their students can benefit from them”.

Little or no awareness of OSH legislation reported by young workers

Small number of young workers with college-level or higher education
Together for better data and healthy young workers

Taking a position with the Indonesia Ministry of Manpower Office was a personal challenge to help improve the quality of OSH at the national level, says Gumilang Mohamad Yani. The 44-year-old labour inspector, who was educated in Belgium and later returned to his home country, likes to talk on all matters related to occupational safety and health (OSH).

In July 2018 Gumilang had the opportunity to attend a regional ITC-ILO OSH training course, joining more than 30 tripartite participants from Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam. During the training he interacted with government counterparts, employer organizations and trade unions, all of whom were committed to improving young workers’ safety and health. Inspired by the training, the Indonesian participants were instrumental in developing the country’s first National OSH Profile, adopted in 2019.

Gumilang says two elements were key to
what he describes as an overwhelmingly successful experience in the rapid development of this national OSH benchmark: high-level government support and a tripartite approach.

“By involving youth, employers’ organizations, trade unions and senior government officials in the process, this document became more than just informative reading material, it became a crucial reference point for future policy development”.

“Creation of the new OSH profile is a cornerstone for strengthening data collection and a prevention culture in the country”, says Gumilang. “With sufficient and comprehensive data, all parties will now have an overview of the existing OSH conditions. This helps everyone to better take on their respective roles in improving OSH in Indonesia”.

Gumilang sees this document as a strong starting point. Initially he acknowledges inevitable gaps and limitations but is confident that the document provides a crucial baseline for further improvements.
Together for better data and healthy young workers

First time Indonesia develops a National OSH Profile

First time youth are included as part of tripartite dialogue
In 2019 Argentina developed for the first time a comprehensive strategy for improving health and safety in the workplace for youth and adolescents.

Critical to the strategy – created through tripartite collaboration – was the involvement of six young university students pursuing OSH study programmes. The six students were invited to join the drafting committee for the National Plan of Action for Health and Safety so as to provide a first-hand perspective on young worker safety.

Safety and Hygiene student Brenda Cardozo was one of the students involved in this ground-breaking initiative. Brenda is a passionate advocate of OSH for young workers in Argentina and says her interest in participating in the initiative was personal.

From an early age she had seen people around her working in unsafe
environments or compromising situations owing to lack of training. “I believe that the National OSH Action Plan is the best tool that we have for reaching locations that have unsafe conditions, are outside existing data collection systems, or affect people who are completely outside the formal national OSH system”, Brenda says.

On the drafting committee for the Action Plan she participates in the education commission, contributing her experience in the selection of training topics and teaching methodologies.

A key challenge Brenda foresees in strengthening the culture of prevention in Argentina is a lack of capacity, partly due to limited financial resources. Often, she says, OSH activities are considered non-essential, which means that many young people enter workplaces unprepared to make the necessary investments in safer work. However, she believes this can be addressed by strategically targeting communication channels to disseminate OSH knowledge and information to all affected social sectors.

“It is important that we work in a safe environment and this needs to start from the beginning of people’s careers.”
– Brenda Cardozo, Youth OSH Champion
As a piece of advice for other young people, she offers the following: “Don’t feel alone. There are many people working for you. You should take all the help you can and try to learn because, in the end, you need to take care of your physical and mental health so that your career can develop in the best possible way”.

The first time Argentina creates a comprehensive strategy to improve OSH for youth

University students included as members of the Drafting Committee in developing the National Plan of Action for Health and Safety
Think safety, work safely

At 20 years old Al began his career in government, working on a temporary contract basis. As a temporary worker he was not eligible to join the local union. Today, at 32 years of age, he continues to work in the public sector as a permanent full-time employee and is a proud member of the Philippine Independent Public Sector Employees Association (PIPSEA) serving the people of the Malapatan Municipality in Sarangani Province.

As an Assistant Human Resources Officer, Al is in charge of training programmes for public officials and recognizes the need for local government to further understand and support the right of public officials and civil servants to safe and healthy workplaces. “At the end of the day, we want to perform our duties as public officials, but we also have to be safe at work. By ensuring occupational safety and health (OSH), the local government is also performing its duty to protect its people”, he says.
In 2018 the Philippines adopted important new OSH legislation – Republic Act 11058 – guaranteeing workers’ rights to report accidents, dangerous occurrences and hazards, and to refuse work in hazardous conditions. The law also mandated employer provision of personal protective equipment at no cost to employees.

The SafeYouth@Work Project provided critical support for implementation of the new law giving an opportunity for OSH champions like Al to learn more about the duties and responsibilities of all stakeholders and about new sanctions for non-compliance.

Together with 30 key representatives of workers organizations and trade unions, Al joined the ILO’s SafeYouth@Work Project Training of Trainers on OSH. Through the training participants learned how to design and implement programmes to promote compliance on OSH at work, with a focus on young workers. They also learned about linkages between compliance with OSH regulations and business sustainability and

“OSH Training of Trainers is a breakthrough helping us to define and clarify the role of the local government on OSH under the new law.”

– Al, Assistant Human Resources Officer, the Philippine Independent Public Sector Employees Association

Nationwide – all sectors

Government – Employer’s Organizations

Workers’ Organizations – Youth

Philippines Independent Public Sector Employees Association (PIPSEA)
competitiveness, as well as with worker productivity.

As a result of the training Al and other participants identified a clear need to secure stronger commitment and collaboration of government agencies with mandates to ensure the welfare of young workers, focusing on the value of prevention. The OSH “champions”, representing government, workers’ organizations and young workers themselves, formed a group to focus on integrating awareness of young worker vulnerabilities into the new OSH provisions.

For his part, Al says he is already integrating OSH in his training and orientation programmes so that public officials have first-hand information for responding to unsafe working conditions.

- Workers have the right to report accidents, dangerous occurrences, and hazards to employers and the Government (per new OSH Law)
- Employers must provide personal protective equipment at no cost to employees and respect workers’ rights to refuse to work in hazardous conditions (per new OSH Law)
- 30 representatives from workers’ organizations/trade unions from the private and public sector have been capacitated as OSH trainers
Safe work means better living for young cocoa producers

Young people in Côte d’Ivoire are often engaged in hazardous working conditions in the harvesting of cocoa. The hazards of cocoa production are numerous, including burning and clearing fields, pruning trees, cutting cocoa pods, spraying pesticides, undertaking repetitive motions, using sharp tools, and transporting heavy loads.

In addition to the difficult labour conditions, young cocoa producers in Côte d’Ivoire face several additional challenges. The low price of cocoa on the international market and the high cost of phytosanitary products make cocoa production a vulnerable industry. Climate change also disrupts the harvest schedule and negatively affects yield. In this precarious context workplace injuries can have an immediate and often devastating impact on their livelihoods.

The absence of educational structures and local learning opportunities has traditionally limited decent work opportunities for youth in the country, which has created a high risk for child labour, particularly in the cocoa sector. In conjunction with the ILO, and with contributions by the SafeYouth@Work Project, the Government of Côte d’Ivoire recently adopted a National Action Plan
Our Impact, Their Voices

The SafeYouth@Work Project has engaged directly with several cocoa-producing communities in Côte d’Ivoire to improve working and living conditions. Twenty young workers trained on OSH advocacy and outreach have worked with self-help groups in three different communities to raise awareness on OSH and develop local solutions to community challenges.

In addition to receiving practical training on safe and healthy production methods, including in the cutting, transport and processing of cocoa pods, the groups have been engaged in raising awareness on the dangers of child labour activities and combatting this phenomenon.

When asked whether they see OSH awareness and training improving prospects in the communities, the peer educators note several immediate impacts. These include reduced injuries caused by cuts while processing the cocoa

**Self-help groups of cocoa producers now advocate against child labour and promote occupational safety and health.**

Self-help groups of young cocoa producers now advocate against child labour and promote occupational safety and health.
Safe work means better living for young cocoa producers

Pods, reduced musculoskeletal injuries linked to transporting and processing the cocoa beans, safer management of pesticides, and a resulting healthier environment at home.

Safe and healthy work practices are also key to increasing and diversifying production beyond cocoa and thus to improving producers’ household incomes, say the newly-trained OSH advocates.

Next steps for trainees include maintaining and strengthening cohesion among OSH peer educators in the communities. Through promoting OSH good practices they hope to expand the network of OSH peer educators and improve the living and working conditions of households in more cocoa-producing communities.

20 young workers from three cocoa-producing communities trained as OSH advocates

Young women account for 25% of young workers trained

40% of the world’s cocoa is produced in Côte d’Ivoire (The World Bank: Cote d’Ivoire Economic Update (2019))
Benefits of safe and healthy work clear for palm oil company

Colombia is the leading producer of palm oil in Latin America and the fourth in the world. Nevertheless, many palm oil production companies are small or medium enterprises, with limited OSH knowledge or resources for ensuring safety and health for their workers.

La Estrella Palm Plantation is one of a growing number of enterprises working in collaboration with the ILO in Colombia to promote safe and healthy conditions for young workers.

For the La Estrella Palm Plantation, a member of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, attention to safety and health is not a new trend. The benefits of promoting a culture of prevention are clear. “Being in touch with people, making sure they are aware that they have to take care of themselves in the field and use their personal protective equipment (PPE), helps us to have good productivity”, says La Estrella Director, Laura Reyes.
In conjunction with SafeYouth@Work Colombia, La Estrella is strengthening its on-site safety and health training. They are also piloting a new preventative OSH tool for worker engagement in identifying and mitigating work hazards and risks.

Reyes notes that increasing workers’ OSH knowledge pays dividends on several levels, as employees “feel that the company is invested in them”.

“One of the challenges is also how to empower workers when their level of schooling is not very high; many of them do not have an elementary school education and some do not know how to read and write”, she notes. For this reason, the company also adopted an ergonomic checklist module for illiterate palm sector workers.

“Doing things right for a safe and healthy workplace helps us make the workplace better. It allows workers to understand not only self-care but also how to work efficiently and how they can contribute to improving work methodologies”, says Reyes.
Benefits of safe and healthy work clear for palm oil company

ILO ergonomic checklist module adapted for illiterate palm sector workers

105 participants in the OSH Professional Formation Certificate

4th largest palm oil producer globally (FAO (2018))
Trade unions embrace youth engagement

For trade unions in Indonesia the struggle for social justice has long focused on improving wages, severance pay and working hours. Occupational safety and health (OSH) traditionally has not received much visibility.

However, a number of high-profile workplace disasters in recent years have highlighted the urgent need to institute a culture of workplace safety. In 2015 a factory fire in Bekasi, West Java, killed five workers and injured 50 others, while in 2017 a fireworks factory explosion in Banten, Java, killed 49 workers. The factory had only one exit, severely hampering evacuation during the emergency. Trade unions were shocked by the situation and rudely awakened to the daily dangers faced by their constituency in unsafe work environments.

Widespread protests and calls for greater worker protection led to the formation of the Industri4ALL Network, bringing together several trade union federations concerned with OSH issues and the protection of workers, including young workers.
Since then improvements have been considerable, but not sufficient. In the first half of 2019 at least 30 people were killed by a fire that swept through a private home doubling as a matchstick factory in Binjai, Langkat.

Driven by a desire to ensure safer working conditions for young workers and with the support of their organizations, six youth representatives from the Indonesian trade confederations KSBSI, KSPI and KSPSI have engaged in the SafeYouth@Work Project.

For these young labour advocates, strengthening OSH capacities means more than providing personal protective equipment (PPE). The OSH champions say that they see PPE as an outdated response to safety and health at work, representing only a partial solution to preventing work hazards. The OSH champions see a pressing need to change the overall understanding of what preventative safety and health is and how it can be implemented to ensure safer working conditions for young workers and indeed all workers.

“An understanding of OSH should also be given to employers and emphasize the sound understanding of OSH.”

– Ratih Fitriani, Representative of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing
With the support of the Project, the SafeYouth@Work Champions have initiated discussion groups and training for young union members, emphasizing that concern for safety and health affects all sectors, not only manufacturing, mining and the oil and gas industries. Through their outreach the Champions challenge young people to be involved in discussions on OSH and to take responsibility for their actions. Their goal is to develop an understanding that OSH is a shared responsibility.

The next step, say the Champions, is to strengthen trade union participation in social networks and build awareness-raising and implementation of OSH for young workers. “Occupational Safety and Health in the workplace is the language of the future”.

316 youth aged 15-24 participated in three SafeYouth@Work Project trainings/workshops

Eight youth formed as SafeYouth@Work Champions supporting awareness raising and capacity building initiatives

Nine OSH for young worker trainings/awareness raising events carried out with representatives from government, workers’ organizations and employers’ organizations
Construction ahead, safety first

The construction industry attracts many young workers, but it has one of the highest rates of occupational injury and disease.

As the General-Secretary of the National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW) in the Philippines, Santi Nolla knows that workers in the construction industry face occupational hazards on a daily basis. The 36-year-old union leader has seen first-hand how workers and their families suffer due to avoidable workplace accidents. In 2015 he served on a task force investigating a factory fire where over 70 workers died partly because of locked fire exits.

“Construction workers work with one foot in the grave. They are not sure whether they will go home safe and alive to see their families. It is crucial to complete safety orientations, to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and to
“Many organizations are eager to learn more – we have the passion and seek partners to support us in our goal of promoting OSH and decent work.”

– Santi Nolla, General-Secretary of the National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW) in the Philippines

understand occupational hazards such as deadly chemicals”, Santi says.

Santi is one of several trade union representatives and young workers in the Philippines trained on OSH under the ILO’s SafeYouth@Work Project in 2018. Through the training, participants learned about a wide range of OSH issues, including the links between compliance, OSH regulations, business competitiveness and worker productivity. The programme also featured site visits focused on setting behavioural objectives in the design of OSH training and development programmes.

Today the union leader employs his new knowledge to conduct hands-on safety orientations for affiliated construction workers.

“Active participation is crucial in training and ensuring that people are part of the process...the difference between traditional and non-traditional training and the importance of attitudes and behaviour of a trainer is key”, says Santi.
A significant number of young workers reporting an injury or illness in their workplace during the last 12 months

Lack of safe work information provided to young construction workers

30 representatives from workers organizations and trade unions capacitated as OSH trainer-of-trainers

Limited OSH training for young workers identified
Many young workers in the Asia-Pacific Region work informally in the agricultural sector. These young workers enter the labour force with limited or no knowledge of occupational hazards and risks, or awareness of their right to safe and healthy work. Agricultural workplaces also tend to be out of the reach of occupational safety and health (OSH) inspectors. These factors, combined with poor working conditions, often result in high rates of injury among workers at the beginning of their careers.

Nguyen Van Thanh, a 46-year-old farmer, owns a tea production business in the Phu Tho Province. He oversees three hectares of land for tea production and employs several young workers. As a manager, Thanh could see that younger workers were unaware of work safety and prevention measures, especially in planting of tea trees and use of pesticides. Reflecting on his misfortune of losing a finger in a workplace accident at a young age, Thanh eagerly joined the ILO-Viet Nam Farmers’ Union training course on
OSH for tea production enterprises.

Following the training course, Thanh invested time and effort to implement a series of OSH improvements at his tea farm. “I have made significant improvements in my establishment. With regard to the spraying of pesticides, we now follow strict safety procedures, and workers must wear personal protective equipment (PPE), including protective boots. All transport paths have been cleared to facilitate ease of movement, and the electricity system is well marked for workers’ ease of use”.

The young tea plantation workers, who also participated in the SafeYouth@Work training, recall their limited knowledge of occupational safety, fire prevention and handling of electrical problems and proudly share their notable improvements in awareness and practice.

“This initiative has inspired local farmers to follow our model”, Thanh says with a smile.
Farm initiative planting safe and healthy workplaces

Insufficient protective measures for young agricultural workers working with pesticides or fertilizers

86% of young agricultural students surveyed unaware of benefits of OSH training

Agriculture accounts for 42% of employment in Viet Nam

©NguyenViet Thanh/ILW
Filling the gaps in youth employment data collection

As the Chief of Argentina’s Occupational Health and Safety Observatory at the Superintendence of Occupational Risks, Natalia Gadea oversees the study of dynamics and trends related to health and safety at work.

Representing the SRT, Gadea’s office partnered with the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project to create a comprehensive strategy for improving OSH among young workers, given their higher rates of occupational accident and injury. The initiative focused on, among other things, strengthening data collection and analysis.

“Argentina’s national system for notification/registration of occupational accidents and diseases is well developed and allows an analysis of statistical data with traceability of up to 20 years. However, collaboration with the
SafeYouth@Work Project revealed specific weaknesses in the information systems, showing a knowledge gap regarding the particular vulnerability of young people”, Gadea said. “Higher accident rates are observed among youth, but official statistics fail to capture the entire phenomenon due to high rates of informal employment”, she added.

Through Gadea’s office, instruments were put in place for capturing reliable information relating to young workers, including informal workers not covered by social security. The instruments permitted a space for analysis and discussion, bringing together those responsible for the development of policies aimed at the vulnerability of young workers.

“This is a complex issue with many actors in the workplace. The Project is an opportunity to draw on this rich network of actors”, Gadea said. 

Through better data collection, the government will be able to provide a fairer and safer future for work, with decent work for all.
Filling the gaps in youth employment data collection

- 80% of youth work informally and do not have social insurance or health coverage in the rural sector

- Occupational risks organization implementing young worker data initiative

- Young worker vulnerability data gap identified
Passion for a safer fashion

The inclusion of OSH training as an integral part of vocational skills training schools and centres in Viet Nam is a relatively new development that is quickly becoming the norm. Through ILO’s SafeYouth@Work Project, preventative OSH curricula are being adopted at national level. Increasingly, essential OSH information is delivered at the beginning of skills training courses which students are required to take as a prerequisite for more advanced coursework.

At the centre of this process is a new training-of-trainers (ToT) course for technical vocational education and training (TVET) teachers in the garment sewing industry. One of the weaknesses identified in previous OSH training courses was the emphasis on theory without practical and participatory activities. New training approaches are designed to be much more practical and hands-on.

“This innovative programme on OSH includes hands-on training - benefitting
“The innovative SafeYouth@Work programme on OSH includes hands-on training - benefitting both instructor trainees and future students.”

– Tran Thuy Ngoc, Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry

both instructor trainees and future students - that those without an OSH background can absorb effectively. The ToT workshop training methodology benefits from a diverse array of teaching methods, reflecting the reality that individuals acquire and process information in different ways”, says Tran Thuy Ngoc from the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

“Nearly 30 trainers and experts have been trained so far. The new graduates have already delivered training to employers and workers to improve their knowledge of health and safety for young workers. In particular they now know how to prevent and assess risks”, says Tran.

“I used to think OSH was a very dry and technical topic. However, my mind changed thanks to the training in which I participated”, says one of the ToT for TVET teachers.
Many young workers report challenges to accessing OSH information where provided.

OSH training not provided to the majority of young workers.

Limited awareness of prevention among young workers on the use of safety equipment.

Majority of young workers surveyed believe employers are ambivalent about the safety and health of their workers.
Building better working conditions in craft villages

The vast craft production industry in Viet Nam is a significant employer of young workers in many villages. However, until recently long-term health issues associated with craft village work have not been fully recognized by workers and employers.

According to a 2017 Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour (KAB) survey conducted by the SafeYouth@Work Project, craft production workers are often exposed to extremely hazardous conditions. These include poor lighting, high noise and vibration levels, extreme temperatures and unhealthy air quality. The KAB survey found that these conditions have direct implications for respiratory, optical, intestinal and dermatological diseases.

In the survey of 900 young workers in craft villages, staying healthy and safe at work was not identified as a key priority. Only 12 per cent of young workers surveyed reported having received any OSH training at all. Most youth aged 15 to 24
also expressed reluctance to report work accidents to their employers.

Guided partly by the survey findings, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), in conjunction with the SafeYouth@Work Project, ILO Viet Nam, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Labour, and the Farmers’ Union undertook a pilot programme to improve working conditions in selected craft villages in Hung Yen province focusing on wood carving and bronze casting.

In seven months, from July 2018 to January 2019, 49 young workers were provided with practical OSH training, with an emphasis on identifying hazards and risks at their workplaces, preventative measures, and the rights and obligations of workers and employers in informal workplaces. Economically disadvantaged village members, including local farmers and craft village workers, were prioritized for assistance.

The Director of the MOLISA Department of Work Safety, Ha Tat Thang, says that the...
Building better working conditions in craft villages

The value added by the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project has been strongly apparent from its inception. Following the success of the pilot programme, MOLISA has invested additional resources in a National OSH Programme. “We look forward to building on these achievements as hundreds of trainers continue delivering multiplier training in the area of their expertise. I believe thousands of people will benefit from these actions” says Thang.

- 67% of craft workers surveyed identify using/operating machinery and tools as the main OSH risk
- 73% of craft workers surveyed report working in dusty conditions
- Only 12% of craft workers report having received training on OSH
Our Impact, Their Voices
Agriculture sector sows seeds for young worker protection

Agricultural work comes with many risks. The possibility of injuries from unguarded machinery, overturned tractors, confined spaces and exposure to toxic chemicals, dust, mould, vibration and noise are just some of the hazards found in this sector. Young workers in agriculture also face additional risks related to their seasonal or temporary employment status and lack of training and experience.

The National Institute of Technological Education and Professional Training Department (INTA) and the Superintendence of Occupational Risks (SRT) are working together with other social partners in Argentina to address these challenges and improve the working conditions of young agricultural labourers.

Ignacio Paunero, of the INTA San Pedro Agricultural Experimental Station and Viviana Martínez, Head, Technical and Professional Training Department with the SRT, are among those leading government efforts to ensure safe and
"Our mission and our values focus on strengthening the preventive culture by developing capacities – it is the only effective prevention tool."
– Viviana Martínez, Head, Technical and Professional Training Department, Superintendence of Occupational Risks

healthy conditions for youth in the sector. “Our mission and our values focus on strengthening the preventive culture by developing capacities – it is the only effective prevention tool”, says Martinez.

Under Martinez’s and Paunero’s technical expertise, OSH content was integrated within the framework of two professional training programmes in agriculture. The curricula now serve as an effective instrument for disseminating national OSH standards and essential criteria for approval of certificates and corresponding vocational training. New training profiles are anticipated for the near future, including in the construction sector, and are expected to have a cascade effect on all vocational training centres in the country.

Why is this work so important? Martinez says: “The realization of measures that promote preventative concepts and impact everyday life is key to improving OSH”.

Including occupational safety and health content in vocational training teaches
young workers about the specific risks of their activities, and also provides practical experience in prevention measures.

“Thanks to the exchanges and joint work, we are generating and strengthening links with different national sectors involved in the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project. As an institution, we consider that inter-institutional work is essential for combining experience, resources and capabilities”, says Paunero.
Our Impact, Their Voices
Learn from others’ mistakes

As one of three pilot countries in the SafeYouth@Work Project – along with Myanmar and the Philippines – Viet Nam has taken a lead role in raising awareness of occupational risks and hazards facing young workers. Eight youth delegates from Viet Nam participated in the 21st World Congress on Safety and Health at Work held in Singapore in 2017.

The delegates - invited in their capacity as SafeYouth@Work Champions - included young workers, government officials, employers, and students, all advocates for workplace safety and health. Thi Phuong, a student at the Academy for Journalism and Communications, was among the Youth Champions invited to participate, based on a short film she submitted to the SafeYouth@Work Media Competition.

As a SafeYouth@Work Champion, Thi Phuong contributed to an international design thinking team tasked with developing prototype solutions to OSH challenges facing youth in the world of work. However, she was also recognized as an individual winner of the SafeYouth@Work Media Competition in the film category for contestants aged 18 – 24. “I
am so happy and so surprised to receive such an unbelievable prize”, said Thi Phuong on learning that she had been selected.

Her documentary “Learn from others’ mistakes” follows the real-life story of a young worker who loses two of his fingers in a work-related accident. The film short explores the psychological impact of work injuries on youth at the beginning of their career.

Inspired by her World Congress experience and the award for her film submission at the global event, Thi Phuong returned home committed to promoting safe and healthy workplaces and familiarizing young people in Viet Nam with occupational safety and health. Together with other young OSH advocates, she launched the “Go home safe” Facebook page (“Về nhà an toàn” in Vietnamese). The page provides information on OSH for young workers through various sources including video clips, pictures and news, delivered in youth-friendly language.
An overwhelming majority of young workers surveyed reported receiving no OSH training.

One out of seven workers in Viet Nam is under the age of 25.
Youth Champions for young workers

Since the adoption of the 1970 Law No. 1 concerning Occupational Safety in Indonesia, discussion on OSH issues was limited to professionals with natural science, engineering, and medical backgrounds. Young workers in particular had few channels through which to contribute to this conversation.

When the SafeYouth@Work Project solicited youth delegates for the XXI World Congress for Safety and Health, Nur Chariroh, Fadllil and Tyas jumped at the chance to participate and contribute their experiences.

The three joined a total of some 125 Youth Champions chosen from 29 countries to participate in the Congress. New to the world of work, and to the idea of a “preventative workplace culture”, none of them could have imagined how valuable an opportunity the meeting would turn out to be. The event was an opportunity to amplify the voices of young workers and establish an international network of youth for OSH.
The SafeYouth@Work Congress, conducted at the 2017 World Congress, represented a watershed moment for many of the participants, including Nur, Fadllil and Tyas. “Without OSH knowledge, it is difficult for young people to represent young workers and entrepreneurs, express solutions to OSH problems and raise awareness of the importance of OSH in the work environment”, said Nur.

Building on their experience at the World Congress and knowledge gained, the three Indonesian Youth Champions have been actively involved in OSH advocacy, beginning with outreach at their places of work and study. Seeking a way to promote OSH learning in an enjoyable and creative way attractive to young workers, they also helped to develop and promote the “OSHNopoly” educational gaming tool.

In conjunction with the SafeYouth@Work Project, Nur Chariroh, Fadllil and Tyas were also instrumental in the creation of a Youth Task Force to represent young worker perspectives at the National OSH Council.
Youth Champions for young workers

SafeYouth@Work Champions provide comprehensive support for strengthening OSH in the country.

Development of OSH-related applications and games by youth: OSHnopoly

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Through its unique way of combining adventure, education and fun, Scouting continuously renews itself in the face of changing interests of young people across the globe. Those interests include a growing concern for the safety and health of young workers.

In December 2018, in partnership with ILO and the Philippine Occupational and Health Centre, the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) launched a new OSH merit badge for the more than 2.6 million Scouts in the country. With the adoption of the new badge, the BSP members are actively engaged in serving their communities through building awareness and sharing knowledge of safety and health issues for youth. The Boy Scouts of the Philippines is one of 170 national members of the World Organization of the Scout Merit Badges on OSH.
“These Merit Badges are unique. When a Scout accomplishes all the requirements to earn this badge, he/she will be doing his or her family and the nation a great service.”

– Rogelio S. Villa, Jr., Secretary-General, the Boy Scouts of the Philippines

Scout Movement, representing some 50 million youth participants globally.

In announcing the first-of-its-kind, BSP Secretary-General Rogelio S. Villa, Jr. underscored the organization’s commitment to integrating safety and health awareness, not just among its members but for the nation’s youth in general.

“These Merit Badges are unique. When a Scout accomplishes all the requirements to earn this badge, he/she will be doing his or her family and the nation a great service. Imagine our young people drawing the line between safety and danger, health and wellbeing, not just of Scouts, but of those who, though still young, find themselves working to help the family make both ends meet.”

Under the merit badge system, Scouts will earn the badges by completing a set of tasks which introduce OSH know-how and understanding through such activities as hazard identification and taking of preventative measures.
Internationally-affiliated youth organization integrates OSH awareness

OSH merit badge introduced by Boy Scouts of the Philippines

2.6 million registered Boy Scouts in the Philippines as of 2019
Labour formalization key to young worker rights

When you arrive in Minas Township, in Colombia’s Cesar Department, palm trees stretch as far as the eye can see.

Colombia is the world’s fourth-largest producer of palm oil, with a yield of almost 1.3 million tons per year. The business generates between 35,000 and 40,000 jobs. However, approximately 80 per cent of these workers are informally employed, without any social security benefits.

For most of his adult life, Enalge José Guarín worked as a contract labourer on plantations such as Palmas del Cesar S.A. Then in 2018 he received a welcome end-of-year “surprise”. Under a tripartite agreement promoted by the Colombian Ministry of Labour and the trade union SINTRAINAGRO, worker contracts were formalized. Today Enalge José is one of 225 employees at the plantation and a board member of the SINTRAINAGRO palm workers’ union.
For José, the shift to formal contract status is fundamental to improved working conditions for himself and others when it comes to health and safety and other labour benefits. “Since 2006, when I started to work, I had been hired through cooperatives and other forms of subcontracting that never allowed me to join a union. I had no means of organizing for my rights. Today, I can defend the rights of every worker.”

In Colombia workers not directly hired by the employer cannot negotiate with the enterprise as a member of a trade union.

Training of palm sector workers through the ILO’s SafeYouth@Work Project has been instrumental in the formalization of young worker contracts in the region. Together with SINTRAINAGRO and other labour unions, as well as the University of Los Llanos and workers’ rights organizations, the Project undertook an innovative training-of-trainers course promoting work formalization as key to improving workplace safety and health.

The first cohort of 105 individuals

“Labour formalization allows me to make my dreams come true. As of today, I can start working on my life plans.”
– Enalge José Guarín, palm worker
graduated in 2019, and initial results and feedback from tripartite partners have been overwhelmingly positive.

“When it comes to ILO, I have a lot to be grateful for,” says Guarin. “The tools and knowledge that the SafeYouth@Work Project has provided us with have helped us to be able to start to transform the lives of other workers in the palm sector.”
Inter-regional cooperation for a safer future of work

In November 2018 Uruguay invited delegations from Viet Nam, Myanmar, the Philippines and Indonesia to participate in a study visit of the country’s well-established and recognized good practices in social dialogue. Fifteen representatives participated from government, employers’ and workers’ organizations.

The visit, organized by the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project, highlighted Uruguay’s social dialogue experience and illustrated the respective contributions of tripartite stakeholders to strengthening national OSH systems. The programme also demonstrated Uruguay’s integration of health and safety into technical education and training courses, with a focus on the construction and agriculture sectors.

As part of the visit delegations were invited to exchange national experiences in a seminar with members of the National Health and Safety Council (CONASSAT),
presided over by the Minister of Labor and Social Security of Uruguay, Ernesto Murro.

“The CONASSAT experience demonstrates that effective social dialogue significantly improves efficiency and impact on improving OSH conditions, reducing occupational injuries and illnesses, especially for young workers”, Murro said.

The international delegations also participated in field visits to TVET programmes in the forestry, gastronomy, construction and agriculture sectors, where OSH curricula have been integrated.

“I have learned a lot from Uruguay’s experiences and other participating countries on how to organize social dialogue at the national level and the enterprise level. I will definitely apply this in my daily work and can see this helping Vietnamese employers and business associations”, said Tran Thuy Ngoc, an Employer’s Representative with the Viet Nam delegation.

SafeYouth@Work fosters inter-regional cooperation in sharing innovative practices for improving the safety and health of young workers.
Four South-East Asian countries participate in knowledge exchange with Uruguay on OSH and social dialogue
Our Impact, Their Voices
When a chance arose for working as an Information Technology Specialist for the Government of the Philippines after graduation, Euniz grabbed it.

It was while working for the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) that the then 24-year-old professional found out about and was accepted as a delegate to the 2017 World Congress for Safety and Health at Work. “I felt privileged to be selected as a Youth Champion for safety and health at work”, she says.

“Through the SafeYouth@Work Congress, in Singapore, I became highly aware of OSH issues, especially among young people”, says Euniz. “Millennials make up one-third of the population in the Philippines. This young generation of workers and entrepreneurs sometimes called ‘digital natives’, are up-to-speed with the internet, gaming, social networks and mobile technology, but they lack skills and training on OSH, and they are not aware of workers’ and employers’ rights and duties.”
A SafeYouth@Work Project survey of OSH knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in the Philippines revealed that most youths had limited understanding of OSH standards and safe practices. The survey also revealed that many young workers believe that complying with OSH standards takes too much time and that accidents typically only happen to “unlucky people”. The same survey found that employers often see OSH measures and training as an unnecessary business expense.

Armed with this information and supported and guided by her colleagues and supervisor, Euniz developed an interactive game or application, to raise awareness among millennial workers on the need for safer and healthier workplaces. The app was launched in the Philippines on World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2018.

“For me, it is vital to educate and help protect young people because they are the future of work, and how better to communicate with ‘digital natives’ than by speaking their language?” says Euniz.
Advancement of Youth on Occupational Safety and Health (AYOSH) initiative launched - 60 youth participants now serve as OSH advocates (selected as student leaders from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao)

500 young workers and 20 experts consulted the OSH App (as of Oct 2018)

Two innovative OSH educational tools/games developed (OSH App and OSHnopoly)
Workers of all ages have the right to safe and healthy work. The 541 million young workers aged 15-24 account for more than 15 per cent of the world’s labour force but suffer up to a 40 per cent higher rate of non-fatal occupational injuries than adult workers above the age of 25.

Various risk factors specific to young workers increase the likelihood that they will suffer harm from workplace hazards. These risk factors are mostly due to their young age (for example their stage of physical, psychosocial and emotional development, or their lack of skills, experience, and education).

Moreover young workers are often unaware of their rights and occupational safety and health (OSH) responsibilities. As young workers they may be particularly reluctant to speak out about OSH risks. The strong presence of young workers in hazardous economic sectors and their exposure to the hazards found in these sectors further increases their risk of sustaining occupational injury and disease.

Targeting this problem, the ILO SafeYouth@Work Project is a global effort that seeks to make workplaces safer and healthier for young workers aged 15 to 24. To achieve its goal the Project carried out OSH interventions in eight countries around the world, collaborating with Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, youth organizations, civil society, schools and international development partners to improve:

1. the collection and use of national OSH data, particularly regarding young workers;
2. national legislation, regulations, policies and programmes on OSH, particularly regarding young workers;
3. national capacity to enforce OSH laws and regulations, particularly regarding young workers; and
4. global awareness of hazards and risks faced by young workers.

The ILO prepared this collection of human-centred impact stories to highlight the ways in which the SafeYouth@Work Project has promoted OSH for young workers and fostered a generation of safe and healthy workers. The objective of these stories is to amplify the voices of the individual women and men who have bravely championed improvements in young workers’ safety and health.

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