

Upcoming Events

Labour Day	May 1
World Press Freedom Day	May 3
World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	May 21
International Day for Biological Diversity	May 22
Africa Freedom Day	May 25
International Day for United Nations Peacekeepers	May 29
World Environment Day	June 5
World Day Against Child Labour	June 12
Day of the African Child	June 16
World Refugee Day	June 20
United Nations Public Service Day	June 23

Promoting Safety and Health in a Green Economy

The ILO celebrates World Day for Safety and Health at Work each year on 28 April to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally. It is an awareness-raising campaign intended to focus international attention on emerging trends in the field of occupational safety and health and on the magnitude of work-related injuries, diseases and fatalities worldwide.

The 2012 World Day for Safety and Health at Work focuses on the promotion of occupational safety and health (OSH) in a green economy. The shift in focus throughout the world to a greener and more sustainable economy is commendable and it will be important to also ensure that the new green technologies that protect the environment are also safe for workers.

As the green economy develops, it is essential that safety and health at work is integrated into green jobs policies. This implies integrating risk assessment and management measures in the life cycle analysis of all green jobs. A true green job must integrate safety and health into design, procurement, operations, maintenance, sourcing and recycling policies, certification systems and occupational safety and health quality standards.

It is for this reason that in 2011 the ILO, through its project on "Improving Safety and Health at Work through a Decent Work Agenda" embarked on a training of trainers' programme in risk assessment and management. Two 5-day courses, one in Lusaka and one in Kitwe, were held in June and October respectively. The first course attracted 24 participants from various sectors of industry. The second course, primarily targeting the mining industry, was held at the request of Safety and Health Managers from the mining sector and attracted 18 participants.

This year various enterprises will be holding in-house events to celebrate the day. The official national event to celebrate the day will be spearheaded by the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Labour. The celebrations will take place on the Copperbelt in mid-May.

May 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	2	3
June 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Improving Safety and Health at Work through a Decent Work Agenda

ILO, with financial assistance from the European Union (EU), has been implementing a project entitled "Improving Safety and Health at Work through a Decent Work Agenda" since 2010. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to a more inclusive and productive society through a reduction in occupational accidents and work-related diseases.

Achievements of the Project

- ◇ National Profile of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) was developed in early 2011. This offers a situation analysis of occupational safety and health in Zambia and analyses various aspects including the existing policy, legislative and institutional framework.
- ◇ Training workshop on developing a National Programme/Action Plan on occupational safety and health was held in March 2011 for the tripartite constituents and key stakeholders, resulting in a Draft National OSH Programme. This is scheduled for adoption and official launch in June 2012.
- ◇ A total of 42 Government Inspectors and Safety and Health Managers, Supervisors and Officers from both parastatal and private sector companies were trained as trainers in modern risk assessment and management.
- ◇ More than 200 safety and health personnel from 20 private enterprises have been trained in modern risk assessment and management techniques and more enterprises have requested the one-day, on-site, industry-based, hands-on training.

Promoting MSME's Compliance to Policy, Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

The International Labour Organisation (ILO), country office for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique officially launched the Law Growth Nexus II (LGN) project in Lusaka on 15 March, 2012. The launch, which was hosted by ILO Director, Martin Clemensson, was officiated by the Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Labour, Hon. Fackson Shamenda M.P.

The LGN II Project, funded by NORAD, aims at assisting Micro, Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (MSMEs) in Zambia and Kenya build sustainable businesses and contribute better to the national economy through remaining compliant with labour laws. The ultimate goal of the LGN II project is to contribute to a more enabling policy environment for MSMEs.

Special guests at the event included the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Justice, Hon. Alfreda Kansembe M.P.; permanent secretaries of the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Works and Supply, Ministry of Local Government and Housing and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; senior UN representatives; social partners such as the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions and the Zambia Federation of Employers; and representatives from the private sector. Also in attendance at the launch was the Chief Technical Advisor to the project, Grace Tiberondwa Sebageni, who led a six-person delegation representing the stakeholders from the Kenya project.

The objective of the project is to explore the nexus between labour law and MSME development. The project recognises that law and legal regulations have a direct bearing on the formalisation of small businesses and subsequently on decent work practices, economic growth and sustainable development in the MSME sector. The project also recognises the challenge of effective enforcement and monitoring of labour regulations. There is also a business case for labour law compliance as employers who respect the rule of law cut down on time spent on disputes, industrial unrest and litigation and have more productive businesses.

The LGN II is therefore looking at increasing awareness about labour laws and also encouraging compliance. It is a vital project in Africa as both the unregulated or informal economy is large throughout the continent and the quality of growth is important for sustainable development.



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While the members of the ILO, trade unions, employers' organisations and Governments of 193 countries around the world - including Zambia - agreed on Conventions and International Labour Standards, these are largely only applicable to the formal economy. In practice, the vast majority of workers are in the informal sector and therefore not covered by the labour legislation.

In Zambia, more than 90% of the labour force is in the informal economy meaning that the bulk of economic activity today, is largely informal. According to the Zambia Business Survey of 2012, there are close to 4 million SMEs operating in the informal economy. The characteristic of SME's in Zambia is such that many of these MSMEs are more akin to home-based, income-generating activities than to clearly structured businesses. Most MSMEs are in rural areas (81 percent), and operate in agricultural production (70 percent) or wholesale/retail trade.

Zambia's labour legislation applies equally to employees and employers in large, medium, small and micro enterprises. It is undifferentiated. Under the Employment Act, CAP 268 the term "employee", for instance, applies to any person who has entered into or works under a contract of service, whether the contract is expressed or implied, is oral or in writing, and whether the remuneration is calculated by time or by work done, or is in cash or in kind---" This interpretation also broadly means "any person, or any firm, corporation or company, public authority or body of persons who or which has entered into a contract of service to employ any person, ----".

In principle then, the whole body of labour legislation is intended to apply to the full spectrum of businesses embraced by the MSME sub-sector. It is important to note that the position of informal sector micro enterprises and informal sector employment is uncertain. Although all laws should apply to everyone in the same way, it might be necessary for the relevant law and policy-makers working with MSMEs to consider revising particular aspects of the existing labour legislation to make it more appropriate for MSMEs so that they could enhance productivity, provide more decent jobs and contribute more effectively to the economic development of the country. The Law Growth Nexus Project creates the space for discussions and movement on these issues.

The launch of the LGN II project was followed by a series of labour law dissemination workshops in Lusaka, Kitwe and Livingstone. The objective of the workshops were to educate Micro, Small and Medium (MSME) owners on the provisions of the Zambian Labour Laws and to guide them on where they can go for more information. These sensitisation and awareness activities will continue within the course of the project's implementation.

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