



Evaluation Summaries

Developing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) system in North-West region of Russian Federation to provide Decent and Safe work –phase II

Quick Facts

Countries: Russian Federation
Final Evaluation: December 2009
Mode of Evaluation: Independent
Administered by: SRO Moscow
Technically Backstopped by: SAFEWORK
Evaluation Management: Irina Sinelina
Evaluation Team: Alexey Oleynikov
Project Start: April 2007
Project End: April 2009
Project Code: RUS/04/02/FIN
Donor: Finland (350,000 US\$)
Keywords: Occupational safety and health

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The ILO and the Finnish government have been cooperating with the tripartite constituents in Russia on OSH issues for several years. The overarching objective of this work is to contribute to the improvement of working conditions and creation of safe working conditions, which should be part of normal quality and production management. It is based on the experience that providing adequate working conditions is an investment in human resources, quality and productivity and not an extra cost.

Cooperation in the framework of various consecutive initiatives, i.e. the activities of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Wellbeing (established in October 2003 www.ndphs.org) and the first phase of the project (April 2005 – April 2007), was mainly focused on the North West Okrug¹ of Russia and, specifically, the Leningrad region, City of St. Petersburg, Republic of Karelia, Murmansk, Vologda.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation covered several thematic areas, including:

1. Identification of the scope of OSH problem, with an aim to raise awareness, promote practical use of modern approaches and facilitate the development of safety programmes;
2. Improvement of statistics, registration and analysis of occupational accidents;
3. Raising awareness of the economic costs of poor working conditions;
4. Promotion of paradigm shift at the policy level – from compensation of consequences to prevention of occupational accidents and diseases (in line with the ILO systematic approach to occupational safety and health);

¹ The territory of the Russian Federation is divided administratively and geographically into seven large parts or “okrugs”. This project is being implemented only in the North-West Okrug.

5. Promotion of social partnership in OSH at the enterprise level (safety committees);
6. Development of OSH management systems at enterprises (based on ILO OSH 2001/ GOST 12.0.230-2007);
7. Dissemination of modern information and best experiences across Russia and Russian-speaking communities in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Building up on the previous components and achievements, the second phase of the project pursued the following Specific Objectives:

1. Outline a decent and safe work strategy for North-West region of Russia using the systematic approach of the ILO and based on the new ILO Convention No 187 (June 2006);
2. Identify and determine the scope of the OSH problem in NW Russia (in select pilot regions, NW Okrug of the RF);
3. Introduce and implement ILO-OSH 2001 management systems at enterprises (pilots);
4. Build up practical social partnership in OSH at enterprise level (functioning safety committees);
5. Promotion of OSH issues and awareness raising;
6. Dissemination of OSH information across the language barrier.

Methodology of evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- a) Determine the extent to which the objectives (outcomes) of the project have been achieved, what kind of changes produced, what are the intended or unintended effects of the project;
- b) Obtain feedback from the national partners: what is working, what is not and why;
- c) Provide suggestions, recommendations to better target the next steps, future strategies and new areas of technical cooperation.

The methodology of the research included document review, individual and group interviews, field visits, observation and debriefing with the project team and ILO/Moscow Specialists. Research findings were interpreted based on the following key criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness of the project (outcomes), Effectiveness of the overall project management approach, Efficiency, Impact and sustainability

The evaluation serves the following - external and internal - clients groups:

- ILO tripartite constituents and national project partners;
- Ultimate beneficiaries of the project – working men and women in the North West Region of the RF;
- The Donor;
- ILO management and technical specialists at the ILO SRO/Moscow and the Headquarters;
- Project staff.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance:

1. The project corresponds to the current trends of the ongoing administrative reform of OSH management in Russia (i.e., adoption of a Russian regulation identical to the ILO OSH management systems guidelines/ ILO-OSH 2001). Moreover, the project has been instrumental in initiating this trend by promoting ILO-OSH 2001 to be approved as an Interstate GOST 12.0.230-2007 (covering the CIS region).
2. The project fully meets the informational needs of the partners in the NW Russia. The project has created a solid knowledge base on OSH in the Russian language and made every effort possible to make partners aware of this knowledge. Partners are being supplied with modern information on internationally recognized approaches to OSH management and best practices. The constituents see this as a unique

opportunity, which would not have been possible without the ILO project. It creates enabling conditions for transition from a reactive to proactive approach in OSH management systems, both at the regional and workplace level.

3. What the constituents see as a particular strength of the project is the fact that it is strongly supported by the state authorities, which is a confirmation of the relevance of the project to the national priorities. The government's "blessing" is also essential for the successful piloting of OSH management systems at the level of enterprises.

Effectiveness

4. The project has been instrumental in boosting social dialogue on OSH in the pilot districts (regions) of North West Russia and at the pilot enterprises. In many cases, such dialogue was almost non-existent prior to the project and only became possible with its support. Partners see the ILO and the project as the catalyst of the social dialogue, which is moving forward against all the odds. The pilot regions have started a practice of discussing OSH at the regular meetings of tripartite commissions, special committees and ad hoc meetings.
5. The project raised awareness of economic losses due to poor working conditions. The training module on Economic Efficiency has been successfully developed, tested and is in high demand among the regional partners (and beyond).
6. The project triggered the development of modern OSH management systems based on ILO OSH 2001 at the enterprises and contributed to the adoption of a new national standard on OSH. Nevertheless, the process is still

at its initial stage and needs further support, i.e. at the pilot enterprises.

7. The project brought a new stream of thinking into the stagnant field of OSH, challenging routine approaches, which have been remaining unchanged for years. It pioneered proactive approach to OSH systems aimed at prevention of accidents, as opposed to the reactive one, dealing with the consequences.

Efficiency

8. The outputs of the project in relation to the inputs are significant. The project reached out to over 42 organizations with 60,000 workers in total and provided training to over 1,200 representatives from the constituents' organizations and enterprises. It managed to influence both the regional policies and the state of affairs at individual enterprises, thus providing a unique combination of "theory and practice". It resulted in the adoption of two regional laws on OSH and three regional reports. It developed and tested training modules on "Risk management" and "Basics of economics on OSH at the enterprise" and published over 12 educational guidelines.
9. All the outputs were provided with a very limited staffing (NB: only one person employed by the project) and over a very short period of time.
10. The project managed to skillfully use the ILO knowledge base and intellectual resources to the maximum extent, with the support from the ILO/Moscow OSH team. Partners have been provided with access to unique tools, which they are actively using and developing to fit local conditions.
11. It also managed to multiply its resources by engaging a number of qualified volunteers from among the

local experts, who offered substantial help in the implementation of the project workplan (e.g., Svedwood Group/Karelia; Uchebnyi Kombinat/Leningrad region).

Impact and sustainability

12. The long-term impact of the project is likely to be affected by several factors, outside of the immediate reach and responsibility of the project:

a) There is a gap between the federal policy-making level and practical implementation of policies at the regional/municipal/workplace level. Presently, practical OSH matters are not being duly addressed by the policy makers, which correlates with the abolishment of the Ministry of Labour in 2004 and its merge with the Ministry of Health, resulting in the establishment of the Ministry of Health and Social Development.

The Labour Code and other relevant laws do not specify the role of local administrations (local authorities) in providing safe working conditions. As a result, the majority of the enterprises operate in a “grey” zone, with no oversight from the local administration.

In order to fill this gap and with the support of the project, the constituents in two pilot regions (Murmansk and Karelia) managed to pass special laws determining the responsibilities of the regional authorities over OSH matters.

b) There is a lack of internal motivation among employers for the establishment of modern OSH management systems and improvement of working conditions. There are no external mechanisms to stimulate employers to introduce such systems.

These are some of the biggest challenges to be faced in the mid-term

perspective. The above gaps could be addressed by future activities, for example, in a third phase of the project.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

13. Unions appear to be the weakest side in the tripartite partnership formula. They have difficulties in defining their role in OSH matters and were not able to clearly define their contribution to the project objectives. They consider themselves to be “weak” and not having enough “weight” to influence OSH situation in general. They also think that it is the government authorities, who are the key players in this regard, while the unions are more of a kind of a moral “prosecutor” vis-à-vis the employers.
14. Partners consider that the project is short of staff, which limits its capacity to make a stronger impact at a broader level. Partners see it as a weakness of the project.
15. There has been no involvement of St. Petersburg authorities into the project, which is unfortunate, because the City of St. Petersburg is important in example-setting as one of the most significant academic and intellectual centers in the nation.
16. There is a lack of qualified local specialists in North-West Russia and no region-wide system of training of specialists in line with modern standards. The majority of OSH specialists and managers are not clear about OSH management systems. There are a lot of competing systems and OSH specialists do not know what is the difference between them and how to implement them in practice.

Recommendations on the next steps

17. Continuation of technical assistance

In partners' opinion, in order for the project to have long-term tangible results, it is necessary to extend the duration of the project and sustain the intervention.

18. Establishment of pilot training centers

Partners asked the ILO to consider if it could help them in creating local educational and training capacity based on the ILO standards, tools and methodologies. This could be done through the establishment of a system of professional training courses at the already existing educational centers, which could be engaged as pilots. Partners think some of the benefits and achievements of the project may disappear over time, if they are not supported with the establishment of regular training courses, where the best tools and methods could be disseminated, analyzed and modified to the current conditions and on a permanent basis.

This would help increase the cadre of qualified local specialists equipped with up-to-date knowledge to further spread modern OSH Management Systems based on ILO principles in NW Russia.

19. Further development of training and educational materials in Russian language

Risk assessment should be part of the training courses, but not only - it is necessary to cover other aspects of the ILO OSH 2001 as well. The ILO help in the development of new materials (training courses) in Russian language would be highly appreciated.

20. Economic aspects of OSH

It is necessary to pay more attention to the economic aspects of safety at work.

Economic benefits of safe working conditions will motivate the employers for building effective systems of OSH management. It is recommended to continue work on the topic of economic efficiency in the sphere of OSH.

21. Training course on social partnership

Social partnership on OSH is another focus area for the future. A basic training course on how social partnership can be instrumental in the development of OSH management systems is very much needed. It would help national partners better utilize the potential of social partnership on OSH matters. Such a training course could concentrate on the following kinds of questions: How can social partnership be helpful in practical implementation of OSH management systems? What are the mechanisms, tools and methods of social dialogue on OSH?

22. Targeted training course for unions

In view of the fact that the unions are less prepared to tackle OSH matters, it makes sense to develop a targeted training course specifically for the unions in order to help them speak with their own voice and play a role in practical OSH matters.

23. Workers' motivation, education and communication

Workers' motivation to cooperate in providing safe working conditions and comply with safety regulations is another aspect of OSH which is currently underdeveloped. Unsafe behavior at work is one of the leading causes of occupational accidents in Russia. It should be addressed by a special course on workers' motivation to participate in risk assessment to improve working conditions and adopt safe behavior patterns.

24. Connecting pilot enterprises with pilot training centers

It would be useful to broadly disseminate lessons learned, case studies and best practices from the pilot enterprises of the project. One of the interesting possibilities would be to do it by linking together the pilot enterprises and the future “pilot training/educational centers”, so that the enterprises would supply such information to the centers for the purposes of learning and analysis.

25. ILO Copyrights

It is recommended to develop a simple procedure concerning the transfer of the ILO copyrights to national partner organizations, so that they could use and publish the ILO materials, modular training courses etc.

26. Video courses

Production of video versions of the ILO training courses would be extremely useful.

27. Improvement of texts translated from English

The translations of materials from English into Russian need some editing and improvement.

Specifically, it is recommended to improve the Russian version of Guidelines on the Development of Regional OSH Reports, so that it can be used by administrative officials without any need for adaptation or modification.

28. Updating online OSH Day materials

OSH Day (April 28) materials at the ILO/Moscow Website should be renewed regularly and more often. This information is being regularly used by the Russian-speaking OSH community, so it needs to be updated.

The ILO should be more active in promoting further improvements of Russian legislation governing OSH. Among the most often mentioned gap areas are - regulations on mandatory occupational accident insurance and economic incentives for employers to provide better working conditions.

29. Reaching out to enterprises in St. Petersburg City

It is recommended to try to recruit into the project a few pilot enterprises from the City of St. Petersburg. A potential demo effect obtained from such pilots would be much stronger, due to the special status of St. Petersburg in Russia.

Policy advocacy

