



International  
Labour  
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**Safe Work for** **outh Kit**

**TIPS FOR  
YOUNG WORKERS  
IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY  
IN MYANMAR**

**2019**

**STAY SAFE**





Construction is a dangerous occupation in Myanmar and much of the work is too dangerous for anyone under 18 years. However, there are some tasks young workers who are 14 years old or older might be able to do safely, depending on the type of construction site. There are some general rules:

## 1. Decide which work is youth-appropriate and which is not

Examples:

- OK: Tasks which offer safe opportunities to learn new skills
- OK: Simple tasks; providing lunches and tea; keeping the site neat
- OK: Bringing tools and materials using a wheelbarrow or trolley (no heavy loads being carried)
- Not OK: Tasks which require respiratory protection(toxic chemicals, dusts, etc) or eye protection (welding, grinding, etc)
- Not OK: Tasks which involve pushing, pulling, lifting loads that are more than 20kg
- Not OK: Tasks on a site near open excavations, heavy equipment or vehicles, or exposure to dust, smoke or fume
- Not OK: Tasks which require young workers to operate hazardous equipment
- Not OK: Tasks which require young workers to work at heights without fall protection or appropriate access

## 2. Ensure a safe work environment

- Frequently check that all tools and equipment are in good condition
- Ensure that all products and materials are safely stored
- Provide equipment to move all materials (wood, stone, cement) and ensure that children and young persons are not asked to lift and carry heavy loads (eg >20kg)
- Make sure that there are guard rails on excavations, stairways, scaffolding, floor openings and wall openings
- Keep the construction site housekeeping good so there is nothing to trip over or fall on
- Limit access to the construction site to authorized persons only and provide a sign to indicate
- Post a policy against harassment where everyone can see it and enforce that policy.

## 3. Provide training and supervision

- Young workers must be trained to do every task that's part of their work, such as how to lift things correctly or how to use the tools and equipment safely.
- Young workers must be shown what might be harmful to them, and supervised appropriately
- Young workers must never be allowed to do work that is “not OK” for those under 18 (check the list).



## 4. Know and keep to the law

Myanmar has workplace safety laws to protect young workers. The Factories Act (as amended) covers sites with 5 or more workers where any manufacturing is carried out, either with or without power equipment (Section 2, sub-section “m”). The law forbids adolescents and children from:

- being engaged in work that poses a danger to the child’s health, interferes with the child’s education, or is exploitive. (Section 75)
- lifting, carrying or moving any load heavy enough to cause injury. (Section 36)
- working long hours (over 4 hours per day) for children between 14 and 16 years old or at night (Section 79)
- working without a certificate of fitness from the doctor (Section 77).

Myanmar is also subject to ILO Convention No. 182 on hazardous work which says:

- No one under 18 years is allowed to do any kind of work which could damage their health, safety, well-being or morals.
- Myanmar has enacted a new law on Occupational Safety and Health that becomes effective in March 2020. The new law lead to stronger OSH protections for workers in the construction sector and in other sectors such as agriculture, where many young workers are found.

### **Safety . . . the top hazards for young people in construction are:**

1. FALLING – falling into an excavation or off of a high place (wall, ladder, scaffold, roof)
2. STRUCK BY – being struck by a vehicle or having something fall on them (tools, timber, bricks, stone)
3. HEAT -- Working long hours in the hot sun without adequate water and rest periods
4. CAUGHT IN or BETWEEN – Working in a trench or excavation that is not safely sloped or shored to prevent collapse
5. ELECTROCUTION – working near overhead power lines or with unsafe electric hand tools
6. HEAVY LOADS -- carrying materials that are too heavy for them



## Some other construction dangers for youth and what to do about them:

<p><b>FALLS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ladders</u> Tell young workers to always check that the ladder is strong and stable before going up, and to hold on with both hands. Monitor that they understand how to check ladder safety.</li> <li>• <u>Walkways</u> Guard all walking and working areas to prevent falls and keep free of un-necessary materials and debris, keep ropes and hoses coiled up and properly stowed when not in use</li> <li>• <u>Scaffolding</u> Do not let young workers work on unguarded scaffolding</li> <li>• <u>Clothing</u> Instruct young workers to wear suitable protective shoes, preferably with rubber soles that will not slip</li> <li>• <u>Behaviour</u> Instruct young workers not to run or carry items that are too heavy</li> </ul>
<p><b>STRAIN</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Lifting</u> Teach young workers the safe way to lift things:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Squat to pick up the object and lift using your leg muscles not your back</li> <li>■ Hold the heavy item against your body</li> <li>■ Move your feet to turn, do not twist your body.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>Moving</u> Watch to see that young workers use wheelbarrows or similar mechanical aids to move materials, and that adult workers lift the heavy items. <i>(Young people's bones are still developing and can be easily injured.)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>INJURIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Vehicles</u> Do not allow young workers to drive trucks, tractors or other vehicles. Keep them away from areas where heavy equipment is moving around.</li> <li>• <u>Powered equipment</u> Do not allow young workers to work around or with powered saws, drills, or hammers.</li> <li>• <u>Vibration, light, or noise risks</u> Keep young workers completely away from work areas where there is soldering, welding, powered grinders or sanders, and exposure to noise that means they have to raise their voice to communicate.</li> <li>• <u>Electricity</u> Instruct young workers to tell you if they see electrical equipment or wiring that looks damaged or is wet. Warn them not to touch it. Remind them never to touch electrical power lines with anything. Monitor their understanding.</li> <li>• <u>Cuts &amp; bruises</u> Make sure youth wear suitably protective shoes and gloves when they are working on the site</li> <li>• <u>Concussion</u> Put up barriers to prevent objects from falling over the edge of a roof or building onto those below, provide hard hats to those in positions of risk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHEMICALS &amp; DUST</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Burns</u> Do not allow youth to use or to work with glue, paint or solvent. Do not allow youth to work in enclosed spaces where hazardous chemicals have been used. If respiratory protection is required, the work is too hazardous for young workers. (Young workers are more susceptible to chemicals exposure than adults)</li> <li>• <u>Poisoning</u> Do not allow young workers to work around asbestos, lead or petroleum products.</li> <li>• <u>Lung damage</u> Clean up sawdust and other dust regularly, using a wet mop methods, or vacuum with high efficiency particulate filters</li> </ul>



<b>ATTITUDES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be sure that adult workers do not use violent language around young workers or threaten them.</li><li>• Show no tolerance toward instances of abuse or harassment or sexual misconduct. Act immediately.</li></ul>
<b>WORKING CONDITIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Rehydration</u> Provide clean cool water and urge workers to drink a lot when it is hot.</li><li>• <u>Sun protection</u> Provide a space and time for workers to take rest breaks out of the sun or heat.</li><li>• <u>Contracts</u> Ensure that all young workers have a contract that lays out their tasks, hours, and pay</li><li>• <u>Medical care</u> Have a well-provisioned first aid kit on site, ensure there are site workers trained in first aid, and provide transport and funds for care if a young worker is injured</li></ul>



**Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work  
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