



International  
Labour  
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**Safe Work for Youth Kit**

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

**2019**

**STAY SAFE**





With new sustainable fishing methods, the fishing industry in Myanmar can be a good place for you to work for many years to come. Get set for the future by STAYING SAFE now! This fact sheet will alert you to the most important safety issues in fishing.

What are the tasks that you do in fishing? Do you haul materials onto the boats (floaters for the nets and containers for the fish)? Do you get the nets ready for the water by putting on signal lights? Do you help cast the nets and then pull them back in when fishing is over? On land, do you carry the fish to the drying areas and separate out the different types?

All of this can be good and decent work, but there are always things that can hurt you or make you sick. There are so some tasks nobody should ask you to do because they are too hazardous. The adults in charge (boat owner or fishing company) are responsible for making sure that where you work and what you do is safe, but it is essential for you to know the hazards and risks and how to control them so that you stay safe.

## **THE TOP 5 RISKS FOR YOUNG WORKERS WORKING IN FISHERIES**

- Drowning – storms, fixing the nets under water, unsafe boat
- Injury from lifting, carrying pushing or pulling loads
- Injury from machinery, fish teeth, fins and hooks
- Slipping or tripping on wet or cluttered surfaces.  
Missing out on education!!!



## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO TO STAY SAFE ON THE JOB

### KNOW THE LAW

In Myanmar, the law says: No one under 18 should do hazardous work!

Some of the kinds of work which you should not do are:

- lifting heavy items or carrying loads for long distances (nets, fuel, fish)
- working at night or for long hours (more than 8 hours at one time)
- handling or being close to hazardous materials (gasoline, cyanide, explosives)
- working with machinery (trying to start or repair an engine/ or winch)
- working in or under water (diving, standing in water more than a few minutes)
- working in confined spaces (refrigerators or fish smoking rooms)
- working alone away from others, or isolated from other young people

### GET TRAINED

Your boss or other adult who is in charge must train you to do every task that's part of your job, before you start your job. They must show you how to lift heavy things safely, or how to use cutting tools or equipment safely, and show you what might be harmful. It is really important that they train you what to do in an emergency and where to go if you get injured. They need to also explain what rights you have.

- You have the right to be trained to work safely
- You have the right to be paid the same amount as an adult after you've been trained
- You have the right to rest breaks and time off

### ASK QUESTIONS

Do not be shy. Ask questions. Speak up if you are not sure how to do work or if you are worried about something. If you don't tell someone, or and if you guess or try to muddle through, you could make mistakes – or worse, get injured! If you ask for help in a respectful way, most likely your boss or co-workers will listen. And if they don't? Remember, in the end, losing your life is a much worse than losing your job!



## WHAT YOUR EMPLOYER SHOULD DO SO YOU STAY SAFE

- Provide life-saving equipment for everyone on the boat (life jackets, personal flotation devices, and ensure that all workers are trained on how to use them.
  - Have a first aid kit in the boat and other emergency equipment and train in their use.
  - Provide mechanical assistance to help you carry heavy loads ( more than 20kg)
  - Use sustainable fishing practices that do not involve explosives or chemicals
  - Provide protective gloves if you are going to be cleaning or cutting fish; with gloves the fish and tools are easier to hold and less likely to slip out of your hands
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## TRUE STORIES

*“It was my second week on the job. I slipped on the wet floor when I was sorting fish and fell, hitting my head hard on the side of the boat. I was dizzy when I woke up and had a headache for two weeks. My boss was mad because he didn’t have anyone to help him.”*

*“I was pulling in the net when part of it got tangled around my foot and I got pulled over the side of the boat. If there hadn’t been someone there to cut the net loose, I would have drowned.”*

*“A friend of mine died – we don’t know exactly what happened because he was alone – but apparently they went out to fish in really bad weather. A big wave must have swamped the boat and they sank. His boss was always trying to save money and didn’t believe in buying life jackets. When they found his body, he didn’t have a life jacket on.”*



## SOME OTHER HAZARDS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM:

<b>CUTS</b>	<p><b>You can get an infection from an injury that lasts a long time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep knives sharp. With a dull knife you have to push harder and it can easily slip and cut. Be sure you know the safe way to cut (push the blade away from you, not towards your thumb)</li><li>• If you drop a knife or gaff hook, let it fall. Do not try to catch it (you might catch the blade)</li><li>• Learn first aid: what to do if a hook or fish spine gets embedded in your skin; what to do for a rope burn</li><li>• Ask your boss for suitable gloves</li></ul>
<b>FALLS</b>	<p><b>You may get an internal injury from a bad fall and can no longer work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Never run or move too fast, especially when you are carrying something Do not carry items too high for you to see over</li><li>• Wear rubber sandals or shoes with non-slip soles</li><li>• Keep the deck of the boat neat and tidy; ropes coiled up, bait and hooks properly stowed in containers; block and tackle safely secured.</li></ul>
<b>BACK PAIN &amp; MUSCLE STRAIN</b>	<p><b>Your bones and muscles can be easily injured because they are still growing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you have a heavy item to lift or carry, get someone else to help</li><li>• When lifting something by yourself, remember “SLIM” (Safe Lifting Methods) Squat to pick up the object Lift using your leg muscles not your back muscles In close, keep the object against your body Move your feet to turn, do not twist your body</li><li>• When pulling or pushing something heavy, tighten your stomach muscles</li></ul>
<b>EXPOSURE &amp; FATIGUE</b>	<p><b>You need more rest than adults because your brain is still maturing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a head covering or other some protection from hot sun</li><li>• Drink lots of clean water to keep yourself hydrated</li><li>• Judgement is poor when you are tired or dehydrated; be calm, don't take chances</li><li>• Be sure you get at least 8 hours of sleep each night</li></ul>
<b>REALLY HAZARDOUS STUFF</b>	<p><b>If you are under 18 years, you have to completely stay away from these; they are “off limits”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• electrical equipment-risk of electrocution</li><li>• motorized winch - risk of entanglement</li><li>• explosives, fish poisons or their containers risk of death</li><li>• deep dives to attach or untangle a net, collect shells, - risk of drowning</li></ul>
<b>REALLY BAD SITUATIONS</b>	<p><b>You have a right to be treated respectfully at work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If older men try to get you to drink alcohol, do drugs or other things, you can talk to the boss or a co-worker, but it is best to leave this job</li><li>• If you feel threatened by work mates or if you have been hit, get a different job!</li></ul>



**Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work  
Branch (FUNDAMENTALS)**

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