



International
Labour
Organization

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SAFETY
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FOR ALL



ILO/Japan
Multi-bilateral
Programme

Safety + Health for All Plantation Workers in South Asia

Three Country OSH Training Workshop for Plantation Sector and Introduction and Application of WIND and WISE Training Methodologies

(online meeting)

22 to 24 February from 1000 -1300 hrs (Indian time)

1. Background information/context

Occupational safety and health (OSH) is critical and forms the most fundamental of human rights, the rights to life and health. Yet, the recent statistics by ILO-WHO show that work-related diseases and injuries were responsible for the deaths of 1.9 million people in 2016. Every year, 2.78 million workers die from occupational accidents and work-related diseases (of which 2.4 million are disease-related) and an additional 374 million workers suffer from non-fatal occupational accidents. Globally, construction and agriculture sectors are some of the world's largest and most dangerous sectors. At least 60,000 construction workers and 170,000 agricultural workers die each year (ILO report, 2021). In addition, the workers also suffer from climate change and related heat stress. In the context of a global COVID-19 pandemic, the right of every worker to a safe and healthy work environment has become ever more important.

The workplace needs to be safe and provide productive employment to workers as well as contribute towards competitive and sustainable enterprises or businesses. The workers should be able to work in safe and healthy working conditions, and possible industrial accidents and occupational illnesses need to be prevented. Recent workplace accidents in South Asia have been devastating. They are, for example a factory fire at Ali Enterprises in Pakistan (2012), the collapse of Rana Plaza in Bangladesh (2013), the rubber factory accident in Sri Lanka (2018) or the fire at a bag factory in India (2019). Precious human lives, the lives of workers, were lost and many seriously injured. In addition, the period under the Covid-19 pandemic and enforced lockdowns has thrown up new challenges for governments, businesses, and the workers, even as industrial accidents have continued to be common occurrences.

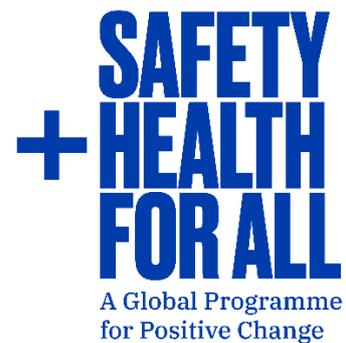
The ILO Centenary Declaration on Future of Work (2019) recognizes the importance of the role of sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work and stated that "safe and healthy working conditions are fundamental to decent work". It also called for consideration of occupational safety and health as a fundamental right, and which will be a subject matter of discussion in June

2022 at the ILC. The importance of safety and health within the ILO's work can be gathered from the number of international labour standards on the topic. Since 1919, the Organization has devoted a major portion of its standard-setting work to occupational safety and health, adopting 20 Conventions, one Protocol and 27 Recommendations.

About the project:

The project contributes to the ILO's agenda of Decent Work for All, targeting Country Programme Outcome of the DWCP – India (Priority 3 and Outcome 3.2: By 2022, women and men workers and enterprises benefit from safe and healthy workplaces) and aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 12 (responsible production and consumption) Sustainable Development that has a principle of 'Leaving No One Behind. The project also targets directly Goal 8 (decent work), target 8.8 (safe working environment), and indirectly Goal 3 (healthy lives), target 3.9 (hazardous environment).

Over the years, the ILO constituents have provided several recommendations and suggestions to improve the safety and health and the roles and responsibilities of the government, employers' and workers' organizations and the key stakeholders. In line with the recommendations and suggestions provided by the constituents, under the global ILO's flagship programme "Safety + Health for All", a sub-regional project has been launched targeting the Plantation Workers in South Asia. This project, funded by the Japanese government, aims at improving the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) conditions of the workers in the plantation sector in South Asia covering the countries of India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. The ILO programme pays particular attention to the hurdles developing countries face; high-risk sectors such as agriculture; workers in vulnerable conditions such as women, young workers and migrant workers; small and medium enterprises; and global supply chains.



The immediate objectives of the project are:

- Generate and share knowledge on constraints and opportunities to improve the safety and health of workers and prevent discrimination in the plantation sector in South Asia;
- Strengthen national and local institutions to better promote and protect the safety and health of plantation workers in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka;
- Develop or strengthen workplace and industry level practices and initiatives to promote the safety and health of workers, in the plantation sector in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, notably through improved representation (including 'voice') of workers in the smallholdings and of women workers.

Focus on Plantation Sector:

Plantations play a critical role in many developing and emerging economies with large rural sectors. They create, directly and indirectly, employment opportunities for millions of people and generate important export earnings. Plantations crops and in particular tea are important agriculture subsectors in South Asia. India is the second largest tea producer in the world (1.2 million tonnes) and the fourth largest tea exporter, Sri Lanka is the fourth largest tea producer in the world (343,100 tonnes) and the second largest tea exporter (288,000 tonnes) and Nepal is the 21st tea producer in the world and the 22nd tea exporter (13,200 tonnes). Similarly, rubber, coconut (Sri Lanka) and cardamom (Nepal) plantations are critical sectors of employment for women and men workers, as well as contribute significantly to the economy.

Several reports, including recent investigation from the ILO, indicate that the tea, cardamom, rubber and coconut sectors presents significant challenges in establishing infrastructure and services necessary to support Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) improvements in rural and semi-rural settings. Production in plantations, whether these are large estates or small holdings, is characterized by high labour intensity especially in remote rural areas with female workers representing half of the total workforce. Overall conditions of plantation workers are very poor and characterized by low wages, poor hygiene, sanitation and health conditions, as well as limited workers' representation. An important part of tea workers is working for estates, but the number of smallholders is growing and the productivity of smallholder farmers is usually higher than the one of big estates. Several reports highlight that OSH is a major area of concern for the actors in the sector, in particular chemical and biological hazards resulting from the use of agro-chemicals with little or inadequate protection and scarce access to proper water and sanitation.

It is important that collective, coordinated and convergent approaches are used to target the OSH challenges in the plantation sector. This requires the tri-partite partners to work together in a comprehensive manner, strategically planning progressive steps that can be undertaken to make improvements and enable decent working conditions, improve safety and health at work.

About the Training Workshop:

Given the above context, a three country OSH Training Workshop focussed on plantation sectors is being organized for the tri-partite constituents. The workshop will also introduce the ILO participatory tools **WIND (Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development)** and **WISE (Work Improvement in Small Enterprises)** programme from 22 to 24 February from 10.00 – 13.00 (Indian time, online meeting).

The training workshop will focus on building knowledge on the international standards on occupational health and safety, understanding the current country context related to

OSH in 3 countries and building capacities of the tri-partite partners to engage in a process of social dialogue to explore comprehensive policy level as well as implementation level actions to enable better safety and health for workers, improve productivity at the enterprise level and develop a culture of safety and health in the communities living in and around the plantations.

The workshop will also serve as a platform to learn about the ILO participatory action-oriented tools WISE and WIND and other approaches that can be used at the workplace level by tri-partite partners. These tools enable a joint approach to identify issues and challenges, and themselves come-up with local home-grown, low cost/ no cost solutions which can be used make immediate improvements which are based on locally sustainable measures and materials; as well as plan and implement strategic changes in workplace and contribute towards strengthening the OSH frameworks by providing concrete evidence.

Objectives of the Training:

Specifically, the training workshop aims to achieve following objectives.

- (i) Build knowledge and capacity of the tri-partite partners on national and international instruments relating to occupational health and safety with special focus on the plantation sector to engage in policy discussions and develop joint roadmap for action by identifying key priority areas.
- (ii) Understand the ILO's practical and participatory action-oriented tools (such as WISE and WIND) to implement action plans for practical, low-cost ways of improving OSH in the plantation sector use of ILO action-checklists for assessing workplace OSH needs;
- (iii) Understand and focus on specific gender and OSH needs for strengthening gender responsive OSH initiatives at the workplaces; and understand the issues related to prevention of workplace violence and harassment;
- (iv) Building capacities to set-up and organize bi-partite (gender mainstreamed) active OSH committees and plan activities to promote participatory OSH management systems and documenting for results and evidence building.

Outcomes of the Training Workshop:

The proposed outcomes of the training workshop are for the tri-partite participants to:

- (i) Understand the issues and challenges related to OSH in the plantation sector and will be able to engage in policy dialogues related to promoting OSH and core labour rights in the plantation sector and developing a joint roadmap for action.
- (ii) Be able to plan for initiation of the participatory approaches using tools such as WISE and WIND to make incremental changes with the participation of workers and employers/management at the workplace.
- (iii) Integrate issues related to specific requirement of women workers in the context of occupational health and safety, understand and focus on specific gender and

OSH needs for strengthening gender responsive OSH initiatives at the workplaces; and understand the issues related to prevention of workplace violence and harassment;

- (iv) Develop a broad framework of action to engage on OSH at the country level to strengthen national work on strengthening OSH policies and infrastructure as well as developing joint OSH initiatives at the workplace level in the plantation sector – in large estates and plantations, both large factories and small holdings (in both formal and informal sector).

Participants

The participants are tri-partite constituents and key stakeholders from India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. They are Ministries of Labour, Employers' and Workers' Organizations as well as other key partners in the three target countries including officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture/Plantations, small grower associations, and sectoral boards and associations.

ILO Team

Speakers

- Ms. Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO DWT for South Asia and CO for India, New Delhi
- Mr. Yasuo Ariga, Chief Technical Adviser and Overall Coordinator, ILO/Japan Multi-bilateral Programme, Bangkok
- Mr. Ravindra Peiris, Senior Specialist - Employers Activities, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi
- Mr. Syed Sultan U Ahmmed, Specialist on Workers' Activities, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi

Trainers:

- Mr. Tsuyoshi Kawakami, Senior Specialist on OSH and Labour Inspection, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi
- Ms. Bharti Birla, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi

Facilitators

- Ms. Sriyani Ekanayake, National Project Coordinator, ILO Sri Lanka
- Mr. Swagat Pandey, National Project Coordinator, ILO Nepal
- Ms. Kanagarani Selvakumar, National Project Coordinator, ILO India

Provisional Agenda:

The proposed agenda for the 3-day training workshop (delivered online) from 22 to 24 February from 1000-1300 hrs (Indian time) is as under:

Day 1: 22 Feb (Tue)	
0930 – 1000	Registration & Welcome <i>Ms Sriyani Ekanayake, National Project Coordinator, ILO Sri Lanka</i>
1005 – 1030	Inaugural Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO DWT for South Asia and CO for India, New Delhi - Mr. Yasuo Ariga, Chief Technical Adviser and Overall Coordinator, ILO/Japan Multi-bilateral Programme, Bangkok - Mr. R. Peiris, Senior Specialist on Employers Activities, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi - Mr. Syed Sultan U Ahmmed, Specialist on Workers' Activities, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi
1020 – 1040	Introduction to S+H for All Plantation Workers Project <i>Ms. Bharti Birla, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi</i>
1040 – 1100	Introduction to International Labour Standards on Occupational Safety and Health <i>Ms. Bharti Birla, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi</i>
1100 – 1110	Break
1110 – 1140	National Programmes and Systems of Occupational Safety and Health and How They Operate in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka <i>Mr. Tsuyoshi Kawakami, Senior Specialist on OSH and Labour Inspection, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi</i>
1140 – 1200	Taking Collective Action and Reaching the Unreached <i>Ms. Bharti Birla, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi</i>
1200 – 1230	ILO's Participatory Approaches to Make Workplace Improvements – Introduction to WIND and WISE Tools - <i>Mr. Tsuyoshi Kawakami, Senior Specialist on OSH and Labour Inspection, ILO DWT for South Asia, New Delhi</i>
1230 – 1300	Application of WIND action-checklist (Participants)
1300	Closing – Day 1
Day 2: 23 Feb (Wed)	
1000 – 1010	Recap of Day 1 <i>Facilitator Day 2: Mr. Swagat Pandey, National Project Coordinator, ILO Nepal</i>
1010 – 1040	Technical presentation 1 (WIND): Improving OSH in the farm by using simple, low-cost methods (Yoshi)
1040 – 1100	Group work (Participants)
1100 – 1130	Group presentation and Q & A (Participants)
1130 – 1140	Break

1140 – 1210	Meeting the needs of women workers in the plantation sector - Creating gender responsive workplace (Bharti)
1210 – 1230	Introduction to WISE action-checklist (Yoshi)
1230 – 1300	Application of WISE action-checklist (Participants)
1300	Closing Day 2
Day 3: 24 Feb (Thu)	
1000 – 1010	Recap of Day 2 <i>Facilitator Day 3: Ms Kanagarani Selvakumar, National Project Coordinator, ILO India</i>
1110 – 1050	Technical presentation 2 (WISE): Improving OSH in farm product processing factories (Yoshi)
1050 – 1130	Group work: Good practice photo contest (Participants)
1130 – 1140	Break
1140 – 1200	Implementation of OSH improvements - Promoting OSH committee activities and participatory OSH management systems in the plantation sector - (Yoshi)
1200 – 1240	Country Wise Group work: Proposed Roadmap for Action (20 min for prep, 20 min presentation) (Bharti and Yoshi)
1240 – 1300	Way forward: Planning Joint Action in the Three Countries (Bharti)
1300	Closing