



**FOR DEBATE AND GUIDANCE**

SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Technical cooperation activities  
in occupational safety and health:  
A thematic evaluation**

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## I. Introduction

1. In 2003 the International Labour Conference adopted a Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH). This was followed in 2006 by the adoption of the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187). In order to provide background and context, this paper begins with a brief summary of this new strategic approach to OSH, followed by a review of selected technical cooperation programmes and projects that were implemented since the creation of the SafeWork Programme in 1999.
2. OSH has always been at the heart of the ILO's mandate and work, including its standards-setting activities. Twenty-three ILO Conventions, two Protocols and 27 Recommendations deal directly with OSH. Others, including core standards such as the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), have significant OSH relevance. Two of the 12 priority Conventions concern OSH matters.<sup>1</sup> Nineteen ILO codes of practice supplement the range of international OSH instruments.
3. The last thematic evaluation of OSH technical cooperation by the Governing Body dates back to 1999.<sup>2</sup> Since then, there have been relatively few technical cooperation projects specifically or exclusively dealing with OSH, since most of the major donors decided to focus on other areas after contributing to OSH projects in the 1990s. OSH was, however, often included as a component of wider programmes on decent work, social protection and social dialogue.
4. As the evaluation is based on the reports of projects and it attempts to be as objective as possible, a certain "order of credibility" is attached to the available reports, the highest being those with an independent external terminal evaluation. Since for projects with limited budgets no independent evaluation was envisaged while, for some others, donors decided not to have the planned evaluation, the number of independent evaluations is limited. Internal evaluations have therefore also been considered, as have been mid-term and progress reports by project directors or chief technical advisers, where available.
5. Efforts have been made to review a mix of national, regional and interregional programmes/projects, and to include references to projects from the different regions. The focus of this paper is on seven programmes and projects, ongoing and completed, with a further six taken into consideration where possible.<sup>3</sup> The average duration of this first group of projects was two years. The total budget for these seven activities was US\$4,080,000 or some US\$580,000 per project. Allocations for most of the other projects listed in the appendix were considerably lower: on average about US\$165,000. Their duration was usually one year or less.

## II. The Global Strategy

6. In 2003, the International Labour Conference adopted a set of conclusions, emphasizing that OSH is "... a fundamental requirement for achieving the objectives of the Decent

<sup>1</sup> The Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81); and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129).

<sup>2</sup> GB.274/TC/4.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix.

Work Agenda". The conclusions outline the ILO Global Strategy on OSH. They confirm the role of ILO instruments as a central pillar for the promotion of workplace safety and health. They call for integrated action that better connects ILO standards with other means of action: advocacy, awareness raising, knowledge development, OSH management systems at both national and enterprise levels, information dissemination and technical cooperation to maximize impact. Technical cooperation is thus an important component.<sup>4</sup> The conclusions underline the need for tripartite national commitment and action in fostering a preventive approach and safety culture considered key to achieving lasting OSH improvements. An action plan for the promotion of OSH and particularly the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), aims at providing technical advice and financial support to developing countries, in particular to develop national OSH profiles, programmes and action plans, and their integration into Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).

### III. Project focus and objectives

7. The projects analysed tend to fall into several distinct, though often connected, categories:

- institutional reform;
- capacity building;
- OSH promotion; and
- sector-focused activities.

8. Several of the projects chosen focus on institutional reform, mainly of labour inspection in respect to OSH compliance and promotion, a central issue of the ILO's OSH programme. The importance of effective labour inspection for promoting OSH is evident. Thus, the project on Training for Integrated Labour Inspection<sup>5</sup> aimed at setting up a modern labour inspection system in Bulgaria, integrating the primary functions of occupational safety and occupational health inspection, until then dispersed under separate administrations – a typical situation in most transition countries. Its main objectives were to:

- substantially improve the labour protection system and working environment;
- enhance productivity and quality of production through better OSH;
- contribute to better relations and social dialogue between employers, workers and government services;
- strengthen and modernize labour inspection by developing an integrated labour inspectorate, using modern training policies and programmes; and
- create an inspection system compatible with relevant international labour standards, EU directives, and best practice in other European countries.

<sup>4</sup> Much of SafeWork's time has been taken up with global efforts to promote OSH, including the annual World Day for Safety and Health at Work and the triennial World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, as well as promoting Convention No. 187 globally. Much time is also devoted to promoting knowledge development through CIS and to international collaboration.

<sup>5</sup> BUL/98/M03/FRG, donor Germany, budget US\$600,000.

9. The project on Improving Working Conditions in the Haitian Assembly Sector <sup>6</sup> had two immediate objectives: “Improved working conditions in participating assembly enterprises” (IO 1); and “Efficient monitoring and inspection systems to ensure improvement in working and employment conditions in the assembly sector” (IO 2). These objectives were to be achieved by conducting initial training courses in OSH and working conditions using the Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) methodology, direct assistance at factory level, and setting up an independent voluntary monitoring system. Following a mid-term evaluation mission, it was decided, in consultation with the donor, to drop IO 2 and focus on activities to strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Labour, and the employers’ and workers’ organizations. Two additional immediate objectives were formulated to enable the employers’ association to provide services to its members to improve conditions of work and employment, and to strengthen tripartite social dialogue.
10. The interregional Global Compact OSH project on Better Health and Safety for Suppliers <sup>7</sup> had the overall objective of establishing national action programmes based on ILO standards in Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, focusing on OSH improvements in the supply chain of a multinational company. Its novel approach included cooperation with that company and a donor agency under a public–private partnership arrangement. The partners’ common goal was to establish an OSH culture by means of improving social and labour standards. The programme further intended to contribute to poverty alleviation by reducing economic losses through improved OSH management in small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) suppliers, and strengthening of labour inspectorates.
11. The development objectives of the project on SafeWork and Integrated Labour Inspection <sup>8</sup> were to improve OSH in Viet Nam, thereby contributing to prevention of work accidents and diseases, increased productivity and quality of production, and better relations and dialogue between employers, workers and government. Its two immediate objectives were: to establish an integrated State Labour Inspectorate as the sole government enforcement agency responsible for supervisory/advisory activities in OSH; and to implement a comprehensive labour inspection training and staff development policy and programme.
12. The Regional Programme for Capacity Building of OSH in Agriculture <sup>9</sup> was aimed at strengthening OSH in small-scale agricultural production, initially in four provinces of Viet Nam. Its main objectives were:
- to provide technical support for the development of policies and a legal framework for the improvement of OSH and working conditions in the sector;
  - to develop sustainable support mechanisms for farmers’ self-help initiatives to improve OSH; and
  - to enhance the capacity of local farmers for continuous improvement of working conditions in agriculture.

<sup>6</sup> HAI/99/M01/USA, donor US, budget US\$1,150,000.

<sup>7</sup> INT/04/M27/GTZ, donor Germany, budget US\$600,000; Volkswagen AG. US\$300,000; ILO US\$200,000.

<sup>8</sup> VIE/00/M01/GER, donor Germany, budget US\$440,000.

<sup>9</sup> RAS/04/M01/JPN, donor Japan, budget US\$600,000.

13. The two other projects under consideration (Serbia and North-West Russia)<sup>10</sup> had broadly the same objectives: institution building through policy development, promotion of social dialogue on OSH, and training of specific target groups with the ultimate aim of reducing occupational accidents and work-related diseases, particularly in high-hazard workplaces.
14. The remaining projects<sup>11</sup> provided mainly short-term technical advisory services and fellowships with limited scope, budget and duration. They usually focused on a specific target group (e.g. employers' organizations) or a particular high-hazard sector (e.g. construction or mining).

## IV. Main evaluation results

15. This section is based on a review of the terminal evaluation exercises selected for the report and also takes into account findings of other project reports where suitable. For those projects that had final (external or internal) evaluations,<sup>12</sup> the reports state that the immediate objectives have all been met. In the project in Haiti, these were substantially reformulated after a mid-term evaluation, but were then fully met by the end of the project. The success of most of these projects can also be judged from the fact that several donors made additional funds available after the initially scheduled project ending. This was the case in Bulgaria, the Global Compact, Haiti and North-West Russia. In the Viet Nam OSH and labour inspection project, another donor (Luxembourg)<sup>13</sup> continued technical support on OSH capacity building after the German-funded project ended.

### A. Project design

16. Examination of the OSH in agriculture, the North-West Russia, and the OSH and labour inspection projects showed that they had all been well designed. Evidence of the quality of project design is that for the Serbia project the Subregional Office (SRO) Budapest had to enter an open tender process for United States Department of Labor (USDOL) funding. In particular the logical sequence of activities, starting with policy review, legislative reform, training needs analysis for effective implementation of new policies and regulations and then, but only then, major HRD and capacity-building efforts, relying on trainer training, and involving the social partner organizations in all decision-making processes, proved invaluable. The Global Compact pilot project also broadly followed this design. Clearly defined, realistic immediate objectives, indicators and outputs thus greatly helped successful project implementation.
17. Two other key factors were that, firstly, target beneficiaries had been closely consulted in the project design phase and their views fully integrated. Secondly, most of the projects

<sup>10</sup> SCG/M02/USA, "Developing a Serbian Labour Inspectorate for the 21st Century", donor US, budget US\$500,000; and RUS/04/M02/FIN "Improved OSH Systems in North-West Russia", mixed funding, principally Finland, budget US\$550.000 in phase 1, and US\$400.000 in phase 2.

<sup>11</sup> Nos VIII–XIII in the appendix.

<sup>12</sup> The Bulgarian project on "Training for Integrated Labour Inspection" (BUL/98/M03/FRG); the Haitian project on "Improving Working Conditions in the Haitian Assembly Sector" (HAI/99/M01/USA); the Viet Nam project on "SafeWork and Integrated Labour Inspection" (VIE/00/M01/GER); and the "ILO/Japan Regional Programme for Capacity Building of OSH in Agriculture" (RAS/04/M01/JPN). See the appendix for a list of reports pertaining to these projects.

<sup>13</sup> VIE/05/M01/LUX on "Enhancing OSH training capacity in Viet Nam", ongoing.

reviewed benefited from qualified national project coordinators (NPCs), whose local knowledge, excellent relations, in particular with the ministries responsible for labour inspection, and continuous on-the-spot support proved crucial for the project's success, while at the same time proving highly cost effective. The Global Compact project appointed an NPC in each participating country, plus a coordinator in the multinational enterprise partner.

18. By contrast, no NPC was envisaged in the Haiti project, and this may in part account for some of the initial difficulties and delays. It also appears that the primary target group – garment assembly factory owners – were not sufficiently consulted ahead of project start-up. This no doubt contributed to the outright rejection of one of the main objectives, i.e. to operate an external monitoring system for review of basic social standards, general conditions of work and OSH.

## **B. Project management, implementation and monitoring**

19. The project management structure chosen first in Bulgaria and then replicated in other countries was crucial to the success of the projects reviewed. The key person in each case was the NPC. ILO units (headquarters or field offices) responsible for technical and administrative backstopping of the projects took considerable care to choose qualified candidates, even if this meant delays in start-up, as in the Viet Nam OSH and Labour Inspection project. In addition, project management units (PMUs) were established for running of day-to-day project affairs; and both the NPCs and the PMUs were guided and monitored by tripartite Project Advisory/Steering Committees (PACs/PSCs), in which the key national and international actors met at regular intervals.
20. For projects that covered more than one country, such as the Global Compact pilot, coordination and monitoring of activities, were more complicated, particularly since more than two international partners were involved. In addition, cooperation with a multinational enterprise in three different countries under a public–private partnership initiative was a novelty for SafeWork.
21. A key component of the USDOL-funded project in Serbia was a “built-in” performance monitoring system to assess progress to allow for continued adjustment of implementation measures. This allowed for considerable flexibility and opened the possibility to develop new initiatives in response to the main partners’ requests arising in the tripartite PAC meetings. A distinct problem arose, however, in that the donor eventually opted for neither mid-term nor final evaluation, thereby foregoing the opportunity of independently and objectively documenting the many successes of this project, some of which had not been planned at the start of activities.
22. In both the OSH and labour inspection projects, the government counterparts and employers’ and workers’ representatives were involved at all levels of project planning, implementation and monitoring. The work of the PACs/PSCs was complemented by broader consultations and regular national tripartite conferences or seminars typically following a logical sequence: presentation and adoption of new national OSH and labour inspection policies highlighting the new roles and responsibilities of government and the social partners; good OSH management at enterprise levels, using the *Guidelines on OSH management systems* (ILO–OSH 2001) and best practice examples from high-performance systems; focus on high-hazard sectors or vulnerable groups; and finally a closing conference in which the project outcomes were presented to a wider public, the media and international actors.

23. The Viet Nam OSH in agriculture project had a local as well as a national level focus. In order to support its grass-roots structure and activities in several provinces, it established a local-level management structure of provincial support committees (PSCs), with local representatives of the corresponding national ministries and relevant associations, including farmers' representatives. It also established support committees in communes where project activities took place. This strong local support was acknowledged as crucial to the success of the project and sustainability of activities.

### C. Performance and achievements

24. Overall, in most of the seven main projects and programmes reviewed, the level of project performance in relation to resource expenditure was very satisfactory. Implementation of project activities mainly by national counterparts and coordinators was one factor. Trainer training as the principal mechanism for capacity building was another. The synergy provided by transfer of positive experience first generated in the Bulgaria project to the Viet Nam labour inspection project and later to Serbia<sup>14</sup> has been remarkable. For example, the NPC of the Bulgaria project was subsequently recruited to undertake the labour inspection training needs analysis in Viet Nam. In the Serbia project, the management-level training was provided by the same institutions and using the same training materials (suitably adapted and translated, but at a fraction of the original costs) as for the Bulgarian inspection system managers. A Vietnamese Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)<sup>15</sup> programme specialist has visited Senegal to assist in carrying out WIND training workshops there.
25. Such cost-effective implementation was less evident in the Haiti project and, by its nature, the interregional Global Compact project. Given the conditions in Haiti, it would not have been possible to implement the project in that country without a resident chief technical adviser (CTA). In fact, start-up was delayed for over a year because of the difficulties of finding one. The Global Compact project produced cost-effective synergies in other ways, applying the principles of OSH audits and supply chain management originally developed by the cost-sharing multinational enterprise to all participating contractor enterprises in the three countries, ultimately to result in a "preventive services system" (PSS), i.e. international guidelines on supply chain OSH management. The PSS will also provide expert knowledge on OSH implementation in SMEs through an information and consultation network including knowledge on specific national and sectoral issues, as well as best practice examples and lessons learned.
26. At national level the Viet Nam agriculture project, in line with Convention No. 187, assisted the Vietnamese Government in developing the country's first national OSH programme, which was subsequently endorsed by the Prime Minister. Locally, it contributed to poverty reduction, hunger alleviation and gender equality in rural areas through improvements in living and working conditions, and contributing to higher productivity. Key to these achievements was the introduction of the WIND methodology. Two target groups were trained as trainers in WIND methodology: the members of each PSC, and WIND farmer volunteers and representatives of local authorities, who then organized WIND mini-workshops for other farmers. These local networks facilitated the exchange of successful practical improvements. As a result, WIND training activities organized by the project were extended from the original four to a further ten provinces

<sup>14</sup> And today under new (non-ILO) projects to Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Moldova.

<sup>15</sup> WIND, adapted from the ILO WISE methodology, which was introduced in the Philippines, and used in the Haiti project.

covering both the North and South (without an increase in funding). The Office provided additional resources to implement the methodology in two other provinces. As a result, the first Vietnamese national OSH programme includes OSH in agriculture as a priority, and the necessary national budget is secured to extend WIND training to further provinces.

27. From the very beginning, the project in Haiti faced strong resistance by the primary target beneficiary group, the assembly employers, to any project activities for trade unions or their participation in the envisaged tripartite PAC. ILO efforts to get the project started indicated further resistance to the second immediate objective: independent external monitoring of employment and working conditions, including OSH. At first neither the enterprise owners nor the association perceived advantages in their voluntary participation without market access related incentive. This situation led to a deterioration of relations between the intended project partners. After two missions and a comprehensive mid-term review, 16 (of 34) association members verbally agreed to participate, though only 12 subsequently followed up their commitment.
28. The mid-term review led to specific compromises regarding the project implementation strategy, characterized by direct, customized support to the voluntarily participating enterprises. All references to external monitoring were dropped. Unspent resources were reallocated – inter alia, for an assessment of the labour inspection service, the existing, though poorly performing, government monitoring system for conditions of employment and OSH. Pilot trainer-training seminars for labour inspectors were successfully organized. With the new strategy, the project “jump started” so quickly that the CTA and his team soon became overwhelmed with the workload. Relations with the counterparts improved significantly. The project then made impressive progress towards the achievement of its main objective: to improve working conditions and OSH in the Haitian assembly sector – so much so that the donor approved a US\$150,000 one-year extension to consolidate project achievements.
29. The (ongoing) OSH system improvement project for North-West Russia covers mainly the Karelia Republic of the Russian Federation. It also has a pilot character, and efforts are being made to disseminate information on its activities and achievements to other entities of the Russian Federation and member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Project objectives cover the following: determination of the scope of OSH problems in North-West Russia; promotion of practical and informed social partnership in OSH at enterprise level; calculation and awareness raising of the economic costs of poor working conditions; development of OSH management systems at enterprises; dissemination of OSH information across the language barrier; and international OSH cooperation in the Russian North-West region and Baltic countries. According to a 2007 project report, these objectives were all met in phase 1, and the donor approved a second two-year phase in 2007.

#### **D. Improving social dialogue on OSH**

30. One major outcome of the projects reviewed was the success of tripartite cooperation and social dialogue. In most cases tripartite social dialogue on OSH was virtually non-existent before project start-up. In Haiti, the very idea almost led the project being aborted. But, where tripartite project advisory committees were established, social dialogue on OSH firmly took root. The projects demonstrated that it was possible and fruitful to conduct such social dialogue on strictly technical issues if it was shown that all three parties have a fundamental stake in the process. In OSH and labour inspection this is generally the case since it helps ensure compliance with labour legislation, enhances enterprise competitiveness and improves workers’ employability. It greatly helped to get this message across by organizing study tours for the PACs/PSCs to countries where such



continuous, institutional tripartite social dialogue at national and sector levels is already in place and has led to successful OSH management at enterprise level. Some projects also had activities specifically designed to encourage social dialogue at local level, especially in the area of risk management, where it was emphasized that the key to evaluating and managing risks was employer commitment, worker participation and finding solutions together.

## **E. Impact**

- 31.** In all major programmes and projects reviewed (except Haiti), the impact has been substantial. As the projects were of relatively short duration, it is difficult to make predictions about the long-term impact on the basis of the reports received. Other sources indicate that the long-term impact in, for example, Bulgaria, Viet Nam and Serbia is assured however. The Bulgarian OSH/labour inspection system has passed all the tests for admission into the EU, including a peer review by the EU's Senior Labour Inspectors Committee.
- 32.** In Viet Nam, the Prime Minister has firmly established the Integrated Labour Inspection System with a series of government decrees. A successor project continues the process of long-term achievement of the original development objectives with the setting up of three regional labour inspection training centres. By the end of the Serbian project it was confirmed that attitudinal changes towards ways of carrying out more efficient and effective inspections had firmly taken hold in the inspectors, and in the expectations of the social partners.
- 33.** The national OSH programme developed in the agriculture project in Viet Nam proved a good model for other Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, and ASEAN-OSHNET, an active network grouping representatives of government OSH departments in the ten ASEAN countries, assigned Viet Nam as the focal point in national OSH programme developments. While the Global Compact project will only terminate in 2008, reports indicate that OSH management in the participating supply chain companies, including SMEs, is considerably and consistently improving. And the North-West Russia project has already made manifest impact beyond its initial scope.

## **F. Sustainability and replicability**

- 34.** The core components of sustainability – broadly accepted policy frameworks aiming at comprehensive OSH coverage, a structurally integrated single labour inspection system, and effective, institutionalized, ongoing tripartite social dialogue on OSH – have successfully been established in five of the seven projects reviewed.<sup>16</sup> Sustainability has also been achieved in the North-West Russia project by effective dissemination and transfer of local strategies, tools and achievements to other regions of the Russian Federation and CIS members.
- 35.** A considerable amount of synergy was created when national and international experts from the Bulgaria project went on to work in both Viet Nam and Serbia. Training and other materials first developed for the Bulgaria project were successfully introduced in

<sup>16</sup> The Bulgarian project on “Training for Integrated Labour Inspection” (BUL/98/M03/FRG); the “Global Compact and Safety and Health Project” (INT/04/M27/GTZ); the Viet Nam “SafeWork and Integrated Labour Inspection” project” (VIE/00/M01/GER); the “ILO/Japan Regional Programme for Capacity Building of OSH in Agriculture” (RAS/04/M01/JPN); and the project on “Developing a Serbian Labour Inspectorate for the 21st Century” (SCG/03/M02/USA).

Viet Nam, Serbia and elsewhere. As a result of the Serbia success, SRO Budapest published a *Tool Kit for Labour Inspectors* which has since been widely distributed in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and translated into Albanian (for use also in Kosovo), Bulgarian, Macedonian, Romanian (for use also in Moldova), Serbian (for use also in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro) and Ukrainian. It is now in use as an important headquarters resource.

36. The North-West Russia/Finland project disseminated its publications and results throughout the Russian Federation with the help of different government ministries and the Federation of Independent Trade Unions. A further essential tool was the Internet Academy of Safe Work ([www.safework.ru](http://www.safework.ru)) where all available ILO–OSH material is published in Russian and regularly updated. This is an indispensable tool to spread the experience to all Russian language countries, leading to broad use throughout the CIS. An interstate Russian OSH management standard, based on the *Guidelines on OSH management systems* (ILO–OSH 2001), was developed and tested in selected enterprises in Karelia and the Leningrad region, then in Armenia and Georgia. Requests have now been received from Azerbaijan and Ukraine. The project actively supported Russian Federation-level cooperation with the ILO/CIS network. It also contributed to the Expert Group on Social Inclusion, Healthy Lifestyles and Work Ability created in the Northern Dimension Partnership on Health and Social Well-being, for the coordination and promotion of OSH matters among several countries. A methodology to assess the real costs of accidents in enterprises and another for estimating official accident statistics were developed, also for implementation in other regions of the Russian Federation. The project thus achieved strong multiplier effects beyond its initially limited geographical coverage.
37. The ILO/Japan project on OSH in agriculture established a sustainable WIND farmer volunteer system in Viet Nam. The staff of provincial departments of labour, health and agriculture makes regular follow-up visits to the trained WIND farmer volunteers in order to sustain and expand their training activities for neighbouring farmers. The WIND training methodologies formulated in Viet Nam have also been adapted and successfully taken up in Cambodia, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Senegal and Tajikistan.
38. Finally, sustainability could not be ensured in the Haiti project because of the current situation.

## V. Lessons learned and ideas for the future

39. A number of lessons can be learned from this evaluation. The ILO Global Strategy sends a clear message: “Decent work is safe work!” But much more needs to be done (in terms of raising awareness on OSH issues among different stakeholders, including donors). Since its inception in 1999, SafeWork’s technical cooperation portfolio has managed to mobilize only limited donor resources. Under the Technical Cooperation Resource Allocation Mechanism (TC–RAM), little support was given to OSH projects in spite of the evidence indicating the dramatic need to reduce the global death toll of workplace accidents and illnesses. This does not appear to have happened for want of effective programmes or project proposals. The reasons for the seeming lack of support therefore need to be analysed in order to ensure greater donor support for OSH issues.
40. It is necessary to ensure that there are synergies, coordination and better information dissemination to endorse and promote the Global Strategy through effective integration into DWCPs. To integrate OSH into DWCPs requires clear priorities on the national agenda and constituents’ commitment, which in turn requires the Office to have the capacity to provide the necessary support. Cooperation with projects, on employment or migration, or linking up with other units such as the Bureaux for Employers’ and Workers’

Activities for capacity building of their constituents in OSH, for example, can provide additional resources for OSH.

41. Another important lesson is that ensuring that the ILO's tripartite constituents are given full opportunity to shape, participate in and ultimately own a project's outcomes through institutionalized, continuous social dialogue is the most effective way to achieve successful project implementation and sustainability. Qualified national project coordinators are a further prerequisite for success.
42. Policy issues are rarely advanced merely through discussion and provision of external advice. Good results are achieved when the principal actors are brought together through confidence-building measures. SafeWork's advocacy and information dissemination role should include demonstration of how good policies can best be put to work by benchmarking with, and studying at first hand, best practice examples in OSH and labour inspection systems. As an example the national OSH programme developed in Viet Nam has been used as a model for other ASEAN countries to develop their OSH programmes.
43. If projects require monitoring systems, they should, if at all possible, be anchored in existing structures, however weak, and reform and strengthen them. Separate mechanisms only for the purpose and lifetime of a project make little sense. Such "project monitors" tend to get everything that labour inspectors need but lack: training, mobility, IT and adequate salaries. In addition, parallel monitoring structures often create suspicion; they do not have the enforcement powers of labour inspectors as understood in Convention No. 81, and do not contribute to sustainability.
44. Associating OSH improvements with productivity and quality gains, and combining that message with best-practice examples, is a powerful message, especially for SME entrepreneurs and farmers. Using regional or local resources, both in human terms and in good examples, is a very effective way forward. The experiences of organizations and enterprises which have started from the same basis show that change and results are attainable, and, importantly, perceived as attainable. Practical evidence of this can be found in the regional cooperation enjoyed in the Serbian project, the use of WISE and WIND methodologies, and in recently approved Finnish-funded projects in Armenia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as a result of the North-West Russia project.
45. Greater efforts must be made to ensure that national employers' and workers' organizations give higher priority to OSH. The Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities are both committed to the importance of OSH issues. Better integration of these issues in employers' and workers' programmes would be an effective means of sensitization, at both national and local levels. Ultimately, the litmus test is whether technical cooperation activities actually make a change in the workplace.
46. Expanding labour inspectorates' approaches from mainly punitive to preventive (backed up by strategic use of sanctions) will likely ensure better cooperation with, and compliance by, employers.
47. The problems and delays of start-up in Haiti were in large measure due to lack of consultation with the intended primary beneficiaries. This case highlights the critical need for the intended beneficiaries, the donor and the ILO to reach agreement on project objectives and strategy as a precondition for ILO project execution. In this process the ILO should avoid fundamental compromises on project strategy. Only an extraordinary measure of flexibility on all sides in the course of implementation allowed it to eventually produce some acceptable results.

## VI. Concluding remarks

48. The Office should intensify work with donors to ensure that the Global Strategy will have the intended impact as part of the Decent Work Agenda.
49. Some changes are in practice achievable in the short term, but longer term efforts are needed to bring lasting changes, in particular to develop an OSH preventive culture through adoption of national OSH programmes and strategy and better management of OSH in enterprises. Technical cooperation projects therefore need to be integrated into broader programmes to promote OSH in line with Convention No. 187 and the Decent Work Agenda.
50. Future technical cooperation projects need to be more comprehensive in their approach. Promoting better OSH standards, programmes and practice should be combined with promoting better compliance with these standards, through labour inspection-related activities, such as tripartite system audits leading to structural reform, and an integrated approach to monitoring and enforcement.
51. Although it is difficult to provide short-term quantitative impact indicators, the large measure of satisfaction expressed by most project donors and beneficiaries and demands from constituents for more support, advice and assistance demonstrate the relevance and usefulness of SafeWork's OSH technical cooperation activities.
52. Based on the foregoing review, the Committee may wish to give guidance on future directions for the ILO's technical cooperation activities in the area of OSH.

Geneva, 13 February 2008.

*Submitted for debate and guidance.*

## Appendix

### List of project reports used for the thematic evaluation

- I. Project BUL/98/M03/FRG: “Training for Integrated Labour Inspection” (1998-2004)
  1. Terminal project evaluation report (external evaluation), 2004
  2. First phase (mid-term) evaluation report, 2001
  3. Semi-annual progress review reports
- II. Project HAI/99/M01/USA: “Improving Working Conditions in the Haitian Assembly Sector” (2000–04)
  1. Final report, 2005
  2. Final evaluation report (external evaluation), 2003
  3. Mid-term evaluation report, 2002
- III. Project INT/04/M27/GTZ: “Global Compact and Safety and Health”
  1. Global compact case study (external), 2007
  2. Semi-annual progress reports, 2005 (1), 2006 (2)
- IV. Project VIE/00/M01/GER: “SafeWork and Integrated Labour Inspection” (2001–04)
  1. Final project evaluation report (internal), 2005
  2. Semi-annual progress report, 2002
- V. Project RAS/04/M01/JPN: “ILO/Japan Regional Programme for Capacity Building of OSH in Agriculture” (2004–07)
  1. Final report (internal), 2007
  2. Mid-term evaluation report (external), 2006
  3. Progress reports, 2004, 2005
- VI. Project SCG/M02/USA: “Developing a Serbian Labour Inspectorate for the 21st Century” (2003–05)
  1. Semi-annual technical progress reports 2004–05
  2. End-of project survey (external) (2005)
  3. Data tracking table (performance monitoring table) (internal) 2005
- VII. Project RUS/04/M02/FIN: “Improved OSH System in North-West Russia” (2005–07)
  1. Project report, 2007
- VIII. Project RER/03/M52/FLA: “Joint Institutions on Vocational Training for Central and Eastern European Employers’ Organizations” (2003–07) (Component on safety and health in the construction sector in Bulgaria and Romania)
- IX. Project RAS/04/M51/ROK: “Capacity building of OSH in hazardous occupations in Cambodia, Laos PDR, Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam” (2004–05)
- X. Project RAS/06/M51/ROK: “OSH in Small Construction and Improvement of Working Conditions” (2006–07)

- XI. Project RLA/01/M08/SPA: “Promotion of OSH in Construction in MERCOSUR countries and Chile” (2003–05)
- XII. Project INT/05/M54/FRA: “Strengthening systems of Labour Inspection in Central and West Africa” (2005–06)
- XIII. Project RER/00/M08/ITA: “Training in Safe Work Practices in the Trepça Mines and Associated Facilities, UN Administered Province of Kosovo” (2001)