

FINAL DOCUMENT AND STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR THE II HEMISPHERIC WORKSHOP ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

“The Challenges of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in relation to the IV Summit of the Americas mandates and subregional experiences”

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DESCRIPTION AND SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP

The II Hemispheric Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety “The Challenges of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in relation to the IV Summit of the Americas mandates and subregional experiences”, took place on May 16 and 17, 2006 in San Salvador. It is a follow up of the I Hemispheric Workshop that took place in April, 2004 also in San Salvador.

This Workshop was an initiative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Prevision of El Salvador, as Chair of Working Group 2 of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS. It was co-organized by the Department of Social Development and Employment of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and FUNDACERSSO, and it was funded by the Labor Program of Human Resources and Skills Development of Canada. This Workshop is an activity of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), a cooperation mechanism of the IACML coordinated by the Department of Social Development and Employment of the OAS.

The workshop was attended by representatives of the Ministries of Labor of 23 countries of the Americas, with the special participation of the Ministers of Labor of El Salvador and St. Lucia, and the Vice-Ministers of Guatemala, Honduras and Panama. Also present were representatives from COSATE and CEATAL, as well as occupational health and safety centres (Fundacentro, Asociación Chilena de Seguridad, SALTRA, CCOHS) and international agencies.

In the Opening Session , welcoming remarks were made by Honorable Elías Antonio Saca, President of El Salvador, Honorable José Roberto Espinal, Minister of Labor and Social Prevision of El Salvador, Mr. Rogelio Sotela, Director of the OAS Office in El Salvador and Mr. Ajit Mehat, Director General, National Labour Operations Directorate, Labour Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada. Also present in the Honors Table were Dr. Valentina Forastieri, Principal Specialist on Labor and Occupational Health and Safety Conditions, Sub-regional Office of the ILO for Central America, Haiti, Panama and the Dominican Republic, and Mr. Harry Philippeaux, Advisor in Sustainable Development and Environment of PAHO in El Salvador.

After the Opening Session, an Introductory Session took place regarding the current overview of OHS in the Americas. Specialists from OAS, ILO, PAHO and Fundaceresso made presentations on this topic, which are detailed in the attached agenda.

The core of the workshop was composed by three thematic sessions. Each of them had presentations made by specialists in the field and spaces for dialogue in order to exchange experiences and define strategic guidelines. These three sessions were moderated by specialists and each of them had a rapporteur:

Topic 1 – Implementation of occupational health and safety management systems

- **Moderator:** Valentina Forastieri, ILO Specialist in OHS
- **Rapporteur:** Claudio San Juan, Deputy Prevention Manager of the Super-intendancy of Work Risks of Argentina.

Topic 2 – Mechanisms to strengthen information systems in occupational health and safety

- **Moderator:** Carlos Rodriguez, General Director of Social Prevision, Ministry of Labor and Social Prevision of El Salvador
- **Rapporteur:** [Junia Maria Barreto](#), Labor Inspector, Regional Labor Commissariat of Minas Gerais (DRT/MG), Brazil

Topic 3 – HIV in the workplace

- **Moderator:** Anslem de Bourge, Labor Consultant, Ministry of Education and Labour of Grenada
- **Rapporteur:** Devnath Roopnarine, Industrial Inspections Supervisor, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad & Tobago.

After the thematic sessions, the three rapporteurs presented proposals for strategic guidelines on each topic. The guidelines were enriched by the participants and are attached to this document as conclusions of the Workshop. These strategic guidelines will serve to promote and guide the work of governments, OHS centers and international agencies in each of the topics, through activities at the national, subregional and hemispheric levels.

During the workshop, besides the strategic guidelines for each topic, the following general conclusions arose from the dialogue:

- Actions taken on the national level and at the level of international organizations should be complementary in a bid not to duplicate efforts and to strengthen fulfilment of the mandates established in the XIV Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) and the IV Summit of the Americas, in order to promote decent work in accordance with the objectives and goals of the 2006 2015 Hemispheric Agenda “A decade of decent work”.
- In particular regarding occupational health and safety, the schemes preventing work-related accidents and professional illnesses, of promoting health in the workplace and social protection of workers should be expanded and strengthened through the construction of *safe work* in the framework of the paradigm of decent work. This should be done in order to develop and consolidate the culture of prevention in occupational health and safety.

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES OF TOPIC 1

Implementation of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management systems

The questions that guided the discussion of Topic 1 and around which these guidelines arose are:

What strategies should be adopted to improve national and private OHS management systems, taking into account successful experiences on a local and sub-regional level?

What mechanisms of strengthening the OHS government inspection systems should be developed to assure that companies are upholding legal standards in this area?

The strategic guidelines for this topic, which were agreed upon in a plenary session during the workshop, are presented below:

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

- Promotion of social dialogue between workers and employers, and the strengthening of dialogue and cooperation with other civil society actors. The tripartite approach is vital for the implementation of public OHS systems based upon the premise of shared responsibility.
- Promotion of management systems based on international models drawn up and agreed upon in a tripartite manner, such as the ILO guidelines on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (2001).
- Strengthening of the labour inspection systems through better planning and the availability of competent human resources and sufficient financial resources in line with the resolutions of ILO Convention 81 (on Labour Inspection in Industry and Commerce) and Convention 129 (Labour Inspection in Agriculture).

ACTIONS TO COMPLEMENT STRATEGIC GUIDELINES

- The tripartite focus should continue to be consolidated, reinforcing the concept of shared responsibility on OHS. Technical efforts in this area will be insufficient or scarcely effective if they cannot be backed up by a strong culture of dialogue that involves all sides in a constructive effort to carry out the mandates of the Summits.
- Social dialogue guarantees that technical efforts and political priorities enjoy consensus and legitimacy. The participation of civil society is fundamental on several fronts: in revising and updating the legislation, in formulating policies, in defining and implementing programmes and concrete tools in OHS.
- Tripartite national coordination structures in the area of occupational health and safety exist in most countries in the hemisphere; nevertheless the implementation of national policies is a priority. It is necessary to formulate national policies on occupational safety and health that reaffirm the commitment of the states in the promotion of effective action in this area. These national policies should have an inter-sectoral focus.

- For the definition of policies, it is necessary to elaborate and/or finalize the pending diagnoses and national profiles at the country level as a starting point for the implementation of action strategies of the National OHS Systems.
- Promote the revision and updating of laws to adapt to the new labour environment guaranteeing the protection of workers' health and safety. With that purpose, take into account the international labour laws especially the "Promotional framework for occupational safety and health," which will be analysed in the next ILO International Conference of Labor with a view to adopting the model of the national system that these instruments propose.
- In the majority of countries, labour inspection continues to have a limited coverage, which has been complemented by voluntary initiatives. It is necessary to strengthen the national management structures and, particularly, the inspection services by integrating the strategies of OHS departments into their functions.
- The management systems will make it possible to introduce the companies into a virtuous circle where OHS stops being an isolated and momentary event but is converted into an element of continuous improvement of conditions of work, health and safety of workers, the productivity and competitiveness of the company. To that extent, these management systems should be promoted following the available international models of a general character like the ILO guidelines, or of a sectoral character such as the PAHO Health and Safety Manual for health sector workers. Likewise, the adoption of these management systems requires adaptation of these models to the reality, the sector and the size of the company. Therefore, the design of the actions for the implementation of management systems should give priority to small and micro-enterprises as well as those in the informal sector, with the goal of facilitating the fulfilment of existing laws.
- It is necessary that countries initiate the design for the implementation and evaluation of OHS management systems targeting the informal sector (i.e. non-registered workers, self-employed or without contracts), given informal workers are the majority of the labor force in most of the countries of the Hemisphere.
- The large corporations incorporate occupational safety and health management systems into their processes with the outstanding collaboration of their labour organisations, which contributes to a good labour climate and competitiveness. As a contribution of the business community, the large corporations promote good practices among its providers, helping them in applying these practices, which in turn contributes to the development of medium- and small-sized enterprises. *(Text jointly drawn up by COSATE and CEATAL)*
- The application of OHS management systems in the national and business sphere should take into account the new forms of labour organisation, labour relations and the new forms of contracting. In this sense, it is necessary to highlight the responsibility of the main employers or contractors in protecting the conditions of workers health and safety and the empowerment of those through their participation in the company's measures of prevention and control be they temporary or permanent.
- Consolidate the actions of forming and training of the social actors according to their framework of responsibility in OHS area. Likewise, strengthen the training of technical and professional teams in OHS.

- To build a genuine culture of prevention in OHS it is necessary to include this issue within the educational content, even from the basic level. Therefore, in the framework of the strategic alliance among the labour, health, education and environmental sectors, work will be carried out to incorporate the teaching and promotion of OHS into study plans.
- In the framework of the processes of integration and free trade, it is important to continue strengthening the sub-regional entities of OHS that work in the interchange of experiences and the construction of a common agenda of priorities for the region in this issue, and at the same time give advice on the definition de policies, strengthen and support the consolidation of roles, responsibilities, coordination and competencies.

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES OF TOPIC 2

Mechanisms to strengthen information systems in Occupational Safety and Health

The question that guided the discussion of Topic 2 and around which these guidelines arose is:

What mechanisms and processes should be implemented to strengthen information systems on work-related injuries, both on the local and sub-regional level?

The strategic guidelines for this topic, which were agreed upon in a plenary session during the Workshop, are presented below:

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

On OHS information systems

- Incorporate the information systems within a broader framework of knowledge management that includes investigation, analysis of information, and quality control, utilizing the new information and communication technologies.
- Consolidate the knowledge base on OHS for prevention purposes in order to promote the exchange of information and good practices through the establishment of a web portal for the Americas, for which the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) can provide technical support.
- Make an inventory of regional and sub-regional initiatives related to OHS information systems in order to identify common aspects and weaknesses (ILO-PAHO). Take advantage of the progress made in the production of OHS information in the region (both at the country, sub-regional and regional level), despite its current limitations, in order not to start from zero in building information systems.
- Underscore the importance of public information programmes within which the use of mass media, such as the television, is recommended in order to raise awareness and train in the OHS area.

On systems of registry and notification of work-related accidents and professional illnesses

- Develop and strengthen information systems on occupational safety and health for the registry and notification of work-related accidents and professional illnesses with the goal of defining intervention priorities and prevention management in the workplace and on the national level.
- Incorporate indicators on work-related accidents and professional illnesses within the basic health indicators for the Americas, based on the available international regulations.
- Harmonise and standardise definitions, indicators and criteria of collection and analysis on work-related accidents and professional illnesses, based on the available international regulations.
- Promote strategies of coordination at the national level among social security, public health, labour and private sector institutions and organisations in the framework of a national system of registration and notification to achieve a unified registry on work-related accidents and professional illnesses. These strategies will be carried out in collaboration with other programmes and projects that exist at the sub-regional and hemispheric level and with the participation of governments, workers and employers. Ask for support from the ILO and PAHO in this process.
- Seek to extend coverage of the registry of work-related accidents and professional illnesses to workers in the informal sector and other categories of workers not currently incorporated in the information systems. To do this, it is necessary to develop methodologies in compiling data for this sector, based on complementary research.
- Control and evaluate quality of the data generated through the information systems and carry out periodic studies for this purpose, such as periodic national surveys on work and health conditions.
- Include training in occupational medicine within the study programs of health professionals, especially regarding the recognition, diagnosis and treatment of professional illnesses.
- Publish information on work-related accidents and professional illnesses and make this information accessible to the general public. In this vein, improve the web pages of Ministries of Labor and other institutions that publish this information. Likewise, make the information and results of surveys periodically carried out by international institutions more accessible to the public.
- For the implementation of both types of systems, take advantage of the offers of technical and financial assistance in developing these core strategies, especially from the Canadian Ministry of Labor, the Programme on Work and Health in Central America (SALTRA), CCOSH, PAHO, ILO and OAS.

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES OF TOPIC 3

HIV in the workplace

The question that guided the discussion of Topic 3 and about which the strategic guidelines arose is:

How to efficiently integrate the issue of the fight against HIV-AIDS into the occupational safety and health (OSH) management programmes at the public and private level?

The strategic guidelines on this issue, which were agreed upon in the plenary session during the workshop, are presented below.

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

- Promote the development, and in some cases the inclusion, of a specific policy on the management of HIV in the workplace, in national health plans and in occupational health and safety plans.
- Promote actions for employers and workers including persons in training, especially technical and professional students in health sector careers, in order to increase information, knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS in the workplace.
- Based on an assessment of risks in the workplace, develop prevention programmes to reduce the risk of those workers particularly exposed to HIV given the activities they undertake in their jobs.
- Develop prevention programmes in the workplace to reduce the risk of HIV contagion of workers in any situation, whether personal or occupational.
- Promote coordinated efforts and cooperation among international, regional y sub-regional agencies.
- Encourage joint work between health and labor ministries, with a holistic approach, to develop strategies and plans for HIV/AIDS in the workplace.
- In compliance with the ILO-WHO Joint Committee on Health and Workers' Safety, promote the use of tools available from international agencies, for example, the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work.
- Press for the need and use of the guidelines relative to OHS management systems and the repertoire of recommended practices of the ILO on HIV/AIDS as instruments that contribute to drawing up strategies for the workplace that deal with prevention, protection against stigmatization and discrimination in the workplace, access, care, treatment, confidentiality and psychological support.

AGENDA

2nd HEMISPHERIC WORKSHOP ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY: “THE CHALLENGES OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS) IN RELATION TO THE IV SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS MANDATES AND SUBREGIONAL EXPERIENCES”

TUESDAY, MAY 16th

9:00 – 9:30 Welcoming remarks Hotel Hilton Princess San Salvador, Bristol Conference Room.

- Welcoming remarks by:
 - President of El Salvador, Lic. Elías Antonio Saca
 - Minister of Labor and Social Prevision of El Salvador, Lic. José Roberto Espinal Escobar
 - Mr. Rogelio Sotela, Director of the Office of the Organization of American States (OAS) in El Salvador
 - Sr. Ajit Mehat, Director General, National Labour Operations Directorate, Labour Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada

Also in the inaugural session:

- Dr. Valentina Forastieri, Principal Specialist on Labor and Occupational Health and Safety Conditions, Sub-regional Office for Central America, Haiti, Panama and the Dominican Republic of the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Ing. Harry Philippeaux, Advisor in Sustainable Development and Environment, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) in El Salvador.

9:30 - 9:45 Coffee break

9:45 – 11:00 Current overview of OHS in the Americas

- Achievements in the incorporation of OHS in Declarations and Plans of Action of the main hemispheric fora. **Mrs. Maria Claudia Camacho**, Specialist, Department of Social Development and Employment, **OAS**. (15’)
- Main strategic alliances on occupational health and safety as a mandate for sustainable development. **Dr. Maritza Tennasse**, Regional Advisor on Workers Health, and **Dr. Manuel Anton**, Consultant in Workers Health and Safety, **PAHO**. (20’)
- Main challenges for OHS in the framework of economic integration processes. **Dr. Valentina Forastieri**, **ILO**. (20’)
- Achievements and experiences from Fundaceresso, as a continuity of the CERSO Project (*Centro Regional de Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional en Centro América y República Dominicana*). **Lic. Carlos Rivera**, Executive Director of **FUNDACERSSO**. (20’)

11:00 – 1:00 Implementation of Occupational Health and Safety management systems

- Occupational Health and Safety in Canada - a Shared Responsibility. **Mr. Ajit Mehat, Canada.** (20')
- Legislation, policies, national programs and the role of governmental inspection on OHS, **Dr. Arline Arcuri**, Technical Director of Fundacentro (Foundation Jorge Duprat Figueiredo on Occupational Safety and Medicine), and **Dr. Junia Maria Barreto**, Labor Inspector, Regional Labor Commissariat of Minas Gerais (DRT/MG), **Brazil.** (15')
- The role of OHS tripartite national entities. **Lic. Carlos Rodríguez**, Representative of **CONASSO, El Salvador.** (20')
- OHS education and promotion. **Dra. Marianela Corriols**, Coordinator of the Workers Sanitary Intelligence Center and Health Focal Point, **OPS Nicaragua.** (15')
- Strategies for the introduction of a preventive culture in the SMEs and informal sectors. **Lic. Claudio San Juan**, Deputy Prevention Manager of the Superintendancy of Work Risks, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, **Argentina,** (15')
- Successful OHS management programs in the workplace, as essential elements of Corporate Social Responsibility. **Dr. Miguel Ángel González Osuna**, Employers Representative (**CEATAL**), (15'); and **Mr. Vicente Juarez Rivera**, Workers Representative (**COSATE**). (15')

1:00 – 2:00 LUNCH

2:00 – 4:00 Open dialogue on the implementation of OHS management systems, and future actions

Moderator: **Lic. José Roberto Espinal Escobar, El Salvador**, Minister of Labor and Social Prevision of **El Salvador.**

Rapporteur: **Lic. Claudio San Juan**, Deputy Prevention Manager of the Superintendancy of Work Risks, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, **Argentina.**

4:00 – 6:00 Mechanisms to strengthen the information systems on Occupational Health and Safety

- Situation of the information systems on work-related injuries in the Americas: Pilot project of the ILO. **Dr. Edin Pop**, International Consultant, **ILO.** (30')
- Presentation of research results on work-related injuries indicators and intoxication with pesticides, by PAHO, as a potential basis to strengthen information systems. **Dr. Oscar Nieto**, International Consultant, **PAHO.** (30')
- Successful experience on the implementation of an information system on work-related injuries. **Dr. Eugenio Cantuarias**, Manager of Operations Division, Chilean Safety Association (ACHS), **Chile.** (30')

- Platform for strengthening information systems on occupational health and safety. **Dr. Patabendi K Abeytunga**, Vice-president and Director General, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), **Canada**. (30')

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17th

9:00 – 11:00 Open dialogue on the mechanisms to strengthen the information systems on OHS, and future actions

Moderator: **Dr. Valentina Forastieri, ILO**

Rapporteur: **Mrs. Junia Barreto**, Labor Inspector, Regional Labor Commissariat of Minas Gerais (DRT/MG), **Brazil**.

11:00 – 12:00 HIV in the workplace

- The impact on the population and the workforce. **Dr. Valentina Forastieri, ILO** (20')
- Regional Plan on HIV/ITS for the Health Sector and determining factors for exposure to and infection by HIV/AIDS. **Dr. Carol Vlassoff**, Chief of the HIV/AIDS Unit, **PAHO** (20')
- Initiatives to address the issue of HIV-AIDS in OHS National Policies and Programs. **Dr. Rudy Rosales**, Focal Point for HIV, Ministry of Health of **Honduras**. (20')

12:00 – 1:00 Open dialogue on HIV-AIDS in the workplace, and future actions

Moderator: **Anslem de Bourge**, Ministry of Education and Labour of **Grenada**

Rapporteur: **Devnath Roopnarine**, Industrial Inspections Supervisor, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, **Trinidad & Tobago**.

1:00 – 3:00 LUNCH

3:00 – 5:30 Formulation of Strategic Guidelines to be implemented in the years to follow. Agreements

Moderator: **Dr. Marianela Corriols** and **Dr. Manuel Antón, PAHO**

- Presentation of the 3 documents elaborated by the rapporteurs on each topic
- Discussion among all participants to complement those documents and to formulate strategic lines, including horizontal cooperation initiatives that will provide a practical and integrated response to the OHS issue in the Americas.

5:30 – 6:00 Closing remarks by **Lic. José Roberto Espinal Escobar, Minister of Labor and Social Prevision of **El Salvador**.**