

TASK FORCE 8: PROMOTION OF OSH IN SMALL ENTERPRISES AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR

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At present, many of the national level companies are fragmented into smaller independent units that often work in networks, outsourcing activities to smaller units, subcontracting smaller enterprises, and developing flexible work organizations. The fragmentation of the work life is likely to grow in the future, and therefore the most important provider of new job opportunities will be the small enterprises and self-employment. The number of workers in the informal sector, often not within the reach of occupational health and safety services, is considerable, particularly in developing nations. The organizing of occupational health and safety for small enterprises and for the self-employed deserves more attention in the whole world.

Guidelines for self-surveillance of agricultural workers

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Keywords: agricultural workers, self-surveillance, health book

Target group: The project has been conducted in 20 provinces of the country. It will be expanded throughout the country next year.

The objective is to develop guidelines (health book) for self-surveillance in Thai farmers. A health book has been developed as guidelines for Thai farmers to assess their health, working conditions and working environment in agriculture. The book consists of 3 main parts: self-administered questionnaires, instruction and guidelines, and medical record. It covers an introduction of occupational health and safety in agriculture, health and working history of a farmer, checklists of working conditions and working environment, and checklists of symptoms related to occupational diseases. The book will be used as a tool in the development of occupational health service and occupational health surveillance systems in agriculture in Thailand.

The first edition of the health book has already been finished and is being used in the field. The results of the study have been written up. The second edition of the book has been developed.

A Cooperative Project between Italy and Brazil for prevention of occupational risks in small and medium-sized shoe factories

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Keywords: shoe manufacturing, Occupational Health and Safety, International Cooperation.

Target group: Workers of shoe manufacturing from Italy and Brazil, experts and professionals in occupational health and safety of the two countries

The purpose of this project is to obtain prevention plans in the shoe-manufacturing sector with the participation of the scientific community, social partners, enterprises and public services of occupational health and safety. It strengthens the project Cooperation Italy-Brazil.

The objective will be reached through the establishment of a documentary repertoire (legislation, technical regulations, bibliography), the reconstruction of production cycles and work phases of the shoe manufacturing in the two countries, a survey of risks, training of workers, implementation of intervention plans.

At the Iguassu Meeting, February 2003, an Italian-Brazilian seminar was held during which has been shown that the choice of the shoe sector is correct as a field of application of the project. During the mission the relevant interest of other possible partners was verified. During the next few months the Brazilian Institutional partners will be identified. A shared version of the scientific project has been defined and in the next few months the project will be integrated in a cooperation plan to submit to the competent authorities for funding. An internet discussion group has been set up for the permanent exchange of information, updating, experiences and data.

Considering that the planning phase has been completed, we are initiating to identify the necessary funding. Should no human and financial resources be identified within the next 12 months, the possibility of reconsidering the feasibility of the project will be evaluated.

Un progetto di Cooperazione tra Italia e Brasile per la prevenzione dei rischi occupazionali nelle piccole e medie imprese del settore calzaturiero

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Parole chiave: settore calzaturiero, Medicina del lavoro e Sicurezza, Cooperazione Internazionale

Utenza destinata: Lavoratori del settore calzaturiero Italiani e Brasiliani, esperti e professionisti del settore.

Scopo del progetto: Realizzare, sulla base della Cooperazione Internazionale fra alcune Regioni di Italia e Brasile, piani di prevenzione integrati e coordinati nel settore calzaturiero, con la partecipazione della Comunità Scientifica, delle parti sociali, del sistema delle imprese, dei servizi pubblici di Medicina del Lavoro e Sicurezza e dei lavoratori.

L'obiettivo sarà raggiunto attraverso: realizzazione di un repertorio documentale (legislazione, norme tecniche, bibliografia), ricostruzione comparata dei cicli produttivi e fasi lavorative presenti nel settore calzaturiero dei due paesi, censimento dei rischi, formazione degli operatori, attuazione dei piani di intervento.

Al Congresso di Iguassu, febbraio 2003, si è tenuto un seminario Italo-Brasiliano nel quale è stata evidenziata la correttezza della scelta del comparto calzaturiero, quale ambito di applicazione del progetto.

Nel corso della missione si è verificato l'interesse notevole e fattivo di altri possibili partner. Nei prossimi mesi andranno definiti gli interlocutori istituzionali brasiliani. È stata definita una versione condivisa del progetto scientifico, che nei prossimi mesi sarà integrato in un piano di cooperazione da sottoporre alle autorità competenti per il finanziamento. È in preparazione un gruppo di discussione Internet per lo scambio permanente di informazioni, aggiornamenti, esperienze, dati.

Considerando che la fase di progettazione è stata completata, ci si attiverà per la ricerca dei fondi necessari. Se entro 12 mesi non si saranno recuperate le necessarie risorse umane e finanziarie, si valuterà la possibilità di riconsiderare la fattibilità del progetto.

Projeto de Cooperação entre Itália e Brasil para a Prevenção de Riscos Ocupacionais nas Pequenas e Médias Empresas do Setor Calçadista

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Keywords: Setor Calçadista, Segurança e Saúde no Trabalho, Cooperação Internacional

Grupo de alvo: Trabalhadores do setor calçadista italianos e brasileiros, especialistas e profissionais do setor e da área de Segurança e Saúde no Trabalho

Finalidade do projeto: Realizar, com base na Cooperação Internacional entre algumas regiões da Itália e Brasil, planos de prevenção integrados e coordenados no setor calçadista, com a participação da comunidade científica, dos parceiros sociais, dos empresários, dos serviços públicos da área de Segurança e Saúde no Trabalho e dos trabalhadores.

Os objetivos serão alcançados por meio de: produção de repertório documental (legislação, normas técnicas e bibliografia), reconstrução comparada dos ciclos produtivos e fases de trabalho presentes no setor calçadista dos dois países, levantamento de riscos, formação de trabalhadores, implementação dos planos de intervenção.

Nas ações pré-Congresso de Foz do Iguaçu, fevereiro de 2003, foi realizado um Seminário Ítalo-Brasileiro no qual foi evidenciada a escolha acertada do setor calçadista como alvo do projeto. No curso da atividade foi verificado o notável e factível interesse de outros possíveis parceiros. Nos próximos meses serão definidos os interlocutores institucionais brasileiros. Foi definida uma versão consensada do projeto que nos próximos meses será integrada a um plano de cooperação, a ser submetido às autoridades responsáveis pelo financiamento. Está em preparação um grupo de discussões via Internet para o intercâmbio permanente de informações, atualizações, experiências e dados. Considerando que a fase de planejamento está completa, estamos voltando nossa atenção à busca dos recursos necessários. Se em 12 meses não

conseguirmos os recursos humanos e financeiros necessários, iremos avaliar a possibilidade de reconsiderar a viabilidade do projeto.

IEA/ILO checkpoints on ergonomics in agriculture

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Keywords: training, agriculture, ergonomics checkpoints, low-cost improvement, quality of working life, action checklist

Target group: agricultural workers, managers and farmers in small agricultural undertakings, occupational safety and health practitioners in rural areas and instructors in educational institutions

The purpose of the project is to develop ergonomics checkpoints for improving conditions of work and life in agriculture particularly in industrially developing countries.

The project is undertaken as joint work of the IEA and the ILO in cooperation with field experts in selected countries. The outcome of the project will be a compilation of ergonomics checkpoints in agriculture with illustrations. These checkpoints cover materials storage and handling, workstations, agricultural machines and equipment, physical environment, welfare facilities, work organization and community-level cooperation. Each checkpoint comprises a discussion of benefits by ergonomics measures, low-cost ideas for immediate improvements and suggestions for applying priority measures in the local context. Examples of low-cost improvements applicable in the current situations in industrially developing countries will be presented.

The project is under development involving a team of ergonomics experts who compile typical examples of relevant ergonomics measures in cooperation with research centers and field institutions. Collected positive experiences in applying action checklists for improving agricultural work will be incorporated in the final joint publication.

ILO SafeWork is collaborating on the project.

Ergonomics guidelines for occupational health practice in industrially developing countries

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Keywords: Training, ergonomics, occupational health professionals, small and medium-size enterprises, low-cost improvement, checklists

Target group: occupational health professionals and practitioners active in industrially developing countries and trainers and instructors in training institutions

The purpose of the project is to develop basic ergonomics guidelines for occupational health professionals in industrially developing countries.

The project is undertaken as a joint work of the IEA and the ICOH in cooperation with selected research and training institutions active in these countries. The guidelines are compiled in the form of guidance materials for identifying problems in the working environment and applying practical intervention strategies based on basic ergonomics principles as part of occupational health practice in small and medium-size enterprises. The proposed outline of the guidelines comprises the following sections: (a) roles of ergonomics; (b) typical ergonomics-related risks; (c) risk identification and controls; (d) examples of ergonomics problems identified and solved; (e) sample checklists for use by occupational health practitioners; and (f) useful references.

The project work is done by a group of ergonomics experts experienced in occupational health in small and medium-sized enterprises. The draft guidelines have been prepared and are being tested in occupational health programs in industrially developing countries in cooperation with research centers and educational institutions in occupational health and ergonomics in these countries.

ICOH is collaborating on the project.

Level of risk and state of health of the workers of the informal sector at Cotonou

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Keywords: Health, Work, informal sector, Africa

Target: workers, NGOs, decision makers

This study aims at highlighting the level of the risk and the state of health of the workers of various trades in Cotonou, we will carry out an exploratory study in 5 drawn communes of the city chosen randomly. This study is based on a questionnaire distributed to workers of the designated communes. These workers will

be also examined clinically. We also will carry out measurements of some risk factors, in particular the level of solvents in paint workshops. We are working with the ILO on this project.

Niveau de risque et état de santé des travailleurs du secteur informel à Cotonou

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Mots clés : santé, travail, secteur informel, Afrique

Cible ; Travailleurs, ONG, décideurs

Cette étude vise à mettre en évidence le niveau de risque et l'état de santé des travailleurs de différents métiers à Cotonou, nous allons réaliser une étude prospective dans 5 communes de la ville tirées au sort. Cette étude est basée sur un questionnaire à administrer aux travailleurs des communes retenues. Ces travailleurs seront également examinés cliniquement. Nous allons aussi procéder aux mesures de quelques facteurs de risques en particulier le niveau des solvants dans les ateliers de peinture. On travaille avec l'OIT sur ce projet.

Activities to improve small business access to OHS information

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Keywords: small business, franchising

Target group: business advisors

The objective of this project is to improve internal processes in addressing small business issues across a range of products and activities and to improve small business access to information. The activity is undertaken in support of National Priority 2, which seeks to develop the capacity of business operators and workers to manage OHS effectively, which forms a part of the National OHS Strategy. Activities in relation to small business include producing a guide on OHS responsibilities, duties and obligations of businesses in the franchising sector, conducting a stock-taking and evaluation of OHS initiatives for small business in Australian jurisdictions and reviewing and updating OHS information for small business on the NOHSC website.

Current activities have focused on a national project to produce plain-English information on the OHS responsibilities, duties and obligations of business in the franchising sector. This work has been undertaken in conjunction with the National Research Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Regulation at the Australian National University and the Office of Small Business.

The plain-English Guide is now complete and can be viewed on the NOHSC Internet site at www.nohsc.gov.au/smallbusiness.

Establishment of gender-based standards in the floriculture and *maquila* industries

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Keywords: women, gender-based analysis, floriculture, *maquila*, pesticides

Target group: floriculture and *maquila* workers

The purpose of this project is the establishment of gender-adapted standards in the floriculture and *maquila* industries in Latin America using two pilot projects: one in Nicaragua (*maquila*) and one in Guatemala (floriculture). The project also aims eventually to develop labour standards adapted to the realities of both genders, in Latin America. The immediate goal is to make suggestions for standards in the two industries.

IRET (Costa Rica) is also collaborating on the project.

Promotion of OS&H in small enterprises and the informal sectors

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Target Group: Small industries with adhesives, dusts or metals exposure in Zhejiang, Shandong and Fujian Provinces.

The purpose of this project is to analyze the occupational hazards and critical control points of small industries with adhesives, dusts or metals exposure and to improve the control and prevention. The planning and preparatory work has been started.

Funds are provided by the Ministry of Sciences and Technology for 2003-2005.

Development of a support system for occupational safety and health management in small enterprises in Japan

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Keywords: small enterprises, occupational safety and health management system (OSHMS)

Target group: occupational safety and health staff in public sectors and companies, occupational safety and health service providers

The purpose of this project is to establish a support system for occupational safety and health management at small enterprises. The project will develop tools for occupational safety and health management (checklists, manuals and evaluation sheets), which are optimized for small enterprises, through case studies of risk management system developments at small or medium size enterprises and through a panel survey to improve work condition.

One day training activity for establishing self-sustaining OSHMS based on participatory work improvement training was conducted in a medium-scale battery manufacturing factory in September 2003. Documents and checklist used in the training was newly developed by the project staff in Japanese. After several months of implementation, an investigation for evaluation of the effect of the training, i.e. evaluation of work improvements which have done after the training, has been planned. The documents developed and the results of evaluation are expected to be put together and published in both Japanese and English in 2004.

The results of a panel survey for 84 factories was published in Japanese. A follow-up survey of the panel is planned in January 2004.

Products: Training materials for lead battery manufacturing (in Japanese); checklist for work improvement in lead battery manufacturing (in Japanese); the results of the baseline survey on OSH management in 84 small- and medium-scale enterprises in Japan (in Japanese).

Reproductive health of female workers in rural areas: Risk evaluation and management

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Key words: agriculture, female workers, work conditions, reproductive health.

Target group: decision makers, planners and managers, occupational and public health staff, trade unions in mostly agricultural countries, managers of agricultural production.

The purpose of this project is to raise awareness among decision-makers in Departments of Health, Labour, Agriculture of work conditions and reproductive health of female agricultural workers, and to provide preventive measures. A report will cover description of working conditions of rural female workers, their reproductive health and complex of preventive measures. Main directions of research are psychological status workload, level of mechanization, chemical and biological factors at working places of female workers, indices of reproductive functions. The outline plan of the report and the introduction have already been prepared.

Occupational health and safety practices in small- and medium-sized enterprises: research of practices and identification of training needs

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Keywords: occupational health and safety, small- and medium-sized enterprises, training

Target group: small and medium-sized enterprises, managers, employees, trade unions, occupational health and safety professionals.

The purpose of the project is to research occupational health and safety practices in small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and determine their training needs as well as needs for future research. The outcome of the project will be a report that will present the main findings of research on the occupational health and safety practices of small and medium-sized enterprises, will identify their training needs and will suggest paths for future interventions.

A research programme in Greece and the UK has been completed. New collaborative countries are looked for. Funds are partly in place. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 2005.

Occupational health and safety practices in small and medium-sized enterprises

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This project is producing a basic occupational health programme to be implemented in small and medium size enterprises. It involves information systems design, structure, process and results. The model will be implemented at the national level.

A research programme in Greece and UK has been completed. New collaborative countries are looked for. Funds are partly in place. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 2005.

Support for a local and a regional network of stakeholders in occupational health

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Keywords: stakeholders, network, local initiatives, targets, education

Target group: occupational health professionals, small to medium sized enterprises, employers and employees, trade unions

The objective is to raise awareness of occupational health issues amongst target groups through the coordinated activities of a local occupational health development group, comprising representatives of appropriate stakeholders; in particular, to provide training, support and information to small to medium sized enterprises. Activities will include training, production of relevant materials, standard setting and support for networking

The Sheffield Occupational Health Development Group has developed an ongoing plan of work in many areas of occupational health including standards, primary care issues, secondary care provision, education and training, information provision and research and development.

Education and training: The Group holds an annual conference, which has proved very successful; each year it targets a particular stakeholder group. Other activities have included training days on Hand Arm Vibration syndrome. Members of the Group are also involved in discussions with Sheffield Universities and other agencies to raise the profile of occupational health in the curriculum and the local business community.

Information Provision: The Group produces a free quarterly newsletter and holds regular network meetings. These meetings discuss a single occupational health topic (e.g. workplace stress) and provide an opportunity for anyone to discuss occupational health issues informally over lunch. We have also developed a website, where we will be placing case studies, examples of best practice and copies of the newsletter.

Research and Development: Initial research by the Group has shown that there is still work to be done to convince employers of the benefits provided by good occupational health provision. We are currently planning work to estimate the nature and extent of occupational ill health in Sheffield, and assess the impact of targeted intervention (using workplace training and risk assessment) in improving workers' understanding of occupational ill health concerns specific for their workplace.

The following products are available: website (<http://www.healthyworksheffield.org.uk>), quarterly newsletters, quarterly network meetings and an annual conference.

FIOH Small Workplace Action Programme 1995-2000

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Keywords: small workplaces, occupational health and safety, working capacity

Target group: The programme included 16 projects with 20,000 people from 600 workplaces and collaborated with 900 occupational health experts from 200 occupational health units. Experts from the institutes, unions, authorities and mass media supported the programme which functioned on workplace, sectoral and general levels.

The aim of the programme aimed is to promote working capacity and prevention of disability at work places.

In Finland 94% (1998) enterprises had less than ten employees. The law stipulates that workplaces of all sizes must provide occupational health services. An essential element of good occupational health care practices is the maintaining of the working ability. The results showed that the target of working capacities should always be the enterprise with its entire staff and that various types of action should be taken simultaneously at the level of individual, the work organizations and the working environment. The need to improve professional skills is particularly relevant for ageing employees and people with reduced working capacities. All working capacity subsectors must be addressed in order to achieve real improvement.

The project showed that small workplaces have less capacity than medium-sized and big companies to prevent and control hazards. In addition their awareness of occupational health and safety problems is not always well developed and they need external support. There are several problems in organizing such

support. In Finland, the occupational health care units can reach small workplaces, start with them and support expert interventions for the development of well being of workers and workplaces.

The FIOH small workplaces action programme was carried out from 1995-2000. However, reporting of many projects is still in progress.

NIOSH safety checklist program for small business -- OSH CD-ROM with a safety program and resources for small enterprises

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Keywords: safety, program, checklists, small business, supervisors, workers, construction, young workers, CD-ROM

Target Group: Small enterprise owners

The aim of this project is to contribute and disseminate occupational safety and health information in a CD-ROM format to small enterprises to assist the owners with regulatory requirements, information how to establish a safety checklist program in their workplace. Resources will include ready fill-in-the-blanks occupational safety programs, how to increase safety and health awareness in small enterprises, and also information for young workers in the workplace. The CD-ROM will provide information on how to establish a safety and health checklist program based on 82 safety checklists to increase awareness of workplace hazards and ways to control the hazards. The CD-ROM will include numerous safety and health and environmental resources and programs, and hundreds of links to helpful organizations and government agencies.

The information in the CD-ROM will need to be reviewed internally, externally, and by focus-group. Funding for the project is in place. It is estimated that this CD-ROM project will be completed sometime in 2004.

Occupational health and safety management model for small and medium-sized enterprises in Colombia, Chile and Argentina

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Keywords : Management for MSSE, micro and small scales enterprises.

Target group: Decision makers, planners and managers, and occupational health staff in the worker's compensation insurance companies; employers and employees of micro and MSSE of Colombia, Chile and Argentina.

The purpose of the project is to design a comprehensive model to manage OHS programs and reinforce productivity, OSH programs and accomplishment of the laws for the MSSE and micro enterprises affiliated to worker's compensation insurance companies of Colombia, Chile and Argentina.

Taken into account that more than 85% of the enterprises of Colombia, Chile and Argentina are micro, small and medium size enterprises, there is an increasing need to cover them with the benefits that social security (worker's compensation) programs provide by the national laws. At the same time, it is needed to develop effective communication channels that will allow a permanent assessment of the micro and the MSSE. The comprehensive model develops a virtual channel, a massive channel and a presential channel, that communicates de insurance companies with the enterprises, allowing to deliver basic law information, news, OHS and productivity virtual and real training for the enterprises, as well as assessment for developing managerial enterprise skills. The model has established a basic structure that is being adapted to the needs, habits and the language jargon of each of the three countries. The final product will include all three channels described, as well as law, OSH, productivity and other prior topic assessment for nine (9) different prior economical activities.

The comprehensive model, its content and format, has been designed and is being validated with local task groups in each country. It is expected to be finished by June 2003.

Asociación Chilena de Seguridad, is collaborating on this project.

A new comprehensive model for micro and MSSE management, OSH and law assessment will be available on the web and the media. Funds are in place.

Economic appraisal of occupational health and safety in small enterprises

Monica Bergström, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH), Finland (monica.bergstrom@ttl.fi)

Keywords: small enterprises, cost-effectiveness, work ability

Target group: 39 small-scale enterprises from three different sectors

The main aim of the study is define the Maintenance of Work Ability (MWA) factors that have on effect on productivity of small enterprises. The study is part of Small Workplace Action Programme (1995-2000) of Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

There were 39 small and medium sized enterprises from three different sectors involved in this study during 1998-2000. There were 92 enterprise-specific development projects with approximately 1-6 projects per firm. Data was gathered by using survey questionnaires and interviews for employers, employees and Occupational Health Service Units. In terms of economic impact on work ability, the rate of absenteeism and associated costs were analyzed. This was done by comparing absenteeism rates in each enterprise to the average and best enterprise of each sector. The business economic benefit for reducing the average sickness absenteeism rate to that of sectors best varies between € 950 - 2392 per employee per year. There is a positive correlation between personals working capacity and enterprise's productivity and profitableness. Analysis done, and success factors are being identified.

Occupational health and safety practices in small and medium-sized enterprises

Marcela Giraldo, Ministry of Health, Colombia (mgiraldo@minproteccionsocial.gov.co),

Keywords: safety practices, occupational health in small and medium- sized enterprises

Target group: small and medium- sized enterprises

The purpose of the project is to design and implement a model of occupational health programme for small sized enterprises (less than 10 workers). A basic occupational health programme to be implemented in small and medium size enterprises is being produced. It involves information systems design, structure, process and results. The model will be implemented at the national level. The basic model is ready.

Training workshop on implementation of OSH policies in agriculture and informal sector

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Keywords: OSH, agriculture, village enterprises, policies.

Target group: decision-makers at ministries, academic institutions, medical university, trade union, Co-operative Union, Farmer Union

The purpose is to provide aspects of OSH in agriculture and informal sector. The workshop will be held in 2005.

Funds have been secured by WHO, Vietnam Government.

Indicators of chemical exposure in villages with traditional occupations

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Keywords: exposure, chemical, indicator, profile, surveillance, traditional career village.

Target group: regional, national and local authorities, employees, employers, NGOs, communities

The objective of this project is to survey exposures to selected chemicals and its influence on workers and the environment for sectoral, national and regional control in Vietnam; to draw out a scientific base for policy making; and to contribute to setting up an occupational health profile. Funds have been secured by WHO.

To evaluate Quality of Life of female workers who suffer from reproductive tract infection (RTI)

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Keywords: RTI, Quality of Life

Target groups: policy-makers, managers, occupational health staff, female workers, employer, MOH, MOLISA, Women union

The objective of this project is to apply WHO-QOL-100 to evaluate Quality of Life of female workers who suffer from RTI; and to raise awareness among employees, employers, managers, policy-makers, MIOH, MOLISA of the existing risks for RTI, the magnitude of the problem and the necessity of preventive measures. Funds have been secured by WHO.

Development of a health book and guideline on health promotion to small enterprises (agriculture, ceramic workers, mental workers and mechanists)

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Funds are in place (Thai Government budget). The project will be completed by December 2003.

Occupational and environmental development of the community enterprises, the Thai government policy

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Funds are in place (Thai government budget). The project will be completed by December 2003.

Occupational health and safety programme implementation in newly organized small enterprises

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The project is partly funded by the Governmental Agency for SSE. It will be completed by December 2003.

For cross references see also :

TF 2 : Moving forward the WHO/ILO Joint Effort on Occupational Health and Safety in Africa

TF 3 : Model development of occupational health management in child labour in the informal sector

TF 6 : Healthy workplace programme in Vietnam

TF 9 : Questionnaire to all interested CCs to survey the MSD situation

TF 12 : Development of OCH website for employers and employees of European SMEs