

Executive Summary

The National Occupational Safety and Health Medium Term Plan (NOSH-MTP)

Draft

Occupational Safety and Health Center
Department of Labor and Employment

I. BACKGROUND

Under DOLE's leadership and with multisectoral cooperation, a wide range of programs are being implemented: on prevention, compliance with occupational safety and health standards (OSHS); on compensation and rehabilitation and continuous updating of OSHS and related policies. Yet, despite these massive and impressive efforts, several gaps continue to limit the national capacity and capability of making occupational safety and health accessible to a larger segment of the working population. It was therefore decided by the DOLE and its tripartite partners to address these concerns through a review of the OSH situation and the OSHC strategic plan of 1998–2004 with a view to formulating a comprehensive and integrated OSH plan for 2006 to 2010

II. METHOD

The draft NOSH-MTP reflects extensive multisectoral consultations among all stakeholders involved in OSH.

The process was coordinated by OSHC and focused on:

- 1) preparing the national OSH profile.
- 2) holding consultations and workshops between and among partners and stakeholders.
- 3) organizing a two-day national consultation /workshop for the purpose of developing a draft national plan on occupational safety and health with multisectors and;
- 4) presenting to the Governing Board of the OSHC/ECC and to TIPC;
- 5) finalization of the medium term plan;
- 6) calling for a stakeholders' meeting to draft their respective operational programs on preventive OSH

III. THE NATIONAL SITUATION ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Plan was based on a situational analysis of occupational safety and health in the Philippines through the National Profile which is contained in a separate document, but summarized below.

Part 1 of the Profile highlights OSH trends against the background of available statistics and the national and international debate and action to strengthen OSH services. Survey findings provide the bare minimum of data because many injuries and illnesses escape reporting.

Part 2 deals with the legal framework. Under the Philippine Constitution of 1987, workers' safety and health is an integral part of "just and humane terms and conditions of work" and thus part and parcel of the national agenda on Decent Work for All. The Philippine Labor Code devotes an entire book to prevention, enforcement of OSH standards and compensation of work-related injuries and illnesses. Over the past three decades a body of national OSH Standards has been developed including policies, hazard-specific laws and programs.

Part 3 describes the Philippine OSH system and network. Over time the Philippines has developed a wide range of responses to OSH challenges in the private and public sectors. This includes extensive legislation and practices combined with mechanisms and systems by different stakeholders for prevention, enforcement, compensation and rehabilitation to protect workers from work-related injuries, illnesses and death.

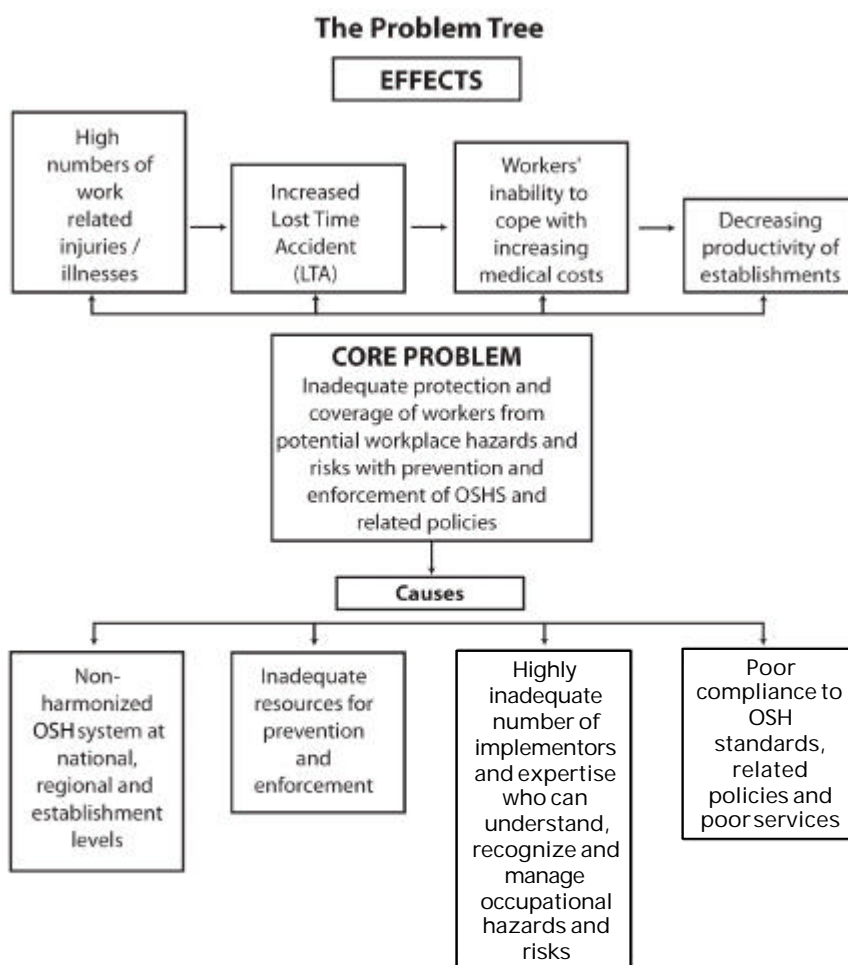
Part 4 reviews progress under the OSHC Strategic Plan of 1998 to 2004 implemented through the activities of OSHC, other government agencies and partners in the public and private sectors. A five-fold increase in programs, activities and coverage of clients was recorded for the period under review, yet this was seen as still inadequate to cover the huge terrain on preventive OSH programs.

Part 5 discusses emerging and re-emerging illnesses; these tend to go hand in hand with rapidly changing technologies and work processes, with the international movement of labor, the rise in female employment and the flexibilization of work. Details are given on exposure to toxic substances and materials and the national and international response to the group of chemicals known as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and to the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of labeling chemicals.

Part 6 discusses OSH concerns of special vulnerable groups of workers and the gaps in policies and program coverage. This includes in particular young workers, women and older workers, migrants, the disabled and, generally, workers in the informal sector.

Part 7 discusses the medium-term challenges to the formulation and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive OSH Plan such as:
The data required for program planning have been sufficiently gathered from a combination of primary and secondary data, and thus, considered enough to address the core problem which is summarized in the next section.

IV. FIGURE 1 SUMMARIZES THE “PROBLEM TREE” WHICH IS A LOGICAL HIERARCHY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT.



V. The NOSH-MTP 2001-2010

1. Focus of the NOSH-MTP

The NOSH-MTP, geared towards the constitutional vision that “All Filipino Workers are guaranteed the right to safe and healthy workplaces” is to be implemented through medium-term strategies and activities that address the specific OSH challenges. Success indicators are designed to facilitate effective monitoring and evaluation.

Prevention takes center stage in the Plan; it aims at strengthening DOLE's lead role in preventive programs and at capacity building of existing systems and networks of tripartite and other stakeholders. The central role of prevention has support from OSHC/ECC Governing Board and from major stakeholders. This is on the assumption that a massive drive for prevention would eventually result in a decrease of both the occurrence of accidents and claims for compensation.

During the major consultations held for this purpose, participants from the multi-sectors emphasized the importance of focusing on prevention while strengthening enforcement of and compliance with OSH Standards and compensation and rehabilitation. While the DOLE is the lead agency in preventive programs, it would at the same time build up the capacity of other agencies, strengthen its working relationship with other agencies.

2. The plan aims at tackling the following medium-term challenges seen during the preparation of the National Profile on OSH:
 - Intensifying OSH capability building through training, advocacy, research, networking and resource mobilization;
 - Improving data collection, analysis and dissemination;
 - Strengthening technical services on preventive OSH;
 - Putting a strong chemical safety management in place;
 - including the perennially excluded groups of workers;
 - addressing OSH concerns of migrant workers;
 - establishing linkages between OSH, productivity and economic growth;

 - harmonizing prevention, enforcement of OSH Standards, and compensation/rehabilitation programs
 - improving governance of OSH at national, regional and establishment levels; and
 - establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

3. The outcome of these consultations included specific recommendations to set up a comprehensive, and integrated national OSH plan, and to move towards a medium term program, strengthen the leadership role on OSH, and create a network of tripartite and other stakeholders.

4. The Framework

The Framework includes the Vision that *"All workers enjoy a better quality of life through OSH policies and programs"*.

1) **The Mission**

"With the enabling leadership of DOLE on OSH, unions, employers and other stakeholders translate the vision into harmonized policies and programs and standard operating procedures on OSH through effective partnerships.

2) **The Goal** " by 2010, all OSH stakeholders have the capability to carry out cost-effective OSH preventive programs of the highest quality reaching out to the majority of workers in all sectors in all regions of the country; and to reduce work-related injuries and illnesses by 20%".

A modest target of 20% is given to the reduction of work accident in order to give time for improving the tools and methods currently being used.

3) **Strategies**

The framework addresses the strategies towards the *harmonization of OSH system on prevention, enforcement, compensation and rehabilitation but with specific focus on prevention through policy development, research, training information and technical services; and delivering quality OSH services, and mobilizing resources.*

4.) **Core Values and Principles**

The Plan is anchored on the following core values and principles:

- ❖ Focus on Prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses and the promotion of health of workers
- ❖ Policies and programs are based on workers' rights
- ❖ Accountability of government, workers and employers
- ❖ Voice and representation of all workers including those in the vulnerable sectors, and the overseas foreign workers
- ❖ Equality and non-discrimination in the delivery of occupational health and safety programs.
- ❖ Promoting a culture of "OSH for All" and Zero Accident Program

5. **Target population**

The identification of its target population and core problems, causes and effects of the problem and the differentiation of clients into direct and indirect recipients was done. A stakeholders' analysis and the institutional framework by which a comprehensive program may be carried out was accomplished.

VI. "TURNING NEGATIVES INTO POSITIVES"

1. The problem tree can now be turned into positive action by identifying the following planning steps. Objectives are specified by re-stating problems as objectives.

Development Objective

By 2010, all major stakeholders have the capacity and capability to carry-out OSH preventive programs reaching out to the majority of workers in the formal and informal sectors in all regions of the country.

Immediate Objective 1

By the year 2010, harmonized OSH policies, systems, structure programs would have been attained through the rationalization process; and/or through legislative action.

Immediate Objective 2

The level and equitable allocation of, and optimum (efficient, maximum) use of resources from the public and private sector, would have been increased with emphasis on preventive services.

Immediate Objective 3

A wider coverage of workers with preventive programs and quality services on occupational safety and health would have been attained.

Immediate Objective 4

At establishment level to develop increased compliance with OSH Standards through the application of the Labor Standards Enforcement Framework.

Immediate Objective 5

To support policies, programs and the OSH system with studies and researches as basis for policy formulation and the design of program as well.

2. Defining Results

This is done by identifying the specific output, outcome, activities and indicators under each immediate objective. The expected impact is linked to the development objective, while lessons learned will be seen during the monitoring and evaluation stage.

At the output level, the indicators are for project management. At the outcome level, they should be linked to the direct recipients of project outcomes and to any individual beneficiaries. -At the impact **level**, these should be linked to direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as to higher levels, e.g. national level.

The details are found in the complete draft of NOSH-MTP Report.

VII. CONCLUSION

To achieve national consensus for OSH, the Secretary of Labor and Employment, in 2004, had called on all social partners for continued improvements of national OSH systems, with emphasis on preventive efforts. While the response of the social partners has been very positive, a comprehensive preventive OSH program has gradually taken shape. In their policies and programs employers and workers' organizations have given highest priority to a consolidation of OSH services.

The present national OSH medium term plan is a practical application of constitutional human and workers' rights for decent working and living conditions of all citizens, wherever they work or live. By preventing work-related accidents, injuries and death, OSH makes a direct contribution not only to human capital formation and social protection but to the promotion of productivity, economic growth, welfare, employment and income. The promotion of OSH is, therefore, linked to the Medium-term Philippine Development Plan 2005-2009 and the related National Program for Decent Work.

This work is the product of collective efforts based on such guiding principles as broad consensus of stakeholders, solid planning processes, extensive coverage, the use of appropriate technologies and consistent follow-up of results.

Declarations of intent were followed by active involvement of all stakeholders in planning efforts. Building on existing arrangements, institutions and networks OSHC took the lead in painstaking consultations to enlist all stakeholders in the formulation of an internally consistent national plan on safety and health. The outcome was a draft National Plan that is expected to harmonize and integrate different strategies and programs in the public and private sectors. The unions have recommended for the creation of a National Tripartite Advisory Council on OSH and the employers' have declared concern for occupational safety and health an integral part of the managerial function.

The nationwide extension of OSH services is a primary objective of the NOSH-MTP. Regional Offices are expected to play a key role in strengthening the relevance and outreach of OSH services in their respective regions through regional partnerships and networks and close cooperation with OSHC, ECC and BWC. The scope for broadening and deepening of OSH services is enormous by reaching out to a new clientele in SMEs and micro-enterprises and the workers in the informal economy; through new training methods, through IEC campaigns, integration of OSH in the school curricula, creation of OSH units in LGUs or integration of OSH in primary health care.

Consistent follow-up at national, regional and sectoral levels is important for monitoring and evaluating progress and taking corrective action where necessary. To operationalize the NOSH-MTP, it should find a permanent place in the framework of the National Program for Decent Work as well as in stakeholders work and financial plans and programs. While OSHC will take a coordinating role in prevention, other stakeholders must take their respective responsibilities.

The Philippine initiative in formulating and implementing a NOSH-MTP will, no doubt, draw much attention at regional and international levels. This will provide opportunities for sharing experience and drawing on external support. A high level endorsement and official launching of the NOSH-MTP will be sought. The purpose of this is to establish commitment and participation in preventive OSH program from all stakeholders. All this augur well for a successful implementation of the National OSH –MTP.

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The Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) was established as the nationally recognized authority on work safety and health research, training, information and technical expertise. As such, it conducts trainings (both basic and specialized), information campaigns; researches on the relationship between work and occupational diseases; and technical services such as Work Environment Measurement (WEM), Biological Monitoring, Safety Audits, as well as Development and Testing of Personal Protective

Equipment (PPE). It pursues partnership with the public and private sectors through responsive and sustainable OSH programs and policies. It aims to increase productivity through better working environment, decrease in manpower and economic losses caused by occupational accidents, injuries and diseases, and to improve welfare of workers and their families.

It is also the main implementor and coordinator of the Zero Accident Program (ZAP), the Department of Labor and Employment's focal program on work safety and health.

ZAP has the following components: advocacy; capability-building; voluntary compliance; network linkages; productivity link-up; and the biennial selection of the Gawad Kaligtasan at Kalusugan (GKK) winners. One of the aims of the 1st Mindanao Summit on OSH is the strengthening of the ZAP



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CENTER
North Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos.: 929-6036 to 39
Fax Nos.: 927-0926 / 929-6030
E-mail: oshcenter@oshc.dole.gov.ph
Website: <http://www.oshc.dole.gov.ph>