

Risk Assessment Training Resource

for the Youth Employment Initiative



Introduction

WHAT IS SAFETY AND HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT?

A key methodology for identifying where and how hazardous work is carried out and who is at risk, and also for coming up with safe and healthy solutions, is the workplace safety and health risk assessment done by the employer in cooperation with the workforce.

Risk assessment can help employers in all sizes of enterprises— small, medium and large – to take action themselves to identify potential health and safety problems, with the participation of the workforce, as well as to come up with practical and cost-effective solutions. The aim is to prevent and reduce fatal accidents, injuries and ill health at work. Using risk assessment to tackle daily safety and health problems avoids the companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, from having to (over) rely on external experts, consultants or officials to make their workplaces safer and healthier (though, of course, advice and help may be sought from such persons). Commercially, risk assessment is also increasingly a factor required by buyers in determining market access.

A safety and risk assessment by the farmers as employers is essentially a careful examination of any workplace activities that could kill, injure, or cause ill health to her/his workers, and even members of the public. A careful evaluation of the risks involved for each problem then follows, taking into account of existing safety and health measures that already provide protection, and deciding what further improvements need to be made to reduce risks of injury or ill health, with a focus on controlling risks at source.

WHY TRAIN FARMERS IN SAFETY AND HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT?

Risk assessment is a self-help tool that allows employers to take action themselves to identify safety and health problems in their workplaces, and to decide on and make improvements to reduce the risks associated with the dangerous work activities that they have identified. The aim of workplace risk assessment is to help employers, in cooperation, with their workers, to prevent and reduce fatal accidents, injuries, occupational disease, and ill health at work.

Training smallholder farmers in workplace safety and health risk assessment gives them a self-help tool with which to make safety and health improvements on their farms. In this way, 14-17 year olds can legally work on their farms as “young workers”, earning wages, learning skills, and providing income for their families; and the farmers remain within the law. Farmers themselves and their adult workers also benefit from better safety and health conditions.

Text includes information and excerpts from the *ILO Training Package on Workplace Risk Assessment & Risk Management for Small & Medium-Sized Enterprises*. ILO SAFEWORK Geneva 2013. ISBN 978-92-2-120764-5 (print); ISBN 978-2-127065-2 (web pdf); http://www.ilo.org/safework/info/instr/WCMS_215344/lang--en/index.htm



Risk assessment: a five-step process

Step 1. Identify the hazards. Who is at risk, and how?

Step 2. Evaluate the hazards. What is degree of risk each person may face from each hazard? Prioritising risks for action.

Step 3. Identify and decide on the safety and health risk control measures in the following order:

- Risk Control Measure 1: Elimination or substitution of hazards
- Risk Control Measure 2: Tools, equipment, technology and engineering
- Risk Control Measure 3: Safe work methods and practices, information and training
- Risk Control Measure 4: Hygiene and welfare including first aid
- Risk Control Measure 5: Personal protective equipment
- Risk Control Measure 6. Health/medical surveillance (by qualified persons)

Step 4. Take action. Implement the safety and health risk controls following the order in the list in Step 3.

Step 5. Record your findings, monitor and review your risk assessment. Update when necessary

“Given the right training and knowledge, [we] are capable of creating decent work opportunities for young people over the age of 14”

- Farmer testimonial during the 2014 Symposium



1: Body Mapping

2: Specific hazards and risks

3: Conduct a risk assessment and fill in the form

During the field training, the farmer (pictured) demonstrated to the team how he fetches water daily for his crops. The farmer received training on risk assessment techniques to help him reduce the level of risk being taken and to improve the way in which he carried out this task.

Training Activities

Training Activity 1: Body Mapping

AIMS

To help participants to:

- use body mapping to identify injuries, occupational diseases and ill health in crop, livestock and aqua-cultural production.
- identify common safety and health problems in different crops and types of livestock and aqua-cultural production.



TASK

Your trainer will draw some body maps on posters, and will arrange for small groups of participants, who do similar agricultural work or have knowledge of similar agricultural workplaces to be formed. Each group will fill in the body maps based on the instructions below and report back.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP:

1. Each participant should place marks (**X**) on to the body map to show any symptoms of ill health that they or others have at the farm/plantation.
2. Use different colours to identify different symptoms. For example:
 - **X** aches and pains - *blue*
 - **X** breathing difficulties, coughing – *black*
 - **X** stress related disorders – *green*
 - **X** other problems such as skin rashes, runny eyes and nose, dizziness, reproductive disorders and so on - *red*
3. As you apply the **X**, explain briefly why you placed the **X** in that particular place
4. Make sure that there is someone in your small group that notes down what is said about the body map and can report back your views.



Training Activity 2: Specific hazards and risks

AIMS

Based on the Body Mapping exercise, to help us to:

- analyse specific hazards and levels of risk arising from them for children working in agriculture
- identify the effects of different levels of risk upon children in terms of their safety and health - high, medium, and low risk situations.

TASK

In your small group, you will be asked to select **one** specific hazard for children working in agriculture from the list below:

- long hours of work
- strenuous labour, heavy and awkward loads
- repetitive work
- extreme temperatures
- cutting tools
- falls and falling objects
- farm machinery
- noise
- pesticides, other chemicals and dusts
- biological hazards
- livestock and venomous/wild animals
- psychosocial risks – e.g. stress and violence
- sanitation and welfare

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Answer the following questions then elect a spokesperson to report back with your group's views.

1. What are the key features of the hazard you have selected? What is the level or the degree of risk associated with the hazard that you have selected for children working in agriculture?
2. What are the likely effects of exposure to the varying levels of risk upon children in terms of injuries, occupational disease and ill health.

Training Activity 3: Conduct a risk assessment and fill in the form

The smallholder farmer training uses a five-step risk assessment process based on using a simple safety and health risk assessment form.

Step 1. Identify the hazards. Who is at risk, and how?

Identifying how a worker could be killed, injured or suffer an occupational disease/ill health is the first step (the hazards). When you work in a place every day, it is easy to overlook some dangers (hazards), so as a farmer you should:

- Walk around your farm and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm to safety and/or health.
- Identify which work activities and processes are the most dangerous (hazardous), and in which parts of the workplace.
- Learn from experience of previous accidents and work-related ill disease and health.
- Remember to think about long-term risks to health (e.g. high levels of dust or noise or exposure to toxic pesticides), as well as safety risks.
- Ask your workers if they can think of anyone you may have missed, or any problems you have not identified.

For each hazard, you also need to state briefly how a worker(s) could be harmed.
E.g. farm dust - danger of lung disease (occupational information)

ALL this information goes in the **FIRST** column of the risk assessment form.

Step 2. Evaluating the hazards. What is degree of risk each person may face from each hazard? Prioritising risks for action.

Risk assessment doesn't mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of workers, who are at risk of harm from a given hazard. For example, those working in the 'agricultural field gang,' or 'young workers'; and listing the numbers in each group.

For each hazard, evaluating the degree of risk - high, medium or low - takes a good trainer, a bit of practice and some thinking. When discussing this in your training group, where there are different views on the degree of risk arising from a particular hazard? Avoid getting lost in lengthy discussions on the degree of risk and focus on the solutions, i.e. the risk reduction measure(s) that will make the job safer and healthier.

ALL this information goes in the **SECOND** column of the risk assessment form.

Step 3. Identify and decide on safety and health risk control measures

For each hazard identified, the **core activities** in risk assessment are to identify, decide on, and implement the safety and health risk controls measures, following the order in which they are listed in the “Hierarchy of Risk Control Measures”:

- Risk Control Measure 1. Elimination or substitution of hazards
- Risk Control Measure 2. Tools, equipment, technology and engineering
- Risk Control Measure 3. Safe work methods and practices, organisation, information and training
- Risk Control Measure 4. Hygiene and welfare
- Risk Control Measure 5. Personal protective equipment
- Risk Control Measure 6. Health/medical surveillance (by qualified persons)

The reason for deciding on and implementing the risk control measures in the order in which they are listed in the hierarchy is first to identify and decide on collective risk controls as they protect the work area before moving on to consider individual risk controls which simply protect the person. For example:

- Workers’ health will be better protected from exposure to harmful dust if your risk assessment first identifies dust extraction machinery as the main risk control (giving collective protection to the work area) rather than relying solely on a dust mask which generally will not give anywhere near the same degree of lung protection, and in any case, only offers some degree of protection to the worker wearing it.
- Soundproofing a noisy machine controls noise more effectively than individual ear protection and avoids workers having to wear such protection for their whole work shift.

For **each** hazard, the risk control measures you have decided to implement to make work activities safer and/or healthier go in the **THIRD** column.

Step 4. Take action. Implement the safety & health risk controls.

When risk control measures are decided upon, as per Step 3, you need to take action to implement the measures. You also have to assign responsibility within the enterprise for their implementation within a reasonable timeframe, and record the date they were acted on and done.

In terms of how soon to take action:

HIGH RISK = Immediate Action

MEDIUM RISK = Action within a period of weeks

LOW RISK: Action over a longer period. Where risks are assessed as very low, no further action may be needed at present.

ALL this information goes in the **FOURTH** column of the risk assessment form.

Step 5. Record your findings, monitor, review your risk assessment. Update.

You need to write down the main findings of your risk assessment, and the risk control measures to be implemented, noting the person(s) responsible for implementing a specific risk control measure, by when, and when it was completed. Where literacy is an issue, others may be able to assist.

As previously mentioned, risk assessment is a Self-help Tool, so from time to time you need to review and update your risk assessment to adapt and/or maintain effective safety and health risk control measures .

ALL this information goes in the **FIFTH** column of the risk assessment form.

Sample—15 Nov. 2013, Madanjala Village, Ntchisi Province, Malawi, Farmer

What are the hazards? Safety/health problems	Who is at most at risk and how?	What measures/actions need to be taken to stop workers being injured or made ill?	Who in your workplace should take action? By when? Action completed?
<p>Milling machine for maize, petrol driven, operating in a small hut</p> <p>Unguarded nip points and belt transmission</p>	<p>Milling machine operator. Other persons helping with maize milling in close proximity to the machine</p> <p>High risk - imminent and serious danger - of entanglement in the machine and possible loss of limbs; even fatal accident</p>	<p>Fit guards to nip points</p> <p>Enclose transmission belt</p> <p>Fit emergency stop device if possible</p> <p>Enclosure of the moving parts of the machine is another possibility if it proves difficult to retrofit guards</p> <p>Keep children out of the milling hut</p>	<p>Farm owner</p> <p>Immediately</p>
<p>Step 5. Record your findings, monitor and review your risk assessment, and update when necessary: The risk assessment should state the intended review date.</p>			

Risk assessment form template

What are the hazards? Safety/health problems	Who is at most at risk and how?	What measures/actions need to be taken to stop workers being injured or made ill?	Who in your workplace should take action? By when? Action completed?
<p>Step 5. Record your findings, monitor and review your risk assessment, and update when necessary: The risk assessment should state the intended review date.</p>			



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