# Terms of reference

## Assessment of the occupational safety and health qualification system in [country]

## 1. BACKGROUND

Occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals play an important role in ensuring that workplaces are safe and healthy. For OSH management at the workplace, the ILO Guidelines on OSH management systems (ILO-OSH 2001) advise that certain functions, such as risk assessment and the investigation of work-related injuries, ill health, diseases and incidents, should be carried out by ''competent persons'', in consultation with workers and/or their representatives, as appropriate, and in line with the OSH competence requirements defined by the employer. The Guidelines define the term "competent person" as a person that has suitable training and sufficient knowledge, experience and skill for the performance of the specific work involved. [1]

Around the world, many workplaces do not have access to sufficient knowledge on OSH to undertake proper OSH management at the workplace level and financial resources to engage external expertise. The problem is particularly acute in small and medium-sized enterprises and in the informal economy, as well as in developing countries, where the number of suitably qualified professionals is often insufficient to meet the needs of enterprises. In addition, many developing countries do not have expertise at the national level to ensure the availability of qualified professionals. Gaps are observed between requirements in national legislation, where applicable, and their implementation.

Against this background, the ILO has developed a practical guide to support countries in assessing and improving their national OSH qualification systems. The guide was developed based on research conducted on qualification systems in 14 countries to provide a comprehensive overview of the different elements constituting OSH qualification systems and of different typologies and trends across the various systems. The findings highlight the similarities and differences among the 14 countries regarding the regulation, education, training and qualification, certification and context surrounding OSH professionals. The guide was prepared as part of a project funded by the Government of Korea entitled "Improving occupational safety and health (OSH) qualifications frameworks", which was implemented under the ILO's Safety + Health for All flagship programme, in line with the Safety + Health for All Strategy – Phase II (2021–2025).

The guide provides a description of each element of the system, as well as examples of different approaches/practices from various countries to be tailored to meet the needs of countries. Its use at the national level will help to identify the existing gaps and future development needs in order to

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[1] ILO, *Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (ILO-OSH 2001)*, second edition (2009).

ensure the availability of suitably qualified OSH professionals, offering a basis for making decisions on the priority actions to be implemented to build a coherent and effective national qualification system.

*[Include information on the country and context to justify implementation of the guide]*

## 2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this consultancy is to assess the OSH qualification system in *[country]* and produce a report of findings that will inform discussions/consultations for the improvement of the system. The assessment will enable the Government and social partners in *[country]* to gain an in-depth understanding of their own national qualification system, including its regulatory and institutional framework, and indications on the required competency profile of OSH professionals.

The assessment focuses on **professionals who perform safety- or health-related functions, or a mixture of both, in the workplace, and who are responsible for the overall management of safety and health in the workplace**. In some countries, they are called "OSH generalists", "competent employees" or "OSH managers", for example. For the purpose of this assessment, the professions that require a medical training (such as occupational nursing and occupational medicine and so on) and the specialized OSH-related disciplines (such as occupational hygienist, toxicologist, psychologist and so on) are excluded. The term ''OSH professional'' throughout this document should be understood in this context.

The evaluation will follow a participatory approach and should cover the following points:

**1. NATIONAL CONTEXT**

> 1.1 Socio-economic context (including brief overview of political system, national culture and societal beliefs, and socio-economic environment)

> 1.2 Industrial/sectoral context (including main industrial/sectoral activities, employment trends by industry, business prospects and emerging industries)

**2. OSH CONTEXT**

**2.1 OSH strategic context**

> 2.1.1 National OSH framework (brief overview of OSH policy and strategy)

> 2.1.2 Key OSH institutions and stakeholders (brief overview)

**2.2 Evolution and status of the OSH profession**

> 2.2.1 History and current status of the profession (for example, whether professional recognition is established or not)

> 2.2.2 National OSH initiatives, strategies and objectives to promote the profession

**2.3 The OSH workforce**

> 2.3.1 Workforce profile (OSH professionals by industry/sector, business type and size, gender, age and other labour-related demographic categories; sample job titles and roles; sample tasks and duties required from OSH professionals)

2.3.2 Forecast/estimation of demand for OSH workers, including:

- data on the number of enterprises required to hire an OSH professional, ensure OSH competence in workplaces and/or to implement an OSH management system
- data on the workplaces employing OSH professionals (desegregation by industry, sector, formal/informal enterprises, workforce size, types of occupational risks, participation in a global supply chain);

2.3.3 Forecasting/estimating demand for skills

2.3.4 Promoting entry to the profession and the options available for entry

2.3.5 Activities/initiatives to recruit and raise the profile of the profession

2.3.6 Workforce diversity sensitivities and considerations (including gender, age and origin considerations in accessing and retaining professionals)

## 3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 OSH legislation (brief overview of national OSH legislation)

### 3.2 Regulation of OSH competence and qualifications

3.2.1 Institutional framework and stakeholder analysis:

▷ Authorities, institutions and other actors involved in the national qualification system and their roles (for example, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, OSH professional associations, education/training institutions, employers and workers' organization and so on)

▷ Existence and functions of external advisory OSH services and/or internal/external occupational health services (including the requirements for setting up or adhering to an internal or external occupational health service and whether all enterprises are covered)

▷ Coordination and collaboration mechanisms between stakeholders

3.2.2 Summary of the requirements imposed on employers to ensure OSH competence in the workplace and/or implement an OSH management system in the company (including whether all companies are covered and including specific requirements imposed in multinational companies, if any).

3.2.3 Mechanisms/strategies to promote and enforce employer requirements to ensure OSH competence in the workplace

### 3.3 Certification and registration

3.3.1 Requirements for certification and/or registration (mandatory or voluntary)

3.3.2 Process for certification and registration

3.3.3 Authority/institution responsible for certification and/or registration

3.3.4 Data on the number and type of OSH professionals who have achieved certification and/or registration

## 4. EDUCATION, TRAINING & QUALIFICATION

### 4.1 OSH professionals' competency profile

4.1.1 legal, social and accreditation/certification requirements placed upon OSH professionals that result in a need for specific skills, knowledge, abilities and/or experience

4.1.2 Knowledge, skills and abilities required by industries/sectors/enterprises from OSH professionals (obtained through job analysis or analysis of existing job descriptions in the industries/sectors concerned)

4.1.3 Gaps between OSH professionals current or actual knowledge, skills and abilities and what is required of them from industries/sectors/enterprises, now and into the future

**4.2 Approved qualification framework (general)**

4.2.1 Profile of the national qualification system (objectives, framework)

4.2.2 Profile of national education and training, including regional differences (such as enrolment rates in higher education and vocational training, disaggregated into age, gender, sector of activity, geographical location and so on).

4.2.3 Key stakeholders and institutions involved in qualification and education/training

4.2.4 Mechanisms for governance, oversight and maintenance of quality

**4.3 OSH professionals' education and training**

4.3.1 Education and training pathways/options for OSH professionals, if any (undergraduate and postgraduate degrees offered through private or public universities/–institutes; degrees, diplomas and certificates offered by TVET training courses provided by employers' or workers' organizations; training courses and certificates offered by professional associations and private consultancy/audit firms and so on), including:

- stakeholders delivering training and education
- training/education courses/programmes available (curricula, topics, content, objectives, length, costs, geographical location, delivery mechanisms)

4.3.2 Transitional arrangements in place regarding OSH qualifications, if any

4.3.3 Education and training profile, if available (current number of students (broken down by gender), course enrolments (applicants versus intrants, by gender), successful/unsuccessful completions (disaggregated by gender), reasons for non-completion and so on).

4.3.4 Education and training capacity and resources, including geographical differences (such as the maximum capacity of students versus the demand for training, the number of people qualified to provide training and the status of infrastructure)

4.3.5 Measures/accommodation in place to ensure access to education and training for persons with disabilities

4.3.6 Coverage of costs for OSH professional training and funding schemes to promote education and training of OSH professionals, if any

4.3.7 Mechanisms for verification of OSH competencies, including:
- data on the number of professionals with the skills required to ensure proper OSH management in the workplace (disaggregated by industry/sector)

- data compared against anticipated future needs for suitably qualified and competent OSH professionals

**4.4 Continuous professional development (CPD)**

4.4.1 Requirements for CPD

4.4.2 CPD options (providers, courses/experiences, costs, location, medium/channel content/topic)

4.4.3 CPD governance and quality assurance

**4.5 Ethics and professional practice**

4.5.1 Ethical governance system (models/frameworks, stakeholders, responsibilities, requirements)

4.5.2 Monitoring and enforcing ethical conduct

4.5.3 Past, current and emerging ethical issues (such as prosecutions of OSH professionals, national and/or local OSH practice issues/concerns)

**5. DEVELOPING/IMPROVING THE OSH QUALIFICATION SYSTEM**

5.1 Identification of gaps in the national qualification system for OSH professionals

5.2 Identifying incentives and opportunities for change

5.3 Identification of constraints and obstacles to change, including:

- political (such as lack of political will, lack of priority and so on)
- economic (such as limited capacities of companies and so on
- organizational (such as lack of control, absence of sanctions in the event of non-compliance with law and so on)
- financial (such as non-attractiveness of OSH professions, high financial costs of training, lack of demand for the profession and so on)
- other factors to be analysed in the national context (such as corruption, lobbying, resistance to change and so on)

**3. KEY TASKS**

1. Get acquainted with the material made available in order to fully understand the needs, objectives and expected results (including the guide and methodology for assessing and improving qualification systems for OSH professionals and examples of similar research).
2. Participate in one or more information/training sessions to conduct the assessment.
3. Conduct a desk review (including a review of public databases, legal documents, journals, academic resources, education and training materials, websites of relevant institutions, national policies and so on).
4. Identify the stakeholders to be interviewed and develop interview protocols for each stakeholder/group, indicating the information to be collected. Stakeholders to be interviewed should include representatives of *(if applicable)*: the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, employers' organizations, workers' organizations, occupational health services and OSH professional associations, as well as OSH professionals and any other key stakeholders identified.

5. Produce a research plan and interview agenda.
6. Conduct semi-structured interviews based on the interview protocols and agenda approved by the task force.
7. Transcribe interview notes.
8. Analyse the information gathered and write an initial research report based on a structure/plan approved by the task force.
9. Compile all the comments received and draft the final report, incorporating all comments received from the task force.

## 4. QUALIFICATIONS

The consultant/service provider should have the following profile:

- an advanced university degree in OSH, social sciences, law, development studies or other relevant field;
- excellent knowledge of OSH qualifications systems and practices in *[country]*;
- experience in conducting qualitative research; and
- excellent command of written and spoken *[relevant language]*

## 5. DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

The contract will start on *[to be determined]* and end on *[to be determined]*

The following products will be delivered by the service provider:

**Deliverable 1**: Research plan, list of stakeholders to be interviewed, interview agenda and research protocols for each stakeholder/group to be interviewed (results of tasks 1 to 5).
	Deadline: *[to be determined]*

**Deliverable 2**: Interview notes and draft assessment report following approved structure/plan (Word format) (results of tasks 6 to 8).
	Deadline: *[to be determined]*

**Deliverable 3**: Final report incorporating all comments received (in Word format) (results of task 9).
	Deadline: *[to be determined]*