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Assessment of occupational safety and health qualification systems at a national level

Training



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► Context and objectives

Context

- ▶ Importance of the OSH professional's role at the workplace level
- ▶ Insufficient skills for OSH management at workplace level
- ▶ Knowledge on national qualification systems for OSH professionals in 14 countries (ILO research)
- ▶ Practical guide to help countries assess and improve their national OSH qualification system
- ▶ Context of the assessment in [country]

Guide overview

► Objectives

- Allow countries 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.
- Provide a description of each element of the system as well as examples of different approaches/practices from various countries to be tailored to meet country specific needs.
- Help to identify the existing gaps and future development needs to ensure the availability of suitably qualified OSH professionals, offering a basis to make decisions on priority actions to be implemented to build a coherent and effective national qualification system.

► Target audience

Content of the guide

1. Methodology

1. Establish task force
2. Conduct desktop review and background research
3. Consult with stakeholders
4. Deliver a stakeholder consultation workshop
5. Develop, implement and monitor an action plan

The training focuses on these activities to be done by the consultant

2. Assessing the national OSH qualification system

- 2.1 National context
- 2.2 OSH context
- 2.3 Regulatory framework
- 2.3 Education, training and qualification

3. DEVELOPING/IMPROVING THE OSH QUALIFICATION SYSTEM



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▶ Training objectives

▶ Training objectives

- ▶ Understand the scope of the assessment and its objectives
- ▶ Master the research methodology for conducting the assessment
- ▶ Understand the different elements that make up a national OSH qualification system
- ▶ Understand and identify the information to be collected in order to carry out the assessment and write the research report

Content of the training

- ▶ The four-step assessment methodology:
 1. Desktop review and background research
 2. Stakeholder consultation
 3. Analysis and report-writing
 4. Stakeholder consultation workshop
- ▶ Assessment content (overview of information to be collected/analysed) :
 1. National context
 2. OSH context
 3. Regulatory framework
 4. Education, training and qualification
 5. Gaps in the system, incentives and constraints for improvement



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► Assessment methodology

Assessment scope

- ▶ Occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals covered by the assessment include those who:
 - ✓ provide either safety-related or health-related functions or a mixture of both at the workplace
 - AND
 - ✓ are responsible for the overall OSH management in the workplace
- ▶ In some countries they are called "OSH generalists", "competent employees" or "OSH managers", for example.
- ▶ The professions that require a medical training (such as, occupational nursing and occupational medicine, etc.) and the specialised OSH-related disciplines (such as occupational hygienist, toxicologist, psychologist, etc.) **are not included.**

► **Step 1: Desktop review and background research**

- Objectives
- Data sources:
 - National workforce and labour statistics databases
 - Legal frameworks, legislation and case law
 - Government policies, publications, and reports
 - Sectoral or industry position papers that describe industry trends
 - Publications/research reports on OSH (e.g., in specific sectors)
 - Policies and documents produced by professional associations
 - Jobs descriptions/job vacancies
 - Education/training documents
 - Any other relevant document or data source

Step 2: Stakeholder consultation

- ▶ Objectives
- ▶ Key stakeholders to include:
 - Relevant government authorities
 - National tripartite advisory body addressing OSH issues
 - Workers' and employers' organizations
 - OSH professional association(s)
 - Education/training institutions
 - Training providers
 - Companies employing OSH professionals (representative sample of the main sectors of activity, including companies of different sizes)
 - OSH professionals (representative sample of the main sectors of activity, including professionals working in companies of different sizes)

Step 2: Stakeholder consultation

► Methods and tools:

- Semi-structured individual or group interviews to collect qualitative data
- Interview or focus group protocols adapted for each stakeholder group:
 - Introduction (context, objectives, confidentiality, consent)
 - Profile/demographic information on non-identified person (e.g. gender, role, enterprise size, enterprise type, sector, geographic location, if applicable)
 - Questions tailored to each stakeholder group

Step 3: Analysis and report-writing

- ▶ Data analysis method: coding and thematic analysis
- ▶ The research report should:
 - Present the findings of the research (combining desk research with data collection from interviews and focus groups)
 - Present an analysis of the gaps identified in the OSH qualification system, as well as the incentives and constraints for improvement.
 - Give appropriate weight to the experiences shared by the stakeholders involved, taking into account their levels of influence and importance in the analysis (ensuring that a diversity of viewpoints is included).
 - Cite sources of information throughout the report (documentary sources and from interviews). For example, "All the employers interviewed reported that...", "It emerged from interviews with OSH professionals that..." "The Labor Code provides for the following provisions ..."). Quotations may be included.

▶ Step 4: Stakeholder consultation workshop

▶ Workshop(s) objectives

- Present and validate research findings with key stakeholders (including research participants)
- Discuss gaps, drivers and constraints for improvement
- Identify recommendations for improvement that will be used to develop an action plan for improving the national system
- Formulate justified and realistic objectives for change/improvement, taking into account practical constraints within the country



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► National OSH qualification system

Information to be collected

1. National context: Socio-economic context

- ▶ Political system
- ▶ Socio-economic environment
- ▶ National culture and societal beliefs

Questions to guide the assessment of the national context can include the following:

- ▶ What is the political structure in place and who are the major decision-makers and stakeholders regarding OSH?
- ▶ What is the current economic environment and what is the future economic prospects (e.g., GDP growth or contraction)?
- ▶ What is the country's level of development and what are the prospects (e.g., foreign investment)?
- ▶ What are the characteristics of the workforce population (i.e., active population disaggregated by sex, age, geographical location and level of education).
- ▶ How might the national culture affect what is acceptable/unacceptable with respect to OSH professionals' practices in enterprises?
- ▶ How receptive are employers to OSH education and training, and can they see the business benefits in supporting employees to gain OSH qualifications?
- ▶ What major disasters or OSH-specific events have shaped public opinion and interest in OSH?

1. National context: Industrial/sectoral context

► Main industrial/sectoral activities:

- Major industries/sectors in terms of their share of total workforce employment
- Profiles of enterprises in the main sectors/industries, in terms of size, level of formality or informality and geographical location
- OSH standards, codes or other technical specifications relevant/required for OSH professionals to know in order to work in certain sectors/industries (including any requirements imposed by multinational enterprises)

1. National context: Industrial/sectoral context

► Employment trends by industry

- ▷ Overall health of the labour market nationally (e.g., employment/unemployment rate)
- ▷ Industries employing the greatest/least numbers of OSH professionals
- ▷ Patterns of movement for OSH professionals between different industries
- ▷ Industries/sectors where OSH professionals are likely to be heavily employed in the future

► Examples from Australia and Madagascar

1. National context: Industrial/sectoral context

► Emerging industries

- ▷ New or emerging industry or changes in industry prevalence in the country (e.g., renewable energy, the hydrogen industry, changes in manufacturing to emphasize collaborative robotics)
- ▷ Technologies showing the most promise for implementation within the country (e.g., is there government policy in place to stimulate the renewable energy sector?)
- ▷ Novel technologies currently in development or planned for development within the country
- ▷ Specific occupational risks posed by the technologies to workers' health/safety
- ▷ Emerging occupational risks

2. OSH context

► Strategic OSH context

- National OSH policy and programme/strategy documents (content in terms of OSH competence, education and training)
- National policy or position statements from professional associations (content in terms of OSH education, training and/or qualifications)
- Stakeholders and institutions providing strategic direction or inferring a direction for OSH professional education, training and qualification (e.g., the type of materials produced, the skills and competencies emphasised or encouraged)

► Example from Guyana

2. OSH context

► Evolution and status of the OSH profession

- Technical professions playing a role in OSH in the country (their main role, functions and duties (general overview)).
- Professional beliefs and identities affecting the role of the OSH professional (e.g., are there strong technical influences that encourage specialization or are OSH professionals more driven to a generalist identity?)
- Current status of the OSH profession (e.g., level of influence, professional recognition)

2. OSH context

- ▶ Evolution and status of the OSH profession
 - Professional recognition of personnel involved in OSH management and level of recognition
 - General characteristics of an occupation (as defined by Ferguson and Ramsay, 2010):
 - *A service orientation or culture (e.g., acknowledgement that OSH professionals provide a service to workers and employers)*
 - *An ethical code of conduct and mechanisms to enforce the code*
 - *A body of knowledge (e.g., core knowledge required to perform the role successfully) that is specific to the OSH profession*
 - *Structured and consistent education and qualification*
 - *Ongoing professional development and learning*
- ▶ Example: The professionalization of OSH in Singapore

2. OSH context

► The OSH workforce

- National OSH workforce profile (OSH professionals by industry/sector, enterprise type and size, gender, age and other labour-related demographic categories; sample job titles and roles; sample tasks and duties required from OSH professionals)
- Forecast/estimation of demand for OSH workers, including:
 - Data on number of enterprises required to hire an OSH professional, ensure OSH competence in workplaces and/or to implement an OSH management system;
 - Data on workplaces employing OSH professionals (desegregation by industry, sector, formal/informal enterprises, workforce size, types of occupational risks and participation in a global supply chain).

2. OSH context

► The OSH professional workforce

- Promotion of entry into the OSH profession, pathways/options available/common to enter the OSH workforce
- Levels of investment required to engage and retain OSH resources in an enterprise (e.g., average salary, salary range by experience and qualification levels)
- Key challenges in given sectors/locations in terms of access to qualified OSH professionals
- National recruitment and OSH workforce profile-raising activities/initiatives
- Workforce diversity sensitivities and considerations (including gender considerations in access to the profession and retention of professionals, as well as considerations with respect to age and ethnicity)

3. Regulatory framework

- ▶ OSH legislation
 - Profile of national OSH legislation (brief overview)
 - Mechanisms to enforce compliance
- ▶ Examples of various approaches to regulating the OSH profession

3. Regulatory framework

- ▶ Regulation of OSH competence and qualifications
 - Requirements are placed on employers to ensure OSH competence
 - Mechanisms/strategies to promote and enforce employer requirements

- ▶ The concept of “competent person”

3. Regulatory framework

- ▶ Institutional framework and stakeholder analysis
 - Authorities, institutions and other actors involved in the national qualification system and their roles
 - Existence and functions of external advisory OSH services and/or internal/external occupational health services
 - Coordination and collaboration mechanisms between stakeholders

3. Regulatory framework

- ▶ Certification and registration
 - Requirements for OSH certification and/or registration
 - Process for certification and/or registration
 - Authority/institution responsible for certification and/or registration
 - Data on the number and type of OSH professionals who have achieved certification and/or registration (trends and patterns in terms of professional demographic and characteristics, or industry/sector)
- ▶ Examples from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Viet Nam, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam

4. Education, training and qualification

- ▶ OSH professionals' competency profile:
 - Critical knowledge, skills and abilities required by industries/sectors/enterprises from OSH professionals
 - Competencies likely needed into the future to address emerging OSH challenges/demands from enterprises
 - Legal, social, and accreditation/certification requirements placed upon OSH professionals that result in a need for specific skills, knowledge, abilities, and/or experience
 - 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. Education, training and qualification

► Approved qualification framework:

- Approved qualification framework(s) in the country (strategic purpose and core objectives of the framework(s))
- Profile of education and training generally within the country, including regional differences, (e.g., enrolment rates in higher education and vocational training, disaggregated into age, gender, industry/sector, geographical location, etc.)
- Key stakeholders and institutions involved in qualification and education/training
- Mechanisms for governance, oversight, and maintenance of quality
- Issues or considerations for compatibility with territory/state/provincial qualification frameworks (if applicable)

4. Education, training and qualification

- ▶ OSH professionals' education and training options
 - Training pathways/options available for OSH professionals
 - Stakeholders delivering training and education and the relationships between them
 - Training/education courses/programmes available

4. Education, training and qualification

▶ OSH professionals' education and training options

- OSH education and training profile across the country (number of students, course enrolments, successful/unsuccessful completions)
- Education and training capacities and resources
- Measures/accommodation in place to ensure access to education and training for persons with disabilities

4. Education, training and qualification

- ▶ Education and formation of OSH professionals:
 - Coverage of costs for OSH professional training
 - Funding schemes to promote education and training of OSH professionals
 - Mechanisms in place for employers or training/education institutions to verify the competence of OSH professionals
 - Data describing the numbers and characteristics of OSH professionals available and suitably competent to provide effective OSH management to enterprises:
 - Disaggregated by industries/sectors,
 - Compared against anticipated future needs for suitably qualified and competent OSH professionals

4. Education, training and qualification

- ▶ Continuous professional development (CPD):
 - Stakeholders or organizations/institutes promoting or requiring CPD
 - Requirements for CPD
 - Main options for CPD (e.g., providers, costs, locations, medium/channels of delivery, content/topics)
 - Mechanisms to provide governance and assurance over the quality of the CPD of OSH professionals
- ▶ Example from Singapore

4. Education, training and qualification

► Ethics and professional practice

- Recognized or widely endorsed ethical code or guideline for the OSH profession. If applicable:
 - *Who has oversight and management of this code?*
 - *Is the code generally accepted and implemented by OSH professionals?*
- Governance system (i.e., models/frameworks, stakeholders, responsibilities, requirements, etc.)
- Monitoring and enforcement
- Main ethical issues for OSH professionals (such as prosecutions of OSH professionals, national and/or local OSH practice issues/concerns)

5. Gaps in the system, incentives and constraints for improvement

- ▶ Gap analysis (gaps between current and desired situation)
- ▶ Analysis of drivers and constraints for improvement. These may include, for example, the following factors:
 - political (e.g., lack of political will, lack of priority, etc.)
 - economic (e.g., limited capacities of companies, etc.)
 - organizational (e.g., lack of control, absence of sanctions in the event of non-compliance with law, etc.)
 - financial (e.g., non-attractiveness of OSH professions, high financial costs of training, lack of demand for the profession, etc.)
 - other factors to be analysed in the national context (e.g. corruption, lobbying, resistance to change, etc.)

Useful ressources



- ▶ Practical guide to support countries in the assessment and further improvement of their national OSH qualification system
- ▶ Occupational safety and health professionals at the workplace level : A review of qualification systems and regulatory approaches in selected countries
- ▶ Executive Summary - Occupational safety and health professionals at the workplace level: A review of qualification systems and regulatory approaches in selected countries



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► **Questions?**