

# 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference and Exhibition on **Occupational Health & Safety**

June 24-25, 2014 Valencia Conference Centre, Valencia, Spain

## **Workplace hazard assessment in traditional weaving and how to regulate standards in the informal sectors**

Yifokire T, Ansha N, Hiruy W, Tesfahun M, Haregewoin T, Yemataw W and Getu D  
University of Gondar, Ethiopia

Currently, occupational health and safety service is becoming the major public health and business issue in Ethiopia. Informal sectors are the major employer in Ethiopia especially traditional weaving is the historic job where child labor is common. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess workplace hazards in the traditional weaving and how to standard regulation in the informal sector as part of the global eradication program of ILO, The Worst Forms of Child Labor by the year 2016. There are 168 million child labor aged 5-17 years; and 85 million of them in hazardous work. The research was done in collaboration with World Vision Ethiopia, Melonite Economic Development Association, and Mission for Community Development Program, United States Department of Labor and University of Gondar.

The study was conducted in two zones, Wolayta and GamoGofa, found in South Nation and Nationalities People Region and Guliele Sub-city in Addis Ababa. A total of 12 districts and two town administrations with 54 'kebeles' were included. Quantitative and qualitative research methods using multiple research tools; NORDIC questionnaire, Ergonomic assessment using posture analysis, Rosenberg self-esteem, workplace observation, Key informants interview and Focus group discussion were applied for data collection. A total sample of 1268 children aged between 5 and 17 years, 1268 household heads/business, and stakeholders from government, non-government and civil societies were involved in the study.

Workplace hazard assessment showed that children worked in a confined space with poor ventilation system (36.5%), no adequate light for the task demanded (33.7%), excess cotton fibers in their work place (62.9%), dissatisfied with thermal condition of the workplace (81.6%) and sleeping at the workplace (10%), no toilet at all (36.9%), a toilet but not sanitary (52.2%). According to ergonomic assessment; weaving tasks involved long time sitting with a bent and twisted posture, 89.0% of the seat had no back rest, the posture analysis assessment score showed "Shimena" were the most risky task for back, neck, wrist/hand and shoulder/arm. Around one third of children were working more than 7 hours a day and 15.8% of them worked at night. Psychosocial hazards were very prevalent; for 31.1% of children, jobs were demanding beyond their capacity. The last one year injury and illness prevalence was 121 and 261 per 1000 respectively. Children had low self-confidence, had feelings of exhaustion and hopelessness and even some of them had a wish to commit suicide. In the Rosenberg self-esteem assessment nearly 30% of the children had low self-esteem. Participants identified the gap in awareness and the practical applicability of the existing labor laws in the informal sector.

Generally, many children have been working in hazardous conditions; hence, a collaborative effort should strengthen special focus on occupational health and safety service improvement, labor inspection and supervision of the informal sectors should be designed and implemented.

yifoomitu@yahoo.com