

SPOTLIGHT

Special ILO / Korea Edition



International
Labour
Organization



DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.

Welcome

I'm privileged to introduce to you this special ILO/Korea Edition of "Spotlight". The stories in this small collection not only demonstrate the recent contributions made by ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in promoting decent work in Asia-Pacific, they are also really good reads.

The stories here will take you to a number of countries in the region to meet some outstanding individuals. Their determination to build a better life for themselves and their loved ones offers inspiration to us all. In the Republic of Korea, you will meet Sakultala, from Thailand. She found a job in a Korean factory through the Employment Permit System and her increased income has enabled her little son back home to have a proper education and enjoy a better life. You will get to know an old father in Cambodia who was able to shrug off financial worries after the death of his only son, thanks to the Employment Injury Insurance scheme. In Indonesia's Papua Province, Lexi Sawa, a construction worker, no longer worries about his safety when working high up on buildings because he has learned the benefits of an occupational safety and health culture. Elsewhere in Indonesia, a young entrepreneur has found ways to make his sportswear business flourish while keeping the local environment safe.

I hope you will also enjoy the photos from Lao People's Democratic Republic, which give a snapshot of the thousands of young people who have benefitted from skills' standards training.

I'm proud to say the changes in these people's lives were made possible because of the involvement of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme. Their stories encourage us to help more people in need. I hope they will also inspire you, in one way or another, in your own pursuit of a better life.

Kim You Jin
Programme Coordinator of ILO/Korea Partnership Programme

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Vong Sreymom lost three-quarters of her left arm in a road accident while commuting to work. She will receive a monthly disability income for the rest of her life.

Cambodia's social protection scheme helps rebuild shattered lives

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA – When his only son died in a road accident on his way to work, Traing Sreng thought the sky had fallen in. It happened just a few days before his son's planned wedding. The marriage had been expected to bring happiness and prosperity to the family but the loss of the young man made Mr Sreng fear his old age would be spent in poverty and misery. "My son contributed to our family income. When he died we had nothing," he recalls.

Several years have passed since the tragedy, and looking at the photo of his late son, which has pride of place in the centre of the family sitting room, still brings sadness to Mr Sreng. But the older man's

fears of financial ruin were unfounded, because he benefited from the Employment Injury Insurance scheme developed by the Cambodian Government.

The insurance scheme is financed through mandatory employer contributions of just below one per cent of a worker's salary. The National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which administers the scheme, processes more than 12,000 claims annually. Before the NSSF was established there was no social insurance in the country to protect workers from work-related accidents. The Fund covers not only accidents and injuries at the workplace but also those that happen while commuting to or from work.

Mr Sreng found NSSF with help from some social workers. He filed a claim and soon received some money. “The survivor’s benefit has helped with our expenses and financial burden,” he said. “For that, I thank NSSF very much.”

The scheme was set up with technical support from the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme and the Korea Workers’ Compensation and Welfare Service (COMWEL). They collaborated closely with the Cambodian government, as well as workers’ and employers’ organizations.

“In the case of the employer-funded NSSF, technical support was more important than financial contributions,” Keo Bunna, the Director of the Benefits Division of NSSF, said. “The technical support and human resources provided by the ILO/Korea Partnership were vital in helping us introduce this scheme.”

Kang Young-shin, Economic Counselor at the Korean Embassy in Cambodia, said “it is essential to have a public insurance system to have a social safety net for labour as a whole. Therefore the Korean government wanted to have such a role in this country.”

Vong Sreymom is another beneficiary of the scheme. The young woman lost three-quarters of her left arm in a road accident while commuting to her job in a garment factory from her home in the suburbs of Phnom Penh. The effect was devastating, mentally as well as physically.

“I wanted to cry all the time – I was so shocked. I couldn’t accept this injury,” she said. “Immediately after I left the hospital I was depressed. It was difficult to do many things including daily chores like washing my clothes.”

As she gradually recovered, Ms Sreymom re-learned ways to do light household work, but she was unable to go back to her old job or earn a living as she had before. But a monthly disability benefit from the NSSF helped her to survive, and she will continue to receive the payments for the rest of her life.

Sav Pannop receives a similar life-long, monthly disability benefit, even though he has been able to return to work. He lost the sight in his left eye in an accident at work. “I was changing the blade on a machine that cuts ceramic tiles. When I installed a new blade and tried to cut another tile, the blade snapped into small pieces and flew into my eye.”

“The ILO is the recognized authority in assisting countries in designing and reforming social security programmes,” Maurizio Bussi, the Officer-in-Charge of ILO Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR, said. “Through this partnership with the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour we have supported the Royal Government of Cambodia in making the NSSF a reality for thousands of workers.”

The Cambodian authorities are now planning to expand the NSSF concept into other types of social security provision, such as a public health insurance scheme.

“The survivor’s benefit has helped with our expenses and financial burden. For that, I thank NSSF very much.”

Traing Sreng
employment injury insurance
beneficiary



Traing Sreng received survivor’s benefit after his son died in a road accident.



Workers welding a steel beam at a construction site

Tighten the bolt, strengthen the safety

ABE PURA, PAPUA, INDONESIA – About 20 meters above the ground, on a complex steel structure at the edge of a lush tropical forest in Indonesia, Lexi Sawa whisks deftly up and down the steel columns, wielding a spanner in his hand, stopping at every joint to tighten the bolts. He and his co-workers were building a high-rise hotel in Abe Pura, Jayapura City, Papua Province.

While they work hard to make the steel frame solid and strong, their own safety also isn't neglected. "I feel more secure now," The 23-year-old said, as he showed off his entire set of protective gear; helmet, safety shoes, a mask and a safety belt with a lanyard tightly buckled around one of the steel beams. "I can do my work in a more comfortable way and don't need to worry too much about the risks."

However, he didn't always feel so safe. In the past he had been deeply worried that he could easily fall from the steel frame, especially during the rainy season when the surfaces became slippery. "I always thought if something happened to me, what would happen to my parents," Mr Sawa recalled. "They are very old and dependent on me".

But, despite his concern he didn't regard protective measures as important. "I don't really understand working safety. The company gave us the equipment to wear but I didn't feel obliged to wear it," he said.

The construction company Mr Sawa works for, PT Bukit Abe Permai, also found it a big challenge to get its 30-or-so employees to understand the importance of occupational safety and health (OSH). "The workers were afraid of the OSH officer," Yuti Yusran, the Managing Director recalls. "So it is quite difficult to talk about OSH issues with the workers."

The consequences were a slew of safety incidents and accidents, which brought financial as well as human costs. Last year, a worker injured his feet by stepping on shards of glass, because he wasn't wearing safety shoes. Two years ago, a subcontracted worker died on the way to pick up some construction materials. Even though he died of a sudden illness rather than in an accident, the company had to pay 50 million Rupiah (US\$4,000) for the funeral and compensation.



Lexi Sawa, a construction worker from Abe Pura, Jayapura city, Papua Province.

“I feel more secure now. I can do my work in a more comfortable way and don’t need to worry too much about the risks.”

Lexi Sawa
construction worker

One of the reasons for the problems, Mr Yusran said, was that the workers, like Mr Sawa, didn’t appreciate the need for workplace safety and health.

But their views began to change when the company joined the Work Improvement in Small Construction Sites training (WISCON) in 2014. The training was organized by the Indonesian Government. The ILO/Korea Partnership Programme contributed significantly to the launch and roll-out of the programme.

The WISCON approach is designed to help and encourage small construction companies to implement low-cost, simple and sometimes voluntary measures to reduce the risks of accidents or diseases at the workplace.

“Before the training, the implementation of OSH measures was only on paper and no action was taken,” Mr Yusran said. “After the training, we made

concrete plans to implement the protective measures.” From the WISCON training Mr Sawa learned to be aware of safety, identify potential risks and use safety equipment. “The improvement can start from small things such as removing the garbage from the workplace or putting tools in order,” he said.

Now every morning work starts with a safety briefing. The workers are alerted to use safety equipment, wear protective gear and keep the workplace clean.

From a business perspective Mr Yusran can also see the benefits. “The workers focus more on their work and worry less about risks in the workplace,” he said. Herdian Tobo, the local labour inspector, has also seen changes - the workers don’t try to avoid him anymore. “Papua is a remote area in the country and it is very difficult for me to visit all workplaces or construction sites,” Mr Tobo said. “So it is necessary to help the workers and employers to create a ‘safety culture’ at the workplace.”

A safety culture is what the ILO is trying to create in some 65 construction companies in Papua, as well as in other parts of Indonesia. “The construction sector has the highest rate of both fatal and non-fatal accidents in Indonesia. The ILO has been working with the Indonesian Government to improve the OSH conditions of the construction workers,” Julia Lusiani, ILO Programme Officer in Jakarta Office, said. “It’s great to see that the WISCON training has helped to build awareness of the importance of OSH among both employers and workers, and that the result has been an improvement in working conditions and a reduction in the number of accidents.”

The Indonesian Government appreciates the support of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme. “The participatory approach involving labour inspectors, workers and employers jointly to review the existing positive practices will encourage both workers and employers to continue making improvement at the workplace,” said Mr Mudji Handaya, Director General of Labour Inspection, Ministry of Manpower (MOM) of the Republic of Indonesia.

With a long, intense twist of the spanner, Mr Sawa tightens his last bolt of the day. After putting the equipment back in its proper place and taking off his work outfit, he is ready to go home. “I hope that there will be more training about OSH for me and my friends at work,” Mr Sawa said. “I feel that is really useful and practical.”

Developing skills in Lao PDR

The ILO/Korea Partnership Programme has helped the Lao People's Democratic Republic to develop national skills' standards in a number of key sectors, including the automotive, construction, and information and communications technology industries.

This initiative supports the aims of the country's 2011-15 Decent Work Country Programme because it is expected that these standards will encourage Lao workers to improve their skills, which, in turn will make it easier for employers to find the skilled labour they require. It will also encourage better and more organized labour migration, help the country and its workforce deal with the introduction of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, and support the mutual recognition of skills across the AEC.





1,2,3,4,8 - Lao workers on a construction site.

5 - A trainee learns good construction techniques, as part of the national skills standards training programme.

6,7 - Students on the national skills standards automotive sector training programme





The national skills standards developed so far include:

Construction sector

- Cabinet Making
- Concrete Skilled Worker
- Cornice Layer
- Electrical Installation
- Glass & Aluminum
- Masonry & Plastering
- Building Painting
- Plumbing
- Tiling
- Welding

Automotive sector

- Automotive Engine
- Automotive Electrical/Electronic System
- Automotive Chassis
- Automotive Train & Axles
- Autobody Painting & Refinishing
- Autobody Repair
- Autobody Airconditioning

ICT sector

- Computer Installation & Maintenance
- Mobile Phone Maintenance
- Web Development
- Database Development
- Computer Network Installation
- Software Development



Ilham Rhamanda runs an established and thriving sportswear factory in Bandung, the capital of Indonesia's West Java Province.

Young Indonesian entrepreneur goes green

BANDUNG, INDONESIA – Ilham Rhamanda should have been one of the most contented men in Bandung. As a successful young entrepreneur, he and his brother ran an established and thriving sportswear factory, with a reputation for original designs. They employed 12 people and supplied a number of department stores in the city, the capital of Indonesia's West Java Province. But when he looked to the future, the 34-year-old father of a two-year-old daughter wasn't satisfied.

He saw the waste water running from his workshop running into the little streams in his neighborhood. He knew his sportswear factory, like many other small and medium-sized businesses in Bandung, was thriving at the expense of environmental quality, producing large amounts of sewage, garbage and industrial pollution. But making his business both profitable and environmentally friendly appeared to him as a "complete puzzle".

So, when the opportunity arose to attend a Start Your Green Business (SYGB) training, organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Mr Rhamanda jumped at the chance. "Good business practices should take planet and people aspects, instead of only profit, into consideration," he said. "Because they are critical for our business to grow sustainably."

"The traditional thinking is 'prosper first and clean up later' but you can't continue to prosper if you damage the environment, nor will you if you don't take care of your workers," Lorraine Villacorta, Environment and Decent Work Specialist of the ILO, said. "Fortunately, entrepreneurs, especially young entrepreneurs in Indonesia, have realized it. What they need is the knowledge and expertise to put their ideas into practice. And that's where the ILO comes in."

Ms Villacorta points out that being "green" means not only reducing your impact on the environment but meeting standards of decent work, such as safe conditions, adequate wages, worker's rights, social dialogue and social protection. During the SYGB course the trainers explained these principles, policies and practices. They helped Mr Rhamanda and his fellow entrepreneurs come up with a wide range of green business ideas, including in food and agriculture, sustainable tourism, waste management and recycling, renewable energy and creative industries.

“My business activities do no harm to the environment anymore and the local people can still have clean water.”

Ilham Rhamanda
business owner



Ilham Rhamanda started to adopt environmentally-friendly approaches in his production after joining an ILO training workshop.

The course helped Mr Rhamanda find a solution for the toxic water and chemicals coming out of his factory. It gave him the idea to install a filter made of fibre palm, active carbon and a sedimentation box to eliminate the dirt and waste from washing screen prints, inks and chemical liquids and prevent untreated waste water going into local drains and streams. The filter is affordable, easy to install and operate, meaning his products are still priced competitively. His workers are also happier too. “My business activities do no harm to the environment anymore and the local people can still have clean water,” Mr Rhamanda said. “Now, I have nothing to worry about and my clients too.”

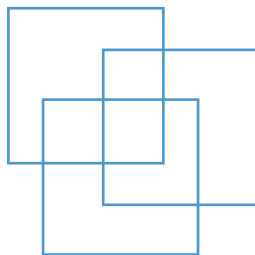
He has also started to promote the ‘green’ aspects of his business and is thinking of new ideas, such as using environmentally-friendly ink for screen printing. “Another plan to further green my business is to develop our own brand with organic raw materials and natural cloth dye,” he said. In the longer term he aims to expand and create more jobs for his community.

The training also offered the young entrepreneurs valuable networking and business opportunities. Mr Rhamanda now sells the fabric offcuts from his sportswear to another company, which produces headscarf accessories and ladies clothes.

So far the SYGB training has enabled almost 200 entrepreneurs in six provinces in Indonesia to balance their business ambitions with the environmental and climate change challenges around them, either by producing environmentally-friendly products or using environmentally-friendly production processes.

“More and more young entrepreneurs like Mr Rhamanda are thinking long-term and want to take a more sustainable approach to their business,” said Peter Van Rooij, Director of the ILO Country Office for Indonesia. “They know the Indonesian economy has developed rapidly in the past few years but that the development has affected the environment, and they want to move forward in a different way. The ILO is delighted to help them and support a greener, more sustainable economy.”

The SYGB training was organized with the support of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme through the Green Jobs Programme for Asia and the Pacific (Green Jobs-A/P).



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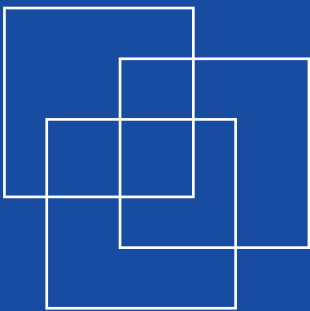
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The International Labour Organization

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the UN agency for the world of work. It was founded in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the principle that universal and lasting peace can only be achieved if it is built on social justice. The ILO is the only 'tripartite' United Nations agency that brings together representatives of governments, employers and workers to shape policies and programmes for social justice and decent working and living conditions for all women and men. For this it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969. The ILO is also responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards (Conventions and Recommendations). This unique arrangement gives the organization an edge in incorporating 'real world' knowledge about employment and work into its activities.



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