



International
Labour
Organization

**VISION
ZERO
FUND**



RESULTS BOOK

How Vision Zero Fund is making
supply chains safer through
collective action

September 2021

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1. EVERY WORKER, EVERYWHERE, DESERVES A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACE

Every day, 1,000 people go to work and never come back. Another 6,500 die from work-related diseases.

These people make our clothes, grow the beans for our coffee, and construct the buildings in which we live and work.

They need safe and **healthy workplaces**.

Every worker deserves our shared commitment to improving health and safety up and down global supply chains. Without it, the consequences can be serious: livelihoods, businesses, and national economies are at stake. An estimated **4% of global GDP** is lost annually due to work-related accidents, injuries, and diseases.

A combination of factors can cause unsafe, unhealthy working conditions:

- Systemic governance gaps
- Inadequate legislative frameworks
- Unsustainable business practices

Since 2016, Vision Zero Fund has been working with a range of actors to make real, measurable improvements in occupational health and safety (OSH). Its main goal is to eliminate severe and fatal work-related accidents, injuries, and diseases throughout global supply chains. It aims to promote collective action, mobilizing all major stakeholders to address the root causes and promote safe and healthy supply chains – together.

“We encourage governments, social partners, local and international companies as well as NGOs to take part in collective action for the prevention of workplace accidents ... within the framework of the Vision Zero Fund.”

G20 statement on the Vision Zero Fund, May 2017

2. FROM A POLITICAL INITIATIVE TO A GLOBAL PROGRAMME

Achieving Vision Zero Fund's vision requires strong commitment, collective action, and resources from stakeholders that include global enterprises, employers' organizations, national and transnational suppliers, governments, international financial institutions, trade unions, civil society, and development agencies.

In 2015, the Group of 7 countries (G7) established Vision Zero Fund. In doing so, they recognized the joint responsibility of governments and businesses to address OSH in global supply chains. Two years later, the Group of 20 countries (G20) reaffirmed the importance of the Fund's mandate.

At present, the Fund is implementing nine projects in eight countries and three global supply chains: garment and textiles, agriculture, and construction. It also implements COVID-19 relief measures in four additional countries, in partnership with Better Work – a joint programme between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group.

For a broad overview of the type of work the Fund carries out, see the annual progress reports.

- [2019](#)
- [2020](#)



EVOLUTION OF VISION ZERO FUND 2016-2021

2016-2018

“Vision Zero: Achieving a world without fatal or serious occupational accidents and diseases” (2016-2021)

- Vision Zero Fund Steering Committee established
- Vision Zero Fund Steering Committee Plus (SC+) that includes social partners

- Results frameworks per project
- A Global Programme Performance Measurement Plan (PMP), outlining the overall results framework, indicators, baseline, end targets and milestones developed

- An annual reporting cycle agreed upon
- Projects submit progress reports to donors in line with agreements
- “Vision Zero Fund Secretariat Report” submitted to Steering Committee (every March, June and November)
- Vision Zero Fund inception phase evaluated in 2018 (global and Myanmar)

- First VZF-led assessment on drivers and constraints for OSH improvement completed in Myanmar (ginger) in 2017. Similar assessment completed in Laos (coffee)
- Based on results of assessments, intervention models designed in close collaboration with stakeholders resulting in greater ownership and enhancing sustainability

- Steering Committee members encourage and support the Fund’s Secretariat to develop a comprehensive private sector engagement strategy
- Siemens becomes first private sector donor (2017)
- Engagement with representatives of MNE’s commence at country level, in particular in Myanmar, Madagascar and Lao PDR



- Vision Zero Fund follows ILO policy on gender equality

- Ad-hoc meetings between global and country staff
- Participation in the OSH World Congress (2017), G20 OSH Network meeting (2018), ASEAN Labour Inspection Conference (2018), among others
- Global Stakeholder event (2018)

- Participation in G20 Ministers of Labour and Employment Meeting (2017)
- Communication and Visibility plan developed for Vision Zero Fund globally
- Vision Zero Fund global and country webpages are developed and regularly updated to document and disseminate project related information and other knowledge and visibility products

Strategy

Global governance structure

Theory of change and logframe

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Strengthening programme models

Private sector engagement strategy

Gender mainstreaming

Knowledge sharing, knowledge management and learning

Visibility and communication

2019-June 2021

Revised five-year strategy, entitled “Collective action for Safer Supply Chains” (2019 - 2023) adopted, embracing the collective action approach

- Vision Zero Fund Steering Committee
- Vision Zero Fund Advisory Committee established (2020), successor to the SC+ and includes social partners, in particular IOE and ITUC
- Safety+Health For All Flagship Programme’s Global Tripartite Advisory Committee

- One common Theory of Change developed and the initial PMP revised. All tools aligned with the Safety+Health for All Flagship Programme framework
- Terms used in results framework defined and ability to disaggregate data related to target groups and on the basis of gender enhanced



- Standard reporting template for Vision Zero Fund Global Annual Progress Report adopted (2019)
- Standard ‘Snapshot’ report template developed for periodic reporting to the Steering Committee (March and June each year)
- Evaluability Assessment conducted (2020)
- Evaluations: VZF Myanmar independent mid-term evaluation 2019; VZF Lao independent mid-term evaluation 2020; VZF Madagascar self-evaluation 2020; and VZF independent mid-term cluster evaluation 2020
- A Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) review (commissioned by the EC) conducted (2020)
- Work to define core qualitative indicators and design a dynamic monitoring dashboard for Vision Zero Fund and Flagship advanced

- Six additional assessments of drivers and constraints for OSH improvement completed in the garment sector (Myanmar, Ethiopia and Madagascar) / in the coffee sector (Mexico, Honduras and Vietnam)
- ‘Collective action for safer and healthier supply chains: Guidelines for designing and implementing VZF projects’ developed (2020)
- Analysis of intervention models conducted (2020)



- A private sector engagement strategy approved (2020)
- VZF Vietnam develops a country-specific private sector engagement strategy based on the global PSE Strategy
- Significant private sector participation in the VZF high-level forum. Increased interaction with private sector actors through global platforms such as the UN Global Compact



- Implementation of a refined approach to gender mainstreaming, including a gender diagnostic of the Fund’s “Assessment of Drivers and Constraints for OSH Improvement” methodology (2020), and the development of practical guidance to ensure the integration of gender into the design, implementation and monitoring of projects (2021)

- Global Stakeholder event (2018)
- First Vision Zero Fund-staff retreat held (2019)
- Establishment of monthly knowledge sharing meetings between global and country staff
- Development of a knowledge management strategy (2021)
- Increased participation in international and regional events, including the Vision Zero Summit (2019), A+A panel discussion (2019), ASEAN OSHNET Conferences (2019), Vision Zero and the Great Reset (2021) South Asia UN Forum for Business and Human Rights (2021)

- Event for G20 countries co-organized with the German Permanent Mission in Geneva (2019)
- First Vision Zero Fund High-Level Forum held (2021)
- Vision Zero Fund rebranding completed in 2021. New branding guidelines developed for all communication, visibility and knowledge products
- New website launched on the occasion of Safe Day 2021. The new website ensures greater visibility of knowledge products.



WHERE WE WORK

Collaboration with ILO's Better Work Programme to address the direct and indirect health risks of the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Mexico

DURATION: 2019-2024
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN: Coffee, tomatoes, chili peppers

The project works on six main intervention areas: legal reform, national development programmes, supply and demand training services, establishing a preventative culture, good practices for women producers, and raising awareness on the link between OSH and productivity.

Coffee - Chili Peppers - Tomatoes

Honduras

DURATION: 2019-2022
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN: Coffee

The project developed a practical guide to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in agriculture and in the coffee value chain, which served as the basis for the development of national protocols.

Coffee

Colombia

DURATION: 2019-2022
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN: Coffee

In 2019, more than 100 tripartite partners participated in dialogue workshops on current OSH regulations, barriers, gaps, and opportunities for improvement.

The project assessed OSH training activities conducted by the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia and are currently working with them to improve their impact.

Coffee

Ethiopia

DURATION: 2019-2022
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN: Garment and textiles

In 2020, despite the pandemic, we increased the number of factories we work with, from 23 to 38. We reached more than 40,000 workers (87% of them women), conducted 22 unannounced assessments, and completed 121 advisory visits. The project trained nearly 1,000 line supervisors, team leaders, HR and production managers, and operators on OSH, supervisory skills, workplace cooperation, and labour law orientation.

Garments

Myanmar

DURATION: 2016-2023
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS: Garment and textile, ginger, construction

We improved compensation schemes in two pilot townships, with disability claims processed in just 27 days, compared to a previous high of 104 days. In one large ginger trading house, workers now have access to a sorting table. This means they don't need to squat for hours, have more space to sort the ginger, can breathe better with less dust in their workplace, and can drop the ginger into a sack without damaging it.

Ginger - Garments - Construction

Vietnam

DURATION: 2020-2022

Coffee

Madagascar

DURATION: 2017-2022
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN: Garment and textiles, lychee, construction

We helped lychee sector employers register 1,335 seasonal workers with local inter-enterprise medical services during the 2019 harvest season, compared to just 1,100 registered the previous year. We supported labour inspectors and the National Social Security Fund (CNAPS) to set up social protection task forces to jointly conduct visits to garment factories.

Garments - Construction - Lychee

Lao PDR

DURATION: 2018-2021
GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS: Garment and textiles, coffee

After training provided by the project, coffee farmers in Champasak province implemented OSH measures like covers for pulping machines, waste management in coffee processing, and proper tool storage and labeling. Labour inspectors found that subsequent to project trainings, 80% of project factories implemented at least one improvement measure, and all of them established OSH committees with worker participation.

Coffee - Garments

3. A JOINT APPROACH FOR SAFER SUPPLY CHAINS

Collective action

/kə'lektiv/ /'akʃ(ə)n/

noun

a multi-stakeholder approach that involves governments, workers and trade unions, national, transnational and global employers and their organizations, multilateral organizations, civil society and development agencies, working together so that each meets its responsibilities, consistent with organizational roles, to implement an agreed plan or set of actions to reduce severe or fatal work accidents, injuries or diseases in global supply chains.

The Fund recognizes that multi-stakeholder partnerships and international cooperation are the keys to safer, healthier supply chains. This [thematic brief](#) provides more information on the Fund's framework for collective action, especially at the country level.



THEORY OF CHANGE



Zero severe and fatal work related accidents, injuries and diseases in global supply chains (GSCs)

IMPACT

Sphere of interest

Strengthened eco-system of OSH regulations, services, promotion and culture involving businesses in global supply chains, governments, trade unions and other national level actors as well as workplace initiatives by employers and workers

OUTCOMES

Sphere of influence

Global and national stakeholders confirm their commitment to OSH by taking action to enhance OSH in global supply chains

Strengthened system of OSH services, legislation, policy, availability of data and compliance in targeted countries

Female and male workers in targeted global supply chains and countries benefit from reduced exposure to OSH hazards and improved access to employment injury insurance

OUTPUTS

Sphere of control

Knowledge on and tools for OSH in global supply chains made available through briefs, research, forums and platforms

Improved capacity of practitioners and policy-makers to promote and enforce OSH and to contribute to OSH data collection and use

Tripartite social dialogue structures, processes and capacities strengthened in relation to OSH legal frameworks and action plans

Improved capacity of employers' and workers' organisations as well as other key actors to strengthen OSH at the workplaces, using inclusive and gender responsive approaches

Vision Zero Fund's approach

- A collective action approach through which key stakeholders in the OSH ecosystem are mobilised and their commitment and capacity strengthened to jointly address underlying causes to poor OSH outcomes in a gender-responsive manner
- Evidence-based and sector-specific interventions based on assessment of OSH drivers and constraints in GSCs
- Engagement with multi-stakeholder platforms, sectoral forums and business networks in the informal economy for their promotion of OSH in GSCs
- Regular information-sharing with MNEs in GSCs on global and national level
- Promote and foster recognition of the benefits of OSH for sustainable and productive business practices
- Strategic partnerships to reach vulnerable workers in targeted sectors
- Synergies with other workplace level programmes
- Workplace data, evidence and experiences inform national-level and global initiatives



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Case studies

Making workplaces connected to global supply chains safer requires the involvement of multiple actors and work at different levels: global, national, sectoral and workplace. The Fund works with stakeholders across supply chains and at all levels, and the case studies that follow provide a sample of the work that the Fund is engaged in all over the world. For more detailed information, please consult the [Fund's Annual Reports](#).



Case study 1: WORKING GLOBALLY FOR GREATER IMPACT

Outcome 1:

Global and national stakeholders confirm their commitment to OSH by taking action to enhance OSH in global supply chains

This case study:

- Traces the evolution of the Fund from G7 initiative to a leader in OSH and global supply chains
- Describes how the Fund translated a political mandate into an actionable global programme that benefits 5.6 million workers worldwide
- Examines how the Fund refined its strategic approach and intervention framework, established a governance structure and financial footing, developed a portfolio of projects, and engaged multinational corporations to reach vulnerable workers
- Highlights achievements and good practices, as well as opportunities for improvement

Response

The Fund's [five-year strategy](#), adopted in 2019, details its approach to improving OSH in global supply chains. The strategy recognizes that unsafe, unhealthy working conditions result from complex underlying causes, including governance gaps, insufficient awareness, and unsustainable business practices.

And it makes clear that one actor alone cannot address them all. **Stakeholders must work together and assume responsibility to address the root causes of deficient OSH outcomes.**

That's why the Fund encourages collective action for safe and healthy supply chains.

This approach requires:

- Commitment and participation from a **broad range of stakeholders** at global and country levels
- Creation of a **transparent OSH knowledge base**, in collaboration with constituents, global companies, and other stakeholders
- Facilitation of **social dialogue for collective action**, resulting in action plans and agreements among stakeholders

The Fund also recognizes the importance of improvements in the private sphere, as well as the public one, to achieve sustainable OSH conditions and practices.

Projects focus on low-cost, practical, and context-appropriate solutions. Evidence of success already abounds:

- Reduced accidents in pilot project workplaces
- Improved handling and storage of hazardous chemicals
- Increased awareness and use of safety equipment
- Establishment of effective workplace OSH committees with worker participation

Over the years, the Fund has ensured a standard approach across country projects while at the same time allowing countries to design evidence-led, context-specific interventions.

Some of the achievements and good practices gleaned so far include:

1. Evidence-led programming

The Fund assessed drivers and constraints for OSH improvements in the targeted supply chains. This was a way to gain a holistic understanding of a given supply chain and its institutional environment. It also promoted ownership and sustainability of the interventions.

Over the years, the team has refined and adapted the methodology for new sectors and integrated gender-responsive elements. **To date, the Fund has completed eight assessments in seven countries across three sectors.**

Recently, the Fund finished synthesis reviews of all assessments in the garment and agriculture value chains. These reviews will help the Fund further improve its strategies.

2. Knowledge management

Generating, sharing, and managing knowledge is a key component of the Global Secretariat's work. Knowledge may include tools, methodologies, training modules, and research.

To date, the Fund has developed more than 100 knowledge products on safety and health in global supply chains, 70 of which have been published. The Global Secretariat has been involved in multiple stages, from developing research to supporting technical reviews.

In 2021, the Global Secretariat refined its approach to include:

- A series of global toolkits, which consolidate tools based on themes and topics ([example](#))
- A public-facing website that includes a knowledge platform to disseminate products
- An internal knowledge platform to facilitate knowledge sharing across country projects

3. Country projects

The Fund improves OSH in country supply chains based on need and the extent to which it can make a difference. [Country projects](#) present opportunities for the Fund to test new methodologies and conduct replicable research.

The Fund seeks to establish synergies with other country projects, building upon achievements. **Since 2016, the Fund has established projects in eight countries on three continents and in three supply chains.**

4. Resource mobilization

The Fund's Secretariat has secured funding for global and country-level operations. **Since 2016, the Fund has mobilized more than USD 28 million from 10 different development partners.**

5. Private sector engagement

Engagement with the private sector is crucial to the Fund's efforts. This involves engaging with global buyers and multinational enterprises to leverage their presence, influence, and resources in support of the Fund's goals.

At the country level, the Fund has engaged with local suppliers and representatives of global buyers from the start. As a result, local business owners have improved OSH conditions, social dialogue between tripartite constituents and private sector acts has improved, and all stakeholders have better access to data, knowledge, and expertise.

At the global level, the Fund established a public-private partnership with Siemens and is currently engaged in conversations with other global buyers in the private sector. Since the Fund is active in more than one sector, it aims to influence global conversations on OSH and engage with global platforms to achieve its objectives.

In 2020, the Fund developed a Private Sector Engagement Strategy to standardize its approach to private sector engagement at all levels. This strategy foresees a variety of forms of engagement, from financial contributions to in-kind support. It also provides a framework for country-specific private sector engagement.

6. Global governance

The Fund's global governance structure comprises a Steering Committee and an Advisory Committee. The Steering Committee is the Fund's decision-making body and decides on things like the allocation of funds and the selection of countries. The Advisory Committee provides advice on the Fund's strategic direction and includes representatives from the ITUC and the IOE.

At the country level, national tripartite advisory boards continue engagement, dialogue, and ownership among national stakeholders.

The Fund also organizes an [High Level Forum](#) to raise its political profile and overall visibility. The inaugural forum in 2021 attracted more than 18,000 representatives and stakeholders in discussions about innovative approaches to OSH in global supply chains.

7. Advocacy, visibility and communication

The Fund's staff organize and participate in national, regional, and global events, like the G20 Labour and Employment working group, meetings organized by ASEAN, and the Vision Zero Summit, to name a few.

Since 2016, the Fund has participated in 27 high-level events on OSH. The goal is to keep OSH in global supply chains at the forefront of the global agenda, as well as highlight the Fund's comparative advantage in addressing unique challenges, especially in countries with limited resources and weak legal, policy, and institutional frameworks.

8. Collaboration with other ILO programmes

The Fund's connection with the ILO allows it to:

- Convene stakeholders and implement a **collective action approach**
- Draw upon the ILO's **knowledge and expertise** on OSH
- Benefit from the ILO's **experience in promoting decent work** in a variety of sectors

The Fund actively promotes collaboration with ILO programmes like Better Work and SCORE, as well as units and departments like Enterprise and Social Protection. It helped establish the SIRAYE programme in Ethiopia, which unites ILO units, programmes, and departments and aims to advance decent work and inclusive industrialisation in the garment sector.

To date, the Fund has collaborated with nine programmes, units, and departments in the ILO.

Lessons learned

The Global Secretariat is the Fund's anchor. It plays an important role in supporting, coordinating, and executing the Fund's global mandate. Without it, the Fund would not have the global visibility and recognition it has today.

The Global Secretariat's role is often overlooked because donors and partners are understandably interested in supporting activities at the country level. **In reality, it links and mutually reinforces projects under a common framework.**

“Without the Secretariat, the Fund wouldn't be able to function the way it does. The strategic work in countries requires someone to roll out the strategy and watch over it. The Secretariat is indispensable.”

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany (BMAS)

Sharing knowledge and expertise has a multiplier effect and prepares other countries to replicate the projects. The Fund ensures that projects benefit from shared experiences and that global discussions are informed by data and evidence.

The Fund's actionable global programme is flexible; it is coherent yet leaves room for country-specific adaptations. This has, for example, allowed the Fund to respond rapidly and effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Fund uses a comprehensive framework to make an impact beyond the targeted supply chains. It uses country-level supply chains as an entry point to [promote change](#) at the institutional and policy levels, which have a domino effect on the economy as a whole.

Multinational enterprises (MNEs) have a unique role to play in addressing OSH deficits in global supply chains. Working across diverse sectors requires a tailor-made approach. The Fund engages with MNEs at the global and country levels, both directly and indirectly, through multi-stakeholder platforms. Engagement ranges from financial partnerships to in-kind exchanges.

The Fund has achieved sustainable results. Its actions are always based on consultations with stakeholders. The results shape project strategies, interventions, and activities, ensuring local ownership along the way. The goal is to ensure that the benefits outlast the interventions.





Case study 2: STRENGTHENING THE LABOUR INSPECTORATE

Outcome 2:

Strengthened system of OSH services, legislation, policy, availability of data and compliance in targeted countries

This case study:

- Highlights some effective practices and lessons that emerged from the Fund's interventions in Madagascar and Ethiopia
- Shows how improving the capacity of labour inspectors results in better overall inspection quality and the general mitigation of OSH issues

Challenges

Labour inspectorates face various hurdles in countries in which Vision Zero Fund operates. These include: limited financial and human resources, high turnover, outdated and inefficient inspection methods, and a lack of authority to enforce compliance. Plus, OSH is not usually a priority issue for labour inspectors.

The agriculture sector poses more problems. Most labour inspectorates don't even cover the sector. Where they do have authority, workplaces are often remote, hard to reach, and largely informal.

For example, in Madagascar, OSH was not a strategic priority for the labour inspectorate. As a result, their institutional capacity on OSH was low. In Ethiopia, the labour inspectorate needed to take a more strategic approach to inspections, use resources more efficiently, and improve the system to standardize the collection and analysis of data.

Response

Madagascar

The country team started by evaluating the role of the labour inspectorate in promoting OSH and ensuring its work was aligned with the Multisectoral Emergency Plan.

The Fund helped the inspectorate develop a strategic compliance plan. It also supported the government on a five-year plan to promote better collaboration between the labour inspectorate, social security agencies, and occupational physicians.

In addition, the project provided OSH training sessions for employers and workers. These sessions raised awareness about the role of labour inspectors in safe and healthy workplaces and fostered trust among all stakeholders.

So far, labour inspectors have conducted more than 1,600 inspection visits and nearly 60,000 workers (about 60% women) have participated in OSH training sessions.

Already, the results are clear. **A group of 12 labour inspectors are now part of a dedicated OSH task force, leading efforts to scale up OSH skills across the country.** Thanks to enhanced coordination among key OSH actors, the most vulnerable workers in the informal sector – seasonal lychee workers – have gained access to OSH services.

Staff also supported worker organizations to deliver OSH training sessions to members throughout the country. **Workers themselves have established new OSH task forces.** Together, these initiatives laid a solid foundation for COVID-19 response measures.

The project also facilitated collaboration between the Malagasy labour inspectorate and the French Directorate for Enterprises, Competition, Consumer Affairs, Labour and Employment in La Réunion. The collaboration has promoted the exchange of good practices and hands-on learning.

“These visits were important because we were able to understand what it’s like to be a labour inspector, including how to organize field visits and common issues. We are implementing what we saw in Réunion.”

Hanitra Fitiavana Razakaboana, Regional Director of Labor, Employment, Public Service and Social Laws, Analamanga, Madagascar

Ethiopia

The Fund developed a six step model to help inspectors develop strategic compliance plans.

The model targets four priority sectors: agriculture, construction, garment and textile, and services.

The project identified 200 enterprises for enhanced inspections, including initial and follow-up inspections, issuance of compliance orders, and issuance of orders through labour courts.

Through the strategic compliance plans, the team accomplished the following:

- **Created a task force** comprising representatives from the regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the fire brigade to conduct joint inspections
- **Developed a training module** that was integrated into the curricula of TVET centres to train workers in the garment sector on OSH hazards
- **Created easy-to-understand educational materials** for workers and employers on OSH hazards and other aspects of decent work, including wages, hours, and social protection

The Fund also supported the following key steps of the development of the labour inspection information management system:

- Completed a labour inspection action management system assessment
- Mapped the labour inspection procedural workflow in five pilot regions
- Developed a unified labour inspection procedural workflow for the ministry and regional bureaus
- Finalized a wireframe of the knowledge management system

The new system will make enforcement more efficient, effective and transparent. It will ease internal and external reporting, standardize the collection and analysis of statistics, facilitate evidence-based planning, and continuously identify priority compliance issues and targets.

The Fund also supported the development of a continuous education mechanism for labour inspectors. The team worked with the ITCILO to adapt the existing labour inspection training module to the Ethiopian context. **Staff trained 28 labour inspectors in fully-online sessions.**

Lessons learned

When we empower labour inspectors – through knowledge, skills, and tools – we create an enabling environment for OSH improvements.

In both Madagascar and Ethiopia, the Ministries of Labour and senior officials in labour inspectorates committed to improving OSH capacity. **Their commitment created a domino effect down the chain, ultimately ensuring more effective and sustainable labour inspections.**

In Ethiopia in particular, the team developed a continuous training mechanism. It will ensure regular updates to their core knowledge base, despite high staff turnover.

More takeaways:

- **A core team of trainers helped scale up OSH training sessions nationwide.** A small group of trainers formed a plan for the dissemination of OSH knowledge and skills among labour inspectors. They also ensured ownership and sustainability of the Fund’s intervention
- **Inspectors with limited resources benefited from strategic compliance planning.** For example, in Madagascar, the government is implementing a five-year plan to facilitate joint interventions with institutional actors
- **Strategic plans targeted specific sectors and enterprises.** A targeted approach helps the government engage with a range of stakeholders and ensure compliance beyond traditional enforcement
- **The project integrated OSH training and labour inspection into national TVET centres.** It resulted in greater, more sustained impact
- **Sector-specific training sessions boosted the capacity of labour inspectors.** These sessions were anchored in practical work through on-site visits and helped identify unique OSH challenges



Case study 3:

IMPROVING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT INJURY INSURANCE

Outcome 3:

Female and male workers in targeted global supply chains and countries benefit from reduced exposure to OSH hazards and improved access to employment injury insurance

This case study:

- Describes how the Fund improved workers' access to social security, especially Employment Injury Insurance (EII)
- Zooms in on Myanmar and Lao PDR, where the Fund helped spread awareness about and expand access to EII

Challenges

Did you know? Vision Zero Fund was established as a direct response to the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory in Dhaka in 2013. More than 1,100 workers died and 2,500 were injured.

To help workers and their families, multinational companies and individuals contributed to a compensation scheme meant to provide financial and medical support. The tragedy shed light on the importance of proper EII benefit schemes in cases of work-related accidents and diseases.

EII schemes are not new. **They are a standard pillar of social security in many countries.** These schemes allow workers who cannot work due to a work-related injury or disease to gain access to payments and medical care as required. In cases of death, these schemes provide payments and support to dependents.

But 60% of the global labour force lacks this type of protection.

Governments and enterprises can help fix this problem. Employers, in particular, are responsible for ensuring fair and adequate compensation for their workers.

As a general rule, EII should be funded by employer contributions. However, poor coverage and inadequate benefits undermine this principle.

Response

One of the Fund's key areas of work is to strengthen EII in project countries and diminish the need for reactive compensation schemes after tragedies. Activities include providing technical support to social security institutions and implementing capacity building initiatives on the ground.

Here's a look at progress in two project countries:

Myanmar

In 2017, the Fund partnered with Myanmar's Social Security Board (SSB) to provide better services to its members and effectively insure them against OSH risks. At the time, the EII scheme suffered from the under-reporting of accidents, a lack of disability claims, and long processing times.

The Fund helped the SSB complete a comprehensive legal, administrative, and IT reform to improve overall efficiency and communication with employers and workers. **Its recommendations included modernizing the IT system and streamlining claim procedures.** The goal was to give a more meaningful role to township offices and reduce workers' dependence on employers in case of accidents.

Two townships benefited from the pilot project, which tested a set of streamlined procedures around disability, funeral grants, and survivor benefits, as well as enhanced communication with clients. It promoted a reorganized workflow, strategic monitoring and reporting, and the separation of front and back office functions.

An independent assessment deemed the reforms a success. Workers received improved, faster services. For example, temporary disability claim processing time was reduced by 77%. For SSB staff, the processes were more streamlined and efficient.

Overall, 198,000 workers in Myanmar benefited from greater accessibility to EII schemes. There are plans to scale up the reforms nationally.

Lao PDR

The Fund discovered a general lack of awareness about the country's social security benefits among employers and workers. To address the problem, the Fund collaborated with the ILO-Luxembourg Social Health Protection Project to assist the Lao Social Security Organization (LSSO).

Together, the actors developed awareness raising campaigns in the coffee and garment sectors. The LSSO gained a better understanding of workers' needs, and reinforced employers' responsibility to register their workers and pay contributions.

The information gathered throughout the project helped illuminate necessary changes in LSSO's structure and administration, including better access to services.

Lessons learned

The Fund used preliminary research to determine whether a country should focus its resources on improving EII schemes. But, the diversity of systems across project countries required extra data to make interventions context-specific.

Those efforts may include:

- Actuarial assessments (Ethiopia)
- Business process reviews (Myanmar)
- Multi-stakeholder workshops (Lao PDR)

The Fund's collective action approach helped it bring relevant stakeholders together to create targeted, nuanced interventions. It also facilitated ownership and promoted sustainability.

Highlights include:

- **Non-traditional interventions**, like when the SSB in Myanmar adopted a client-centered approach and moved away from a worker's fault mentality
- **Working directly with social security institutions**, like the LSSO in Lao PDR, to develop awareness raising campaigns with hyper-targeted messages
- **Supporting institutional changes** and strengthening legal and policy frameworks, benefiting entire economies

It is important to acknowledge that comprehensive changes take time to develop, and a phased approach is often the right one. It also allowed projects with limited resources to test and promote good practices. Through close engagement with stakeholders at all levels, projects can scale up based on results and lessons learned.

The private sector is another crucial component of strengthening EII systems. Working closely with MNEs and their suppliers can reinforce the importance of EII schemes, highlighting the positive, legal, financial, and reputational benefits. **These are the keys to the Fund's success in this area so far.**

“At its very best the Vision Zero Fund is an example, an example of what can be done in difficult circumstances through enabling effective collaboration between governments, unions and employers.”

Hubertus Heil, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany





Case study 4: ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY

Outcome 3:

Female and male workers in targeted global supply chains and countries benefit from reduced exposure to OSH hazards and improved access to employment injury insurance

This case study:

- Examines the Fund's work to advance gender equality by providing direct training and services to women workers and cooperatives across supply chains in Mexico and Myanmar
- Includes lessons to further empower women workers in the strengthening of OSH

Challenges

What factors contribute to gendered employment patterns?

- Social norms and roles
- Socio-economic imbalances
- Biological differences
- The division of labour between women and men at home and at work

As a result, women face specific patterns of occupational hazards and risks. Recognizing the division of labour from a gender perspective is the first step in promoting safer, healthier workplaces.

These gendered patterns play out in global supply chains. For example:

- In agriculture, women's work is routinely undervalued; they often go unmentioned in analyses of Mexico's coffee sector
- In Ethiopia, women reported not only long hours and excessive overtime, but also sexual assault, violence, and harassment while traveling to and from work
- Worldwide, [women represent around 80%](#) of the garment sector workforce but are often stuck in the lowest-paying, lowest-skilled occupations

Workers are generally knowledgeable about the risks for workers – mechanical, physical, ergonomic, and psychosocial – but analyses of the different risks that women workers face remain elusive.

Strong management and organizational awareness, alongside targeted initiatives, can help address these gender-specific vulnerabilities.

The [Fund's 2020 midterm evaluation](#) emphasized the importance of mainstreaming gender throughout its programming. To do so, it provided guidance, tools, and training to country teams and constituents to ensure all interventions were gender-responsive.

Response

In 2019, the Fund adopted a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming to better support women in key OSH areas. **A team of gender experts reviewed its methodology to assess drivers and constraints for OSH improvement.** Based on that, the Fund developed a [thematic brief](#) to provide clear guidance on how to design, implement, and monitor and evaluate gender-responsive projects.

At the same time, the Fund's country teams gathered gender-specific data in target supply chains and used that information to develop gender-responsive interventions.

Here's a look at progress in two project countries:

Mexico

The Fund's [assessment](#) showed a need to improve the visibility of women in Mexico's coffee sector. The team investigated the role of women and gained insights on their attitudes toward safety and health.

The team adapted a tool that was originally developed to survey OSH conditions of coffee workers in Colombia for use in the Mexican context. **This survey allowed the team to better understand the OSH conditions of women in coffee, including social protection and OSH services, exposure to psychosocial risks, and working hazards.**

Then, the team also adapted training materials from the [ILO WIND](#) project to better respond to women's specific learning needs.

It was difficult to organize training activities in remote locations, especially with the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Despite the challenges, the team was able to facilitate a series of virtual and small in-person training sessions.** Content and delivery methods were customized for women workers' realities, including literacy levels, time availability, access to transportation, and access to equipment like phones and internet.

Myanmar

In Myanmar, the project team focused on women in leadership roles in farmer groups and cooperatives. Informed by its initial assessment of [drivers and constraints](#) for OSH improvement in the ginger supply chain, the Fund sought to make project interventions more gender sensitive.

For example, the assessment showed that ginger sorting in processing facilities is done entirely by women workers, so the project team designed a ginger sorting table suitable for them. The team also raised awareness about gender-specific considerations within processing facilities and warehouses.

The team engaged with women in leadership positions and invited them to help identify areas for improvements in OSH. The Fund made sure that women were not just present, but actively involved in training activities.

The Fund's efforts boosted women's representation in executive committees, mainstreaming OSH at the community level and inspiring more women to get involved. In particular, one woman in the Department of Agriculture served as a role model for a new generation of staff. **The best indicator of women leaders was other women leaders.**

An independent assessment found that, through its gender efforts, the country team created an environment in which women felt comfortable entering leadership roles, furthering OSH improvements across supply chains.

Lessons learned

It is mutually beneficial for the Fund to partner with organizations specialized in gender and women's empowerment. For example, in Mexico, the project partnered with the International Women's Coffee Alliance and drew from its extensive network of women coffee producers to reach more workers. Projects should identify organizations with complementary expertise, skills, and willingness to work together on concrete outputs, because these partnerships build trust and strengthen collaboration.

It is also important to deeply understand the role of women in target supply chains, including their terms of engagement as well as their knowledge, attitude, and behaviors toward OSH. The Fund used comprehensive surveys and assessments to capture this highly specific information.

Finally, it can be beneficial to develop gender profiles across target locations and supply chains. This way, project staff can meet the needs of women in different contexts. A strong monitoring and feedback system will help facilitate necessary adjustments throughout the process.

Women and men should have equal access to OSH services and benefit equally from project outputs.

Here's how to ensure that:

- Design a gender-responsive project and formulate outcomes, outputs, and indicators accordingly
- Conduct research and assessments in a gender-responsive way
- Raise awareness in the workplace and beyond, taking a comprehensive approach to changing social norms
- Organize gender-responsive learning activities that address the rights of both women and men
- Boost women's voice, representation, and leadership to help influence decisions at the factory, sector, and policy levels
- Promote dialogue on gender equality and OSH with social partners
- Deliver training on gender issues and gender sensitivity

“Every day, more than 7,500 people around the world die because of the work they do or have done ... It is almost like a permanent pandemic that we have been unable or insufficiently unable to prevent.”

Guy Ryder, Director General, International Labour Organization



Case study 5: IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE, LOW-COST SOLUTIONS

Outcome 3:

Female and male workers in targeted global supply chains and countries benefit from reduced exposure to OSH hazards and improved access to employment injury insurance

This case study:

- Shows the Fund's support for workplace interventions to improve OSH
- Introduces low-cost, scalable solutions to raise awareness and strengthen OSH culture among workers and employers
- Presents specific examples from Madagascar and Myanmar on good practices and lessons learned

Challenges

Actionable research is at the heart of every Vision Zero Fund country project. They all start with a comprehensive assessment of drivers and constraints, including workplace observations.

These assessments often find that OSH improvements do not require large financial investments. **Simple, low-cost solutions that are easy to implement and maintain can have a significant impact on workers' health and safety, as well as productivity.**

The Fund aimed to improve OSH in the lychee supply chain in Madagascar. It identified OSH hazards in the harvesting and processing stages; for example, there was no system in place to record workplace accidents and there was a general lack of awareness about the procedures to follow in the event of an accident. The Fund also noted non-compliance with existing certification standards, along with a need to improve OSH data collection.

In Myanmar, the Fund identified many OSH hazards, including ergonomic and biological ones in ginger trading facilities. Men carried baskets of produce on their backs, shoulders, or heads to move from the warehouse to the trucks. They were compensated based on the amount of produce they carried and loaded per day. This created an incentive for workers to carry heavier loads at faster paces, straining their bodies in the process.

Meanwhile, women sorted produce. They were exposed to ergonomic hazards from squatting all day, breathed dusty air, and worked in poor sanitary conditions. None of the workers were entitled to social security benefits or financial assistance in the event of an injury or illness workplaces.

Response

Madagascar

The country project helped workers gain access to OSH knowledge and services, including through joint training sessions on risk prevention for producers and operators. It also focused on designing small-scale, easy-to-replicate solutions. For example, Fund piloted the garaba, a prototype of a basket used for the transport of lychees, which minimized the risk of cuts and was more ergonomically suitable. It was designed in consultation with local producers.

The Fund team also introduced measures to strengthen a culture of prevention in the workplace. They introduced first aid kits to plantation sites, supported on-site nursing staff, and established OSH management systems on farms and processing plants.

Myanmar

The Fund assessed innovative ways to address OSH challenges by linking improvements with enhanced productivity and product quality. The team identified methods to improve OSH, mostly by addressing ergonomic concerns and workers' exposure to dust and debris.

For example, project staff and local traders developed a prototype for a new ginger sorting table, which allowed workers to stand instead of squatting. The table also features a dust accumulator to reduce the time spent on post-sorting cleaning. Women workers in particular noted a reduction in bodily stress. **It is estimated that the sorting tables saved nearly 40% of workers' time, compared to using the traditional method.**

Lessons learned

At the start of a new country project, the Fund first focuses on understanding the key issues: work processes, gender segmentation, etc. **The context always guides the intervention.**

Project staff identifies key OSH gaps, explores practical, low-cost solutions, and works with local entrepreneurs to develop them. The abovementioned solutions – the garaba in Madagascar and the sorting table in Myanmar – are notable examples. **Each responds directly to the most pressing needs of local constituents.**

Introducing new solutions requires buy-in from producers and workers, as well as follow up over time, to support successful integration and promote upscaling.

More takeaways:

- **Employers are more willing to invest in OSH workplace improvements if there is evidence to show that it will improve productivity.** The Fund's [assessment in Myanmar](#) measures the benefits of the new sorting table in terms of OSH improvements as well as productivity.
- **It is important to work with the private sector at the end of the supply chain.** For example, in Myanmar, project staff collaborated with trading houses to pilot the solutions.
- **Buy-in from local producers boosts the sustainability and replicability of the project activities.** It also generates income for local people who can manufacture, maintain, and repair the solutions.
- **When it comes to new solutions, consider their utility beyond the targeted supply chain.** For example, in Myanmar, the sorting tables are also used for other products, like potato farming.

- **OSH-related workplace solutions are more effective when they're connected to compliance schemes and better markets.** The Fund's collaboration with the Tamatave Technical Horticulture Centre in Madagascar provided invaluable support for the project activities.
- **Solutions should be designed in a participatory way that involves all key actors.** This is an illustration of collective action in practice. In both countries, the country teams engaged a range of stakeholders, including managers, supervisors, and workers, to help understand the needs from all perspectives. It also generated interest and ownership among stakeholders.

“For improvements at the workplace level to stick, one needs strong institutions and an effective regulatory framework that includes good laws and robust enforcement of those laws. That is why a significant portion of the Vision Zero Fund's work is focused on strengthening legal and policy frameworks and national institutions.”

Ockert Dupper, VZF Global Programme Manager





Case study 6: RESPONDING TO COVID-19

Outcome 1:

Global and national stakeholders confirm their commitment to OSH by taking action to enhance OSH in global supply chains

This case study:

- Assesses the relevance and impact of the Fund's response to the COVID-19 crisis at global, country, and workplace levels
- Presents the challenges, response, and lessons learned from the unprecedented events since 2020

Challenges

COVID-19 sent shockwaves around the world of work. From governments to workers, across global supply chains, people lost their lives, jobs, and businesses. Pre-pandemic economic problems worsened. Lockdowns froze labour markets. The psychological impact is insidious.

It is no surprise that the most vulnerable workers are the ones most affected by COVID-19.

The situation has directly impacted the Fund's ongoing work on supply chains, as factories shut down for extended, uncertain periods of time. Project staff faced new barriers, forced to establish virtual connections with country stakeholders. And urgent new demands emerged, requiring more technical and financial resources.

Response

The Fund adapted quickly to the changing situation. Globally, it doubled its resource mobilization efforts, strengthening OSH measures and making sure that workers were protected from health risks. With donor support, the Fund reallocated funding to support COVID-19 activities in the agriculture supply chain, notably in Myanmar and Latin America.

The Fund secured new financial support for short-term COVID-19 activities in the garment supply chain, especially in Ethiopia, Lao PDR, and Madagascar. It also collaborated with the Better Work Programme on activities in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

“The VZF’s ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates its flexibility and resiliency. Measures such as the reallocation of resources, identification of additional funding, development of training material, and training to ensure worker safety and strengthen knowledge around OSH, are relevant and timely responses.”

VZF Mid-term independent cluster evaluation, October 2020

As COVID-19 unfolded, the Fund developed a [rapid needs assessment tool](#) to create country-specific responses. It also developed a variety of [global technical tools](#), which have been widely distributed and implemented.

At the country level: The Fund’s teams implemented [tailor-made actions](#) to mitigate the consequences of COVID-19 and limit disruptions to global supply chains. Action included: raising awareness among vulnerable and remote groups, strengthening prevention measures in workplaces, and boosting capacity through task forces set up by local governments.

For example, teams used radio soap operas, popular apps, and online seminars to boost their messages. They also provided PPE kits and sanitization materials for the most vulnerable.

All the work was designed with gender equality in mind.

At the institutional level: Country teams collaborated with government and technical agencies, including the WHO, to build capacity and provide support to service providers like labour inspectors and OSH professionals.

The Fund organized training sessions on risk assessment and emergency preparedness, provided PPE kits and other protection measures, developed checklists and protocols, and more.

In Latin America, the project expanded its reach to other countries in the region by sharing data, tools, methodologies, and training materials.

In summary, the Fund’s projects faced numerous challenges, including an unpredictable implementation environment, continued restrictions on movement that affect the delivery of services, and supply shortages related to PPE kits and sanitization materials.

Governments and other constituents shifted their focus to immediate response measures, delaying work on institutional and policy areas.

Lessons learned

The Fund turned the pandemic into an opportunity to reposition OSH as a priority issue on national agendas. It mobilized time and resources to develop the guidelines, protocols, and methodologies needed to address the immediate impact. And it emphasized that strong OSH systems are critical for countries and global supply chains to respond to crises.

Working with donors, assessing country needs, and developing technical tools at a fast pace are just some of the factors that set the Fund apart. New countries have requested support, proving the success of the work done so far.

Highlights include:

- The [rapid needs assessment](#) and response plans for countries were identified as a good practice by the [mid-term evaluation](#)
- The Fund’s institutional work provided a strong foundation to upscale response initiatives, while its country-level work served as a channel to reach workers and employers
- Well-established partnerships and trust on the ground allowed for a timely, relevant pandemic response
- Donors remained flexible and recognized that the pandemic could delay outputs and progress

The Fund’s collective action approach made it possible to mobilize key actors quickly, including constituents and the private sector. One evaluation noted that the Fund’s COVID-19 response measures demonstrated strong tripartite engagement and social dialogue, leading to high levels of ownership.

Overall, the Fund has managed to balance its response on the ground and among practitioners and policy makers throughout the ongoing pandemic. More good practices and lessons learned on crisis response in the context of OSH are yet to come.



VISION
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Impact stories

These are the stories of five real people. Over the past few years, their lives have changed for the better as a direct result of the Fund's activities. Get to know them, learn about their work, and understand the Fund from their perspective.





JERSON IS GUIDING MADAGASCAR TOWARD A NATIONAL POLICY ON OSH

He sees a direct link between the Vision Zero Fund project and the country's efforts to ratify new conventions on occupational safety and health.



“I have always wanted to help people, work on a global scale, and be a guardian of the law.”

Jerson Razafimanantsoa was born in the spring of 1974 in Mananjary, a city in Vatovavy, Madagascar. The town lies on the southeastern coast of the country, a place where locals make their living by fishing or producing crops like coffee, vanilla, and pepper.

He arrived in Fianarantsoa, a four hour's drive inland, in 1990 to study law. Fianarantsoa means “good education” in Malagasy; the city is the island's cultural and intellectual center.

Jerson's dream was to work for the government. After graduation, he entered the national administration school, where he earned his license to become a labour inspector. In that role, he was in charge of applying the laws to promote decent work in Madagascar.

After serving his country for 15 years, he moved up in the ranks to become a head of service, then Regional Director. Since April 2019, he has held the position of Director General in the Ministry of Labour.

After COVID-19 hit, his daily activities doubled. He began shouldering more responsibilities and gained new ones. According to Jerson, everyone in the ministry was and continues to be dedicated to overcoming challenges related to the pandemic. But it hasn't been easy. Madagascar was one of the hardest hit countries on the continent, battling a wave of infections and the socio-economic downturn that followed.

Jerson's days start around 5 a.m. and end around 7 p.m. But, since work-from-home became the norm in 2020, he is still aiming to strike a balance between his personal and professional life. He sometimes receives work-related calls as late as midnight.

“All this time, I'm just thinking about how I can make progress and overcome the COVID-19 challenges. Sometimes, I confuse daily life with work life. Even when I should be sleeping, I still keep thinking.”



Building a culture of prevention in the workplace

When Vision Zero Fund opened a dialogue with Madagascar about the training programme in 2017, there were already stipulations about OSH in the country's labour code. However, Jerson admits that, in practice, his work had been more focused on economic prosperity – improving social security, for example.

The goal of the project was to train specialists like Jerson in OSH practices. Through the training, Jerson gained a better appreciation of the risks associated with work – situations that increase the possibility of getting into an accident. Now, after completing the Vision Zero Fund training programme, he has a better sense of what those risks are, and how to address them.

Jerson then trained labour inspectors, who went on to train even more labour inspectors. Other stakeholders, like employers and doctors that operate in workplaces, were included as well.

That said, decent work deficits persist in Madagascar. The government is trying to address them, and the Vision Zero Fund project supports those efforts. Currently, the ministry is preparing to ratify conventions around OSH. Jerson sees a direct link from the training programme to the progress being made in government.

“Since the implementation of the project, there's been a true restoration of a culture of prevention in the workplace.”



“If we didn’t have the Vision Zero Fund project, we would not be in the position to accelerate this process.”

Steering the country toward improved OSH

While he is not personally active in the daily activities of the Vision Zero Fund project, he and his colleagues in the ministry encourage all labour inspectors to participate and learn as much as possible about OSH.

As proof of its commitment, he rattles off the ways in which the ministry is committed to OSH: it describes itself as a partner of the Vision Zero Fund; it is always present for regional Vision Zero Fund activities; and it has promoted one of the labour inspectors that received training from the Vision Zero Fund to the position of director.

Jerson and his colleagues in the ministry are also preparing a strategic plan for labour inspection in certain sectors, including mining, tourism, and the textile industry. Jerson says he expects better, more concrete results.

The ministry’s efforts to push through with progress on labour inspection, while overcoming COVID-19 challenges, have been recognized by the national parliament. According to Jerson, it would have been impossible without Vision Zero Fund’s support.

He admits that challenges remain in relation to OSH and to preventing and mitigating the impacts of COVID-19. But he is optimistic that the government will continue working hard to face them.

With so much going on, Jerson is still seeking that elusive work-life balance.

“When the pandemic is over, ideally, possibly, I would like to take a little bit of a vacation,” he laughs. “But there’s a lot to do.”



Learn more:

- Vision Zero Fund Madagascar: Building safe and healthy textile and construction supply chains



BRISEIDA IS CULTIVATING OSH IN HER MEXICAN COFFEE COMMUNITY

The “proudly peasant” president of a women-led coffee cooperative is spreading the word about safety and health at work.



In the Uto-Aztecan language Nahuatl, Ixhuatlán means “where there are green corn leaves.”

Café, of course, means coffee.

So maybe it’s no surprise that Briseida Venegas Ramos, born and raised in Ixhuatlán del Café, in the state of Veracruz, Mexico, is the “proudly peasant” daughter of farmers and current president of Vida AC, a women-led coffee cooperative.

Despite the success of the cooperative, she doesn’t take personal credit for any of it. Instead, Briseida is the kind of person that speaks in the plural.

“How did you get involved with coffee? When did you get started?” To her, “a farmer is a great worker.”

Briseida is 30 years old, formally trained in psychopedagogy, and a self-described feminist. She lives with her mother, sister, aunt, uncle, and cousin.

She first learned about coffee when she was eight years old. As a teenager, she was already helping her parents with light activities on the plantation. And today, coffee farming is such an important part of her identity that she thinks of her co-workers as family.

Briseida works every day of the year. During the harvest period, she wakes up early to go to the windmill and prepare breakfast before heading out to the plantation. Outside of harvest time, her work includes gathering firewood from dry trees for cooking, as well as planting and grafting coffee.

Her field work starts at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m., when she goes back home to finish other work with her family. Together, they wash the coffee harvested the previous day.

Despite criticism from her peers, Briseida is motivated by her work and enjoys sharing her personal experiences.



A new type of training

Briseida had already taken training courses and workshops on subjects like self-esteem, community empowerment, and food sovereignty when she heard about the Vision Zero Fund project and occupational safety and health (OSH) training course. It was a topic outside of her repertoire, and she was curious.

Health has always been a priority for the cooperative, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only increased that sentiment. Members grow medicinal plants and teas to protect against illness and disease.

They know their plantation inside and out. However, they had never seriously considered training farmers in OSH principles.

The risks of the work are myriad. Coffee farm workers often use heavy machinery on the plantation, which can lead to accidents. Briseida herself was once nearly electrocuted while operating a machine with wet hands. She was lucky – the accident didn't have any consequences. But she could have been seriously injured, or worse.

Through the Vision Zero Fund training, Briseida learned how to avoid risks like that. Now, she and her co-workers have a background in OSH and look out for one another at work. They've learned about the importance of machine maintenance, especially for old ones. And they've realized that they needed to make certain adjustments, like replacing light bulbs, or wearing protective equipment like gloves.

When asked about what she learned during the course, Briseida connects back to her community and their three pillars: quality of life, health, and prevention at work.

“First health, then work. It's important to be safe and to take care of one another,” she said. “You must know your community and act as a unit.”

The big picture

Mexico is the world's 12th largest exporter of Arabica coffee and the leading exporter of organic coffee, mostly destined for markets in the United States, Spain, Belgium, Germany, and Canada. In 2017, coffee production accounted for 6% of all agricultural economic units in the country.

Veracruz is one of Mexico's most important coffee-producing areas. It's also the state with one of the highest poverty rates in the country. And the work comes with many potential dangers.

About 98% of coffee producers are small-scale, with less than 5 hectares of crops – like Briseida and her family.

Risk factors include:

- The machete, the main cause of work-related accidents on plantations due to the physical burden and postures required to use it
- Tree pruning, which may result in falls and blows
- Harmful fauna, like snakes and other animals, that pose biological risks
- Toxic agrochemicals, frequently dusted, sprayed, sprinkled, or applied as a steam for fertilization, pest control, and weed control
- Noise emitted by work tools, such as brush cutters or machines used for wet method processing
- Fatigue and stress, along with other psychosocial risks

A vision for safety and health

There is no official statistical information on occupational accidents in coffee production, so it can be hard to understand where there is room for improvement. What we do know is that there is a general lack of awareness about the potential risks involved in daily tasks.

Global value chains offer opportunities to improve OSH, even – or especially – on small-scale farms.

That’s why the Vision Zero Fund promotes specific interventions to prevent work-related accidents and diseases in the coffee value chain in Mexico.

Women-led networks in coffee

Women account for 40% of coffee producers in Mexico. That percentage has grown among associations specialized in producing organic coffee.

However, most women are considered to be just “helping out” and are not included in statistics. In reality, women play a key role in coffee production, doing work such as preparing meals, filling bags, selecting coffee, picking cherries, and much more.

This is one reason why Briseida is passionate about women-led networks and alliances in the coffee sector. She is focused on improvement for herself and for her community.

Sexism was a challenge she faced early on, since there was already a local men’s cooperative in her area. However, she persisted and opened her cooperative, which now provides masculinity workshops.

She shares her presidency position in the cooperative with two other women, who are also the daughters of coffee farmers. The cooperative itself is made up of mostly families and close friends. They rely on one another for almost everything.

After all, it’s thanks to the women’s cooperative that she found out about the Vision Zero Fund project and OSH training course.

“We all have rights and obligations.”

Community and OSH go hand-in-hand

Briseida was one of the women coffee producers that directly benefited from the project. Today, she is an OSH advocate on the plantation and within her cooperative. And she continues to share her knowledge of OSH with her community during meetings, switching from talking about the results of the latest coffee export to giving tips on staying safe in the fields.

Self-sufficiency, which was already important to Briseida before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, is now one of her top priorities. The cooperative was already using agroecology principles to save money and promote sustainability.

Now that she has completed the OSH training, Briseida understands that safety and health at work is just as important to ensuring continuous, sustainable production.

Briseida’s dream is that the next generation transcends to the next level. She has high hopes for the cooperative, agroecology, and the power of feminism in her community, and she is working toward that vision every day. What is certain is that she isn’t going anywhere until she achieves it, with her entire community – her family – behind her.

“El café es nuestra vida,”she said. Coffee is our life.

Learn more:

- [Vision Zero Fund: Latin America](#)
- [Improving occupational safety and health in the global coffee supply chain from Mexico](#)
- [Proyecto SST en las cadenas de valor del café: Historia de vida de una productora de café en Oaxaca](#)
- [Proyecto SST en las cadenas de valor del café: Historia de vida de un productor de café en Chiapas](#)
- [Vision Zero Fund project in Mexico – ILO – Animation](#)

DAW SANDAR AYE IS PROMOTING OSH IN MYANMAR'S GINGER SECTOR

As the Treasurer of a local ginger cooperative, as well as the head of her household, she wears many hats as she pushes for safety and health at work.



Daw Sandar Aye is 55 years old. She was born into an agricultural family, in the same village where she lives today, in Lawksawk Township of Shan State, Myanmar.

Her parents were farmers, so she decided to attend Yezin Agriculture University to continue her career in the sector. Afterward, she married and had three sons. Sadly, her husband died seven years ago; she is now the head of her household as well as an employer.

Every day, she wakes up before 6 a.m. She washes her face, prays, and goes to the kitchen to prepare breakfast. Then, the day labourers arrive around 8 a.m. Daw Sandar Aye allocates daily tasks, oversees the work, and then comes home to do house chores before lunch time. In the afternoon, she goes back to the fields.

Her income comes from ginger, in addition to rice, mango, avocado, and corn crops.

An NGO wanted to create a plot for demonstration purposes, and she had extra land.

In 2017, a project officer from Winrock International, an American NGO, approached Daw Sandar Aye and asked her if she would be interested in getting involved in their project, which aimed to improve the value chain in the agricultural sector in Myanmar.

She took the opportunity just to help out, but she ended up learning a lot from the project, including modern farming techniques, which she passed on to other farmers in her community. Using new technologies and methods, they were able to get rid of pests and improve their crop yield.

In 2018, the Vision Zero Fund project teamed up with Winrock International to roll out occupational safety and health (OSH) training courses for ginger farmers in Myanmar. Daw Sandar Aye learned about cooperatives and the advantages of working as a collective. Her interest in OSH and passion for farming led her to become a founding member of Shwe Chin Sein (which means “Golden Fresh Ginger”), a local ginger farmers’ cooperative.

Today, Daw Sandar Aye is the Treasurer and a member of the Board of Directors of the cooperative. Since completing the Vision Zero Fund training, she has started implementing OSH practices in her farming activities.

Before the training course, she grew ginger in the traditional way. Now, she grows it on a commercial scale. This year, she grew 2.5 acres of ginger. And, like many other farmers, Daw Sandar Aye plants other crops in addition to her main crop, so her OSH knowledge also spills over into other areas.

As a trusted communicator in her community, she shares her knowledge with other farmers, including how to produce healthy ginger, alternatives to using pesticides, and good OSH practices.

The Shwe Chin Sein cooperative is not like most cooperatives in Myanmar.

Since its founding in 2018, members have been trained on OSH principles and best practices. Farmers take breaks from the sun, carry manageable weights, and wear proper protection when handling materials. There have been no reported accidents, illnesses, or diseases.

It hasn’t always been this way.

Before the Vision Zero Fund training course, farmers would carry heavy loads of harvested ginger, resulting in back pain. They worked in the hot sun and in rainy conditions, risking heat stroke. And they would feel dizzy after applying pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers without any protective clothing.



Some of the main risks involved in ginger production are:

- Using farm machinery and tools
- Falling from transportation vehicles
- Working in intense summer heat
- Spraying harmful chemicals

Much has changed for the better. Now, when village farmers complete training courses, they redistribute the knowledge to other farmers.

Workers don’t drink cold sodas anymore. Instead, they reach for water and fruit-based drinks, like lime juice, to ward off heat stroke. They wear long sleeves and pants to reduce exposure while spraying chemicals on other crops. And they’ve completely stopped using pesticides in ginger farming, instead focusing on manual weeding and other safe alternatives for pest control, as well as safe fertilizers. Their ginger is safe for the producers to produce as well as for the consumer to consume.

The ginger they produce now is of a higher quality, and they produce more of it per year.

Daw Sandar Aye always carries bandages and medicines for herself and her workers – just in case. To her, OSH is all about keeping workers healthy and safe, and making sure that they can show up to work every day. She also has good intentions of ensuring safety for the consumer.

“If they don’t get sick, get into accidents, or get injured, the whole workplace and business can continue as normal.”

Empowering farmers to do business globally

The project helped ginger farmers in Myanmar establish market links and gain direct access to buyers, allowing farmers to gain awareness of global markets and prices for themselves. This means they are now empowered to do business directly with processors and buyers that offer fair deals and align with their objectives of sustainable, safe, healthy and fair conditions for Myanmar farmers.

Alongside the chairman and other members of the Board of Directors, Daw Sandar Aye explored international and national market opportunities. Not long after, with help from Vision Zero Fund, Shwe Chin Sein entered a partnership with Snacks Mandalay, a domestic company and main exporter of processed foods.

That market link, alongside meeting OSH standards for export, is key to improving livelihoods in the country. Plus, now the ginger is high-quality and free from harmful chemicals. In another major step forward, this year, Shwe Chin Sein sent a sample of ginger to a buyer in the United Kingdom. The international buyer placed an order for 50 tons of ginger.

Unfortunately, due to the current political and health (COVID-19) crises, all exports are currently suspended.

Daw Sandar Aye looks forward to business getting better over the years, and toward a future in which her cooperative routinely exports fresh ginger to other countries as well as domestically. The group is currently saving up to buy more land to build extra storage and a processing facility.

“If you think only in a commercial way, you cannot achieve success. Ginger should be safe, fresh, and residue-free.”



Leading her household and the ginger cooperative

Originally, Daw Sandar Aye was supposed to be the chairwoman of the Board of Directors. Her peers pushed her to take up the leadership role. But with some many competing priorities at home, primarily related to her role as a mother of three, she didn't feel she had enough time to take up the task.

As a woman who owns her own farm and now actively participates in a cooperative that requires field visits, task delegation, and other activities, she is still finding her balance.

In her role as a member, however, she remains committed. She tries to increase awareness among farmers about market access for the ginger sector, which is sometimes lacking. For example, if the market price for ginger falls, some members suggest using chemicals. She knows, however, that weeding by hand produces better crops overall, even if it is more difficult than simply spraying the field.

The cooperative is still very new, and members still have a lot to learn about certain aspects of the market. She views her leadership position as a way to contribute, foster equality, and do her share of the work required to improve ginger farming and farmers' livelihoods in her community.

And now, she is a steadfast advocate for OSH. As a founding member of the cooperative, a woman who is also the head of her household, a caretaker of both her family and her land, Daw Sandar Aye is a remarkable and unconventional leader in Myanmar's fast-growing ginger sector.

Learn more:

- [Vision Zero Fund Myanmar](#)
- [Vision Zero Fund Myanmar: Improving safety and health in the ginger supply chain](#)



SENGCHANH IS IMPROVING OSH ON LAOS COFFEE PLANTATIONS

The Vice President of the Lao Coffee Association now applies the OSH lessons he learned during the Vision Zero Fund training course to his daily life in Champasak province.



“I am more cautious of possible risks of accidents.”

“I have even applied occupational safety and health knowledge to my daily life. For example, I store knives properly in my kitchen, because I know that if an accident happens, it will waste my time and money and could lead to injuries or disability.”

Sengchanh Khammountha is the 52-year-old Vice President of the Lao Coffee Association. He is thoughtful and careful – about his health, work, and words.

He was born in Pak Lay, in Sainyabuli province, which sits on the Mekong River in the western part of the country. When he was 18, he moved to Vientiane, the capital, with its broad boulevards, tree-lined streets, and notable shrines. At 24, he moved to Savannakhet, on the border with Thailand, and got married there. Finally, in 1999, he moved to Champasak province in the southwest, where he lives now.

His days begin at 6 a.m. with exercise and breakfast. He spends time with his wife and three children before driving to his office in Pakse.

But one day, instead of going to work as usual, he met with the Vision Zero Fund team and members of the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They had a proposal for him: Would he like to attend training sessions for employers and workers on occupational safety and health?

“I was very interested in the Vision Zero Fund from the first meeting,” he said. “My coffee association had observed that farmers lacked knowledge on OSH, so I wanted to be a part of it.”

Over the next few months, his initial interest turned into a life-changing experience.



Coffee in Laos

Coffee has been produced in Laos for more than a century.

But, it wasn't until the mid-1990s that the government began to encourage private sector investment and export. Today, coffee is one of Laos' most valuable agricultural commodities. In fact, despite a general slowdown of the global coffee market, Laos saw a 22% increase in export volume from 2016 to 2018.

Production is best in the southern part of the country, in the Bolaven plateau. The region is known for being conducive to coffee cultivation, due to its high elevation, volcanic red soil, even rainfall distribution, and cool temperatures.

Arabica beans grown there are known for their medium body and a combination of mild citrus and floral tones. Its Robusta beans are planted at unusually high altitudes, resulting in unique characteristics (good body, neutral characteristics, clean tasting) that make it popular in the global coffee market.

Who grows coffee?

In Champasak province, plantations account for about 30% of the land under coffee cultivation.

The rest of the coffee farms are owned by smallholders. An estimated 24,000 families are involved in coffee farming. Tasks are shared between women and men, with women more active in harvesting activities.

Six cooperatives on the Bolaven plateau are members of the Lao Coffee Association, comprising 3,450 households. That's about 14% of all smallholders on the Bolaven plateau. Members have contracts with the cooperatives to which they sell the coffee they produce for export to Vietnam (76%), followed by Europe, Japan, and the United States.

The supply chain structure is complex and depends on a wide range of factors. In Champasak, the coffee value chain system includes: cultivation, consolidation, primary processing to obtain green coffee, green beans processing, and export or distribution in the domestic market. Roasting, grinding, branding, and packaging are done mainly in importing countries.

“As a result of VZF Lao PDR, both employers and workers are more knowledgeable about OSH and know how to prevent accidents before they happen.”

In Laos, Vision Zero Fund became a multi-stakeholder development cooperation initiative, implemented jointly with the Laos Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Lao Federation of Trade Unions.

The project focused on OSH training in the coffee and garment sectors.

Sengchanh not only learned about the importance of using tools and equipment properly, he learned how to pass on that information to a wider audience. Farmers now receive informational flyers with useful tips and advice.

After the training, he noticed that farmers were starting to protect themselves from potential accidents on coffee farms. For example, they know how to use grass-cutting machines properly, they keep their tools well-organized at home, and they store chemicals safely.

“I noticed the government support for the project, and how it worked closely with the private sector to reduce OSH risks.”

Improving OSH across the supply chain

Although Sengchanh has never personally been injured in the workplace, his workers have been involved in accidents. In 2009, a worker was using a grass cutter when the blade broke and hit his arm and leg. In another incident, workers were moving a small tractor when it rolled over their feet and hands. These two accidents caused minor injuries to those involved.

“I see OSH as a process, an action to reduce work-related accidents, injuries, and diseases that could be caused by machinery, chemicals, or animals,” Sengchanh said.

Generally, the main OSH risks in the coffee sector are:

- Improper use of equipment and tools
- Use of chemicals without protective equipment (for example, when farmers spray chemicals they do not always wear masks, gloves, and boots)
- Sunlight, because farmers tend to work under the sun for a long time
- Animals, like snakes and insects

“OSH is important because it provides information and enhances workers’ understanding of how to protect themselves from the tools, equipment, or chemicals they use. When workers know how to protect themselves, they will be in good health,” he said.

With support from Vision Zero Fund, coffee farmers and members of the employers’ organization now have a better, closer relationship. Farmers gained new knowledge and the association visits them more often for training.

VFZ Lao PDR has enhanced both employers’ and workers’ awareness of OSH.



“As an employer, I would like to see a future in which all employees are safe because they know how to protect themselves from OSH risks. I would like to see a reduction in the number of occupational accidents and deaths to zero in my province,” he said.

The Vision Zero Fund project ended in March 2021. The association planned to provide more training sessions for farmers in other provinces, but they were canceled due to COVID-19. Unfortunately, the best they could do was distribute OSH flyers to farmers.

“In the next 5 to 10 years, I would like to see all concerned sectors working together to encourage farmers to stop using chemicals. I would like to see investors paying more attention to employee safety. And I would like to see all coffee farmers and workers become members of the social security fund, as they will be protected and will receive compensation in case of injury or death,” he said.

Funding remains a major challenge for the continuation of the project. Sengchanh’s association has limited financial resources, although members would like to continue providing OSH training to coffee farmers.

Learn more:

- Vision Zero Fund: Lao PDR
- Improving occupational safety and health in the global value chain of coffee in Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Drivers and constraints. A case study
- Working on the plateau: Improving the safety and health of coffee farmers in Lao PDR



GENET IS MONITORING OSH IN AN ETHIOPIAN GARMENT FACTORY

“From scissors to sexual harassment, the ILO SIRAYE programme, of which Vision Zero Fund is an integral part, aims to build a better OSH culture in a sector dominated by women.”



Genet starts her days at 5 a.m. She wakes up, opens an app on her phone, and completes a short workout session. Then, she reheats last night's dinner and eats it for breakfast, gets dressed, and heads to the bus stop. Her shift at the factory starts at 8 a.m., with a safety announcement.

In her announcement, Genet reminds her co-workers to use precautions with scissors, a common culprit for injuries. She sings the praises of using eye and finger guards, to prevent accidents. And she doles out copious reminders throughout the day.

“The cutting line usually forgets to wear gloves, so I remind them of that,” she said. “Then, there's the COVID stuff: social distancing while entering and lining up for lunch, wearing a mask, and using hand sanitizer.”

Next, Genet makes sure that everyone is following the rules she just called out. In her first safety check of the day, she methodically ensures the functioning and security of every tool and worker, line by line.

Once complete, she writes a report to submit to her supervisor. She repeats the safety check every two hours, up to four times per day or depending on the buyer's request.

Everywhere she looks, there are women: sewing, cutting, checking. The garment industry is highly dependent on women, who make up 80% of all workers in the sector.

Safety officer, meet OSH training course

27-year-old Genet Habte is from Holeta, in the Oromia region of Ethiopia. After high school, she moved to Addis Ababa, the capital, to study fashion design at Ethio-China Polytechnic College. She lives in the city with her aunt.

Genet works at Ashton Apparel Manufacturing, a large garment exporter with 2,000 workers. Over the past five years, she has moved up the ranks – from cutting line to production line quality in charge to her current role as safety officer.

As a safety officer, Genet monitors the safety of people and equipment. She makes sure that the workers are wearing the right personal protective equipment (PPE), properly handling sharp tools like needles and scissors, and correctly using and storing chemicals.

It is also her responsibility to ensure a safe working environment. For example, she needs to be certain that all emergency exit doors are accessible. She also checks moisture, humidity, and temperature, to make sure they are conducive to the products and for the workers.

Ethiopia's textile and garment sector is booming.

Employment in the textiles and apparel industry is estimated at 798,752 in 2018 and is forecast to grow 86% through 2025, creating more than 683,000 new direct jobs and almost 868,000 new indirect jobs.

The garment and textile industries are among the priorities of the Ethiopian Government under the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTPII), aiming to lift Ethiopia to the status of middle-income country by 2025. The sector has continued to be relevant and is included in the new 10-year development plan (2021-2030) as a priority sector.

The garment sector employs 62,000 workers nationwide, representing 17.5% of the manufacturing labour force. Most workers are women, comprising 60% of workers in the cutting stage of production and 90% of workers in the sewing stage.

Industrial parks now dot the landscape across the country. Six of them are government-built: Bole Lemi (where Genet works), Hawassa, Mekelle, Jimma, Adama, and Kombolcha. They all focus on the garment and textile sector. And they have changed the lives of thousands of Ethiopians.

Introduced over the past few years, the nine operational industrial parks in Ethiopia have created a total of 64,000 jobs in 2019. According to an ILO report, the sector provides formal jobs primarily to first-time and young job seekers.

An additional six government-planned industrial parks are in the works, and will cover a wider range of sectors including food processing, vehicle assembly, and pharmaceuticals.

Of course, challenges persist. Ethiopia's private sector development constraints include a shortage of a skilled and productive labour force, access to finance, and trade logistics inefficiencies, among others.



Addressing these constraints will require policy interventions, investment, and technical assistance.

Why OSH is so important to the garment industry

But, poor working conditions and low wages persist, resulting in low productivity and high turnover. Noncompliance with OSH best practices also hinder growth.

Some of the key factors that affect workers in Ethiopia's industry include low wages, access to decent, affordable housing, and the personal safety and health of women workers.

Workers report occupational safety and health challenges in factories. Nearly 45% of workers say they have concerns about safety, including accidents or injuries at work. In some settings, such as factories located in industrial parks, workers' concerns with their personal safety during their daily commute actually exceeds their concerns with safety while at the workplace.

In addition, many women working in these factories struggle with period poverty, which refers to the lack of access to sanitary products, menstrual hygiene education, toilets, hand washing facilities, and waste management. Pregnant workers do not always have conducive working hour arrangements, and are sometimes expected to handle chemicals and waste without adequate PPE.

Factories are aware of the problems and have started to take action. They are doing things like providing personal hygiene training, providing free sanitary products, and supplying uniforms.

As an integral component of the SIRAYE program, Vision Zero Fund, jointly with Better Work and SCORE, strives to improve working conditions of target factories addressing the above mentioned challenges from multiple angles.



If Genet's co-workers follow her safety advice, they could:

- improve productivity and competitiveness;
- encourage accountable and transparent government institutions;
- and create an enabling environment to prevent work-related deaths, injuries, and diseases.

Genet works in an industry that her government believes will make Ethiopia a middle-income country by 2025.

OSH, pass it on

The most common injuries in the factory happen with scissors. Often, workers do not wear finger guards, which can lead to accidents if the scissors slip. Genet herself suffered an injury while she was trimming a button.

She was lucky – the cut could have been much worse. As she learned from the SIRAYE OSH training course, safety at work not only affects productivity and morale; in serious cases, it is also a matter of life or death.

The OSH course covered topics that Genet is now familiar with, like chemical storage and protective equipment. It also prepared her to better explain those important concepts to her co-workers.

One of the key features of this training is its domino effect: once a cohort completes the course, they turn around and pass it on to their colleagues. Genet's cohort managed to train 100 workers per week.

Things are already changing for the better. There have been fewer accidents, and workers are more knowledgeable about the safety procedures. But there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to build a safety and health culture in the sector.

Some of Genet's colleagues think that safety measures benefit the factory itself, not the people working there.

“I have a bit of a scar on my middle finger.”

“We try to help them realize these measures are about personal safety, too.”

Setting boundaries at work

In the OSH course, Genet expected to learn about things like tools and chemicals. So when the trainers began talking about sexual harassment, she was surprised.

“To be honest, I didn’t quite understand what sexual harassment means,” Genet said.

As part of the SIRAYE project, Genet completed training sessions specifically focused on sexual harassment in the workplace. She learned about what constitutes sexual harassment – a broader definition than she thought – and what to do if it happens to her.

“I didn’t know how important consent is.”

How COVID-19 changed life in the factory

In early 2020, COVID-19 cases were rising and governments were shutting down. The Ashton factory watched as the global demand for garments plummeted.

Genet was afraid of losing her job. But, despite her initial worries, she became busier than ever. She began monitoring handwashing, the use of masks and sanitizers, and social distancing measures. As a result of COVID-19, OSH emerged as a top priority.

An April 2020 survey of Ethiopian manufacturers showed that the capacity utilization rate decreased by 30% in the first part of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. Companies have used forced leave, rotational and shift work, and other strategies to minimize expenses during COVID-19.

However, Vision Zero Fund launched a multi-country project to complement efforts undertaken by SIRAYE to protect garment workers, with components on wage subsidies and occupational safety and health. The latter is led by Vision Zero Fund, with the Ethiopian garment factories and their workers being some of the main beneficiaries of the project.

The goal was to reduce the vulnerability of textile and garment workers in the face of COVID-19. Namely, it aimed to keep factories open and operational, retain workforces, and ultimately build a more resilient social protection system.

“I was so scared the first time I heard a case was registered in Ethiopia, because I had heard how bad it was in other countries.”

Up next

In the short term, Genet would like to be promoted to quality manager. In the long term, though, she hopes to start her own fashion company once she saves enough money and gains experience.

“I have learned a lot since joining this factory. I feel confident this experience offers me a strong ground for running my own business in the future.”



Learn more:

- A day in the life of an Ethiopian garment worker
- SIRAYE- COVID-19 Impact Video
- SIRAYE impact video

6. FILLING KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND SHARING KEY FINDINGS

Knowledge, data, and statistics on OSH help the Fund identify risks, design interventions, and allocate costs. The Fund conducts research to fill pressing knowledge gaps and has developed a platform to share key findings and research tools.

The Fund has published two reviews that compare the evidence gathered across country assessments in the [garment](#) and textile and [agriculture](#) supply chains.

Upcoming research includes a study on the effects of climate change on OSH in global supply chains, as well as case studies on OSH measures to prevent COVID-19 in the coffee supply chain in Colombia and the garment and textile supply chains in Myanmar and Ethiopia.

To generate and analyze OSH data, the Fund has also developed:

- Guidelines on how to enhance the capacity of [employers](#) and [workers](#) to comply with duties to report and record occupational accidents and diseases
- Guidelines on [how to interpret OSH statistics for developing policies to prevent occupational accidents and diseases](#)

7. HIGH-LEVEL FORUMS

The Fund organizes regular high level forums to raise its political profile and visibility and foster a global dialogue on the most pressing OSH challenges.

The inaugural Vision Zero Fund High-Level Forum took place from 23-25 February 2021. Over 18,000 tripartite representatives and stakeholders reached a consensus on effective approaches to OSH and committed to achieving zero fatal work-related accidents and severe injuries and diseases in global supply chains.

The forum also addressed challenges and opportunities for progress, highlighting the Fund's work across sectors and supply chains. It emphasized lessons learned, achievements so far, and plans for the near future.

By the end of the forum, participants:

- Agreed on the critical need to improve OSH in global supply chains through collaboration and cooperation
- Supported the Fund's collective action approach, noting that global improvements in OSH cannot be the sole responsibility of host governments
- Highlighted the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all solution and sustainable success requires a broad range of interventions and responses

This [outcome report](#) captures the discussions and main takeaways.

8. HOW TO JOIN THE GLOBAL EFFORT

From a financial contribution to in-kind support, you can support the Fund's mission in a variety of ways.

Governments of ILO Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and private entities including companies, foundations, and individuals may contribute to the Fund.

The Fund seeks credible partners who share the conviction that every worker deserves a safe and healthy workplace, and that working collaboratively with employers, workers and governments is the only way to make lasting, positive change.

When you partner with the Fund, you gain access to a strong global network and a focused model, which means even relatively modest investments yield exponential impact.

To ensure flexibility and keep costs low, donors should contribute using pooled, non-earmarked resources. Otherwise, the funds should be earmarked for a specific country or sector.

All contributions are administered in accordance with the ILO's rules, regulations, and procedures. The Fund receives strategic guidance from a tripartite Advisory Council. Its Steering Committee formally approves all decisions related to the Fund's strategic direction, including allocation of resources, new country projects, and the Fund's sectoral focus.

The Fund is committed to forming coalitions that are greater than the sum of their parts. Together, we can create meaningful change across sectors, benefiting the most vulnerable above all. Contact us today: vzf@ilo.org.

“It is important to act in partnership. Acting alone in a unilateral manner – just the business community, just the governments – that is not the answer. We need to bring together important players.”

Roberto Suárez Santos, Secretary-General, International Organization of Employers (IOE)

KEY RESULTS 2016-2021



5,6M

Workers benefiting directly and indirectly from VZF interventions

2016-2017: -
2018-2019: 2,5M
2020-2021: 5,6M



8

Countries

2016-2017: 2
2018-2019: 7
2020-2021: 8



3
6

Global supply chains
Agriculture subsectors / Crops

2016-2017: 2/2
2018-2019: 2/4
2020-2021: 3/6



29

VZF team members (83% based in the field)

2016-2017: 5 field / 2 HQ
2018-2019: 14 field / 4 HQ
2020-2021: 21 field / 6 HQ



10

Donors

2016-2017: 6
2018-2019: 7
2020-2021: 8



70

Knowledge and training products

2016-2017: 1
2018-2019: 38
2020-2021: 31



27

Global and regional events

2016-2017: 4
2018-2019: 14
2020-2021: 11



9

ILO departments, branches and units with which VZF collaborates

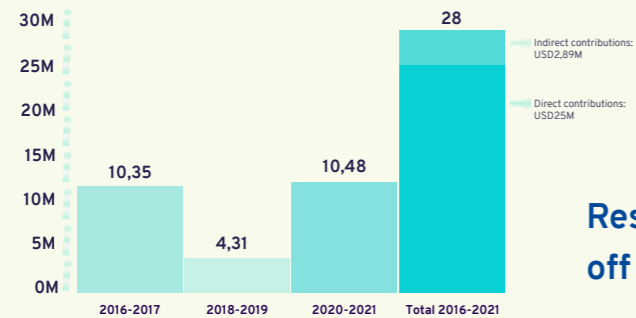
2016-2017: 1
2018-2019: 3
2020-2021: 9



11

References to VZF in ILC, ILO GB, G7, G20, and EU strategic documents

2016-2017: 2
2018-2019: 3
2020-2021: 6



* Indirect contributions from BMZ, USDOL, France and DFID.

Resources (rounded off to USD million)



VISION ZERO FUND

Vision Zero Fund brings together governments, employers' and workers' organizations, companies, and other stakeholders to advance towards the vision of achieving zero severe and fatal work-related accidents, injuries and diseases in global supply chains.

The Fund works at global, country and workplace levels, and currently focuses on the agriculture and garment supply chains. It is an initiative of the G7, and has been endorsed by the G20. The International Labour Organization (ILO) administers the Fund and implements its projects.

International Labour Organization
Labour Administration, Labour Inspection
and Occupational Safety and Health Branch
(LABADMIN/OSH)

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Vision Zero Fund is part of Safety & Health for All, an ILO flagship programme building a culture of safe, healthy work.

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