Occupational Health & Safety Assessment: Small Factories in Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Overview

- Background:
  - Kamrangirchar & Hazaribad districts
  - Environmental & occupational data

- MSF mission overview

- Factory observations

- Building OH&S capacity
Kamrangirchar Environment
Hazaribad Environment
Dhaka “Slum” Factories
OH&S Challenges

- OH&S risks not widely recognized
  - Historical public health risks
  - Growth & investment vs health risks
  - Clean water, air, food higher priority
- Kam & Haz districts “off the map”
- Lack of...
  - Infrastructure
  - Safety organizations (emerging)
  - Training, awareness
  - Available PPE
Building OH&S

- Government/industry/academic/NGO cooperative efforts (garments)
- Train-the-trainer OH&S efforts
- Awareness/outreach effort
  - Pictorial messages
    - Basic hygiene
    - Avoiding take-home exposures
    - First aid
  - Outreach/education of factory owners
Next Steps

- Factory Hazard Assessments*
  - Outreach team uses checklist
  - EHO oversight, QC, assure consistency
  - Integrate without impacting other outreach duties

- “Top 5” hazards identified
  - Significant hazard / easy remedy
  - Provide recommendations to factories

- Checklist Data Entry and Analysis*

- Factory re-survey with same checklist

*completed spring/summer 2017
Hazard Assessment Analysis*

*preliminary, pending peer review

![Box plot showing percentage of positive assessments for different categories: Metal, Plastic, Garments, Leather, Tannery, Others.](image)
Factories Providing PPE

- No factories surveyed provided eye, hearing, or respiratory protection
- Maximum 9% provided hand (gloves), foot (boot), or body (apron) protection
- Locally available PPE limited:
  - Reusable fabric face mask
  - Cheap sun glasses
Ergonomic Factors in Factories

- Most tasks are performed below shoulder level
- Work does NOT require an awkward posture
- Work does NOT require holding same position for prolonged time
- NO repetitive tasks are performed
- Machinery is positioned comfortably to perform task
Potential Next Steps

- Pre- / Post-Intervention Pilot
  - Small number of metal / plastic fabrication factories
  - Low / no-cost interventions
    - Soap & water, toilet, eating area
    - Lighting
    - Ventilation: fans, exhaust
    - Work area: walkways, inventory, storage, organization
    - Machine positioning / safe guards
    - Administrative controls
    - PPE
Potential Next Steps

- Occupational exposure monitoring: sampling protocol

- Possible utility:
  - Document impact of pre-/post-intervention
  - Document occupational exposures:
    - Publication
    - Advocacy
    - Partnership with government, NGOs, etc.
Bangladesh OHS Links – Selected Media Articles & Reports

- International Labor Organization; Occupational safety and health country profile – Bangladesh:

- International Labor Organization webpage: “Toward a safer garment industry in Bangladesh,” updated frequently:

- ILO-IFC Better Work; SME Occupational Safety and Health Toolkit – Bangladesh:

- EU-OSHA, “Promoting occupational safety and health through the supply chain; Literature review (2012):

- Business & Human Rights Resource Centre – Bangladesh
  - http://business-humanrights.org/bangladesh-0

- Weekly newsletter with key articles from the Bangladesh media published by WRAP – Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production

- Maclean’s magazine (2013) “What does that $14 shirt really cost?”
  - http://www.macleans.ca/economy/business/what-does-that-14-shirt-really-cost/

- Source: http://mhssn.igc.org/