

# Building Workers' OSH Committees, Protecting OSH Rights Report on the Training on How to Build Workers' Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Committees

July 21, 2022

Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development (IOHSAD-Philippines)  
in partnership with the Developing World Outreach Initiative and the  
Maquiladora Health and Safety Network

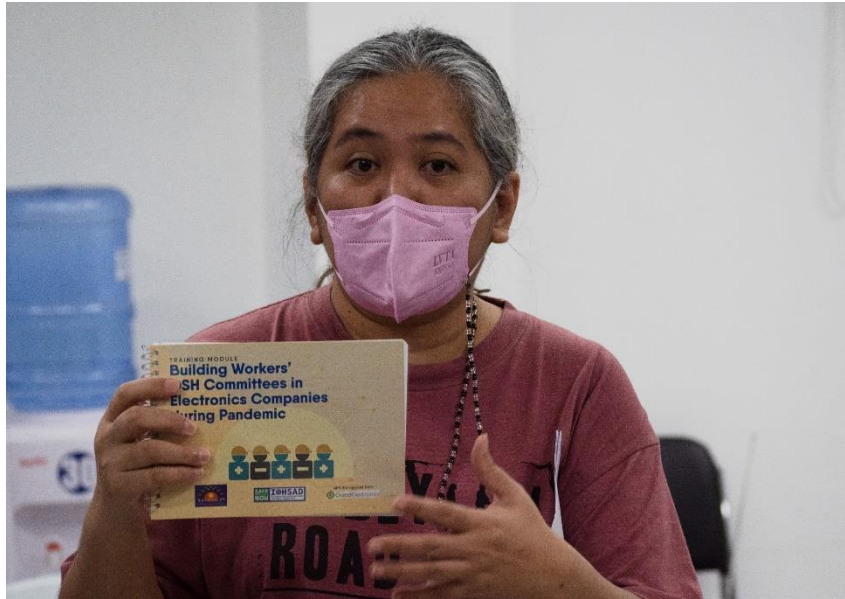


Figure 1. Workers hold signs to show their OSH demands

The training workshop was conducted last July 21, 2022, with 35 workers from various labor unions and organizations in attendance. The activity was designed to know the current OSH issues faced by the workers and from there emphasize the urgent need for workers' OSH committees in their workplaces. It also aims to guide the workers in building workers' OSH committees by providing clear and simple steps – from setting up meetings to designing OSH programs in their workplaces.

The training started with a brief orientation from Ms. Fress Sagnip and Ms. Emma Celada. The IOHSAD staff members recognized all the organization and labor union representatives present. They also shared the objectives and program of the activity.

Ms. Nadia De Leon, IOHSAD Director, shared salient points from the OSH Law and current OSH situation in the country. She also looked back at the consecutive workplace deaths that occurred in different workplaces in the past several weeks. These workers' deaths led IOHSAD, together with victims' families, labor unions and progressive legislators, to file a legislation to amend the current OSH Law provisions on imposing penalties to non-compliant employers.



*Figure 2. Nadia de Leon leads the discussion and shows a copy of IOHSAD's module on building Workers' OSH committees in electronics companies during the pandemic*

She briefly discussed the main provisions of the proposed House Bill 2126 that seeks to criminalize OSH standards violations. It pushes for stiffer penalties and imprisonment for employers, contractors, subcontractors, or any officer who have violated OSH standards. Higher penalties and imprisonment will be imposed to those who commit gross violations of OSH standards especially when these resulted in injuries or deaths.

After the discussion, participants took turns in sharing the most urgent OSH issues in their workplaces. Here are some of the highlights of their reports:

- **Chemical manufacturing company**
  - The company has an OSH committee but there is no worker representative. The union has no workers' OSH committee.
  - Company has not enough safety officers. The company's safety officer is handling multiple jobs such as environmental officer and front office manager.

- **Communication workers union**
  - There is an OSH committee under the union's structure and administration.
  - There are still supervisors/union members who work from home. Isolation or decreased interaction with peers and co-workers has caused some mental health problems among their members.
  - Unlike the rank-and-file workers, supervisors do not receive hazard pay.
  
- **Paint company**
  - The union has a workers' OSH committee.
  - Workers suffer from illnesses. There was one worker who suffered from cancer.
  - They are seeking the help of IOHSAD in identifying and studying the chemicals they use in the production process.



*Figure 3. IOHSAD listens to workers' reports on the urgent OSH issues they face at work and if OSH Committees are present in their workplaces*

- **Electronics company**
  - Workers suffer minor injuries at work.
  - The company has an OSH committee, but the union is still in the process of building a workers' OSH committee under the union's structure and administration.
  - Workers find it difficult to process benefits due for work-related injuries and COVID-19 related claims from the Employees' Compensation Commission.

- **Food company**

- The company has an OSH committee. The union is in the process of building a workers' OSH committee under its administration.
- Workers suffer from injuries and there is rampant contractualization among workers.

- **Elevator company**

- The company has an OSH committee. The union also has a workers' OSH committee. The union is in the process of consolidating the OSH committee and plans to conduct training and educational discussions with IOHSAD. Some of the topics they want to discuss are the following: a) salient points of the OSH Law or Republic Act 11058, b) First Aid Training and c) How to Claim Benefits from the Employees' Compensation Commission.
- Unfair penalties are imposed on rank-and-file workers who accidentally lost or broke their PPEs at work



*Figure 4 A pedicab driver, member of the informal sector, shares the health and safety issues they face at work -- air pollution, absence of clean and safe terminals and more. They plan to build OSH committees in their organization and push for OSH demands*

- **Steel company**
  - The company has an OSH committee. The union plans to consolidate its workers' OSH committee through discussions and OSH awareness campaigns among its members.
  - Workers are prone to accidents because of the nature of their work. There are reports of workers being injured while carrying and transporting heavy slabs of steel.
  
- **Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies**
  - There are OSH committees in BPO companies but no representatives from the workers. Only representatives from the management and safety officers have a say in policy and decision making on OSH issues.
  - BPO workers shared that they participate in regular fire and earthquake drills but during actual emergency, they are forced to continue work even without the conduct of post-earthquake safety monitoring.
  - Workers who are working from home experience OSH-related issues such as stress, ergonomic problems and more. For those who are now reporting on site, social distancing is not practiced anymore.
  
- **Informal workers (Vendors, Pedicab drivers)**
  - Associations of informal workers are also planning to set up OSH committees to protect their members health and safety.
  - Pedicab drivers demand for clean and safe terminals while vendors also need clean and safe places to protect them from harm, pollution, and bad weather.

The IOHSAD staff consolidated their reports in a chart and stressed the importance of identifying workers, in their respective unions and organizations, that will initially compose the workers' OSH committees. On the other hand, unions who already have workers' OSH committees should immediately schedule a meeting wherein IOHSAD will facilitate the discussion and planning of their union's OSH program.

	OSH ISSUES	ED/TRAINING	OTHER CONCERNS
UMICORE - w/ Safety Com (Subic, Zamboanga) (Korea, Indonesia)	Health - respiratory (flu / COVID) - mask not provided - no gloves - safety shoes - no PPE	Basic Orientation (1st month training)	
FLOTT - GUITS w/ Safety Com (w/ lesson) (Korea, UK)	100% - like lesson, demonstrated, looked in	w/ Doc Lead (Gates)	Exposure - the number - as well; instead they through gymnasium (supermarket)
GLOBALSCO w/ Safety Com (Non-Management) (Indonesia w/ management)	accidents, air cleaner - chemical (Pug water) - accidents (compensation/paid)	OSH training in Company Building	
URE - w/ Safety Com		Development of Health & Safety Committee - need to be - 2-3 people - health and training - prepared and ready for accident	any workers in open large machine made in BIC - toward pay
JARDIN w/ safety committee < management union do! health & safety committee	- safety meeting - twice in week 5-6hr - PPE for protection (safety glasses + vest) - safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties	- OSH in Field Aid Training - BIC	
BIEN w/ OSH Committee (management) (UK w/ management)	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties	w/ OSH Standards, BIC	- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
KADAMAY - industrial worker	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
KILOK N/A MANGGAGAWA (KMM)	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
NAFLU	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
ANGLO	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
SOL	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
ECUMENICAL DESE MARIVELDS	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor
ABLO	- safety officer (safety responsibility) - safety officer - non-technical difficulties - safety officer - non-technical difficulties		- OSH standards in BIC (education) BIC were - management & labor

Figure 5. IOHSAD staff members consolidated the OSH issues, demands and plans shared by the participants

It was resolved that all formations present in the training workshop will conduct an OSH-related activity or discussion before the year ends. They will also actively participate in the Safe Workplaces Now campaign and push for the passage of House Bill 2126 or Criminalization of OSH Standards Violations.

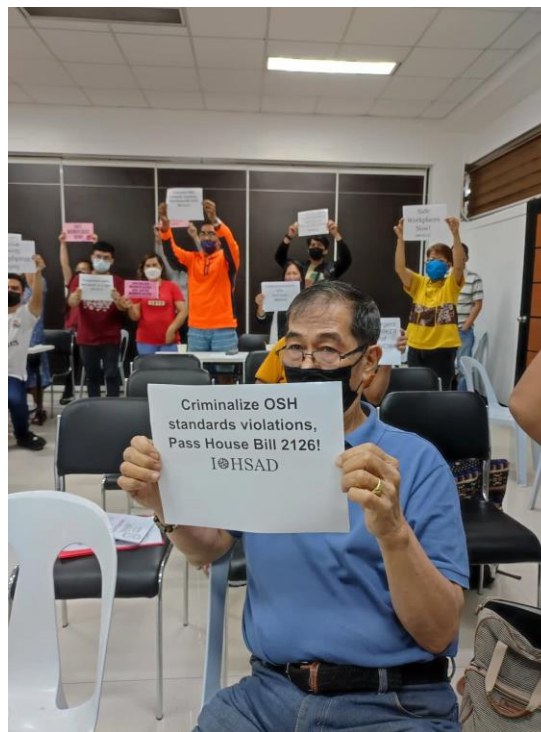


Figure 6. Workers show their support for the passage of House Bill 2126 or the Criminalization of OSH Standards Violations

**Occupational safety and health is a right.**

**CRIMINALIZE**

**OSH Standards Violations.**

**Pass House Bill 2126!**

