

28 April 2020

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

&

International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers

By: Rebekah Smith (Intern, April 2020)

Today we invite you to join us in remembering that workplace violence and harassment is a significant and ongoing threat to worker health and safety around the world. It is a day to raise awareness of and promote safe practices at work, occupational safety and health and the prevention of work-related accidents and diseases globally. As the world battles COVID-19, we are reminded of the importance of ensuring work conditions are conducive to health and safety.

The World Day for Safety and Health at Work highlights the role of:

- Governments to provide infrastructure such as laws and services to ensure workers remain employable and that enterprises flourish; to prioritize policies, programs and a system of inspections to ensure and enforce compliance to legislation and policy.
- Employers to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all employees.
- Workers to work safely, protect themselves and others, to know their rights, and to participate in the implementation of preventative measures.

Violence and Harassment

The International Labour Organisation's theme for World Day this year is 'violence and harassment' at work. Besides violence and harassment of workers damaging organisational productivity and reputation, it is a violation of fundamental human rights and the rights of workers - men and women - everywhere.

The Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and the accompanying Recommendation (No. 206), adopted at the Centenary International Labour Conference in June 2019, calls for the prohibition and prevention of violence and harassment in the world of work. These clauses also relate to migrant workers and those in the informal economy whose work conditions often put them at risk of violence, harassment, exploitation and negative health impacts.

Protecting the health and safety of workers has also been a focal point within the Sustainable Development Goals with target 8.8 reinforcing the need to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

The role of Migrant CARE

Since 2004, Migrant CARE has been working to empower the millions of Indonesian migrant workers across the globe. Much of Migrant CARE's focus has been directed towards women migrant workers, many of them employed in domestic services. A vital component of the organisation's programs is informing these workers of their rights and assisting them in times when these rights, often those relating to violence and harassment, have been violated or are under threat.

Collaborating alongside governments of all levels, the justice systems in Indonesia and internationally, as well as agencies and companies involved in the flow of migrant workers, Migrant CARE has been able to, directly and indirectly, assist thousands of Indonesian migrant workers across more than 25 countries. Civil society organisations such as Migrant CARE play a vital role in advocacy, education and stemming the trend of violence and harassment in workplaces across many sectors.

Where you come in

Promoting and ensuring health and safety in all domains of work is everyone's business. Each of us have a role to play in reducing vulnerability and cultivating positive and empowering working conditions. Here are some ways that you can promote health and safety for you and your colleagues this year:

- Stand up against violence and harassment wherever you see it, especially in the workplace.
- Check up on your family and friends who may be in vulnerable positions at work.
- Be informed of your rights and follow the laws and policies in place designed to prevent workplace health and safety incidents.
- Keep up to date on Migrant CARE's work through our social media channels and spread the word!

Further Reading:

- International Labour Organization:
 - <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/labour-migration/>
 - https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/events-training/events-meetings/world-day-safety-health-at-work/WCMS_733542/lang--en/index.htm
- UN:
 - <https://www.un.org/en/observances/work-safety-day>
- Migrant CARE:
 - <http://www.migrantcare.net/2020/01/migrant-care-outlook-2020/>