CONSTRUCTION-RELATED OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURES;
A CHALLENGE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
(OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT)

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INTRODUCTION

Definitions

- **Occupational exposures**: The exposure to hazards (potentially harmful chemical, physical or biological agents) that occurs as a result of one's occupation / work.
- **Adverse Health Effect**: Any change in body function or the structures of cells that can lead to disease or health problems. E.g. bodily injury, disease, reproductive effects, change in mental condition, etc.
- **Sustainable development**: Pattern of growth (development of industrial and natural resources) that meets the needs and opportunities of the present without compromising the ability or opportunities of future generations to meet their needs in a similar manner.

Dimensions and Indicators of Sustainable Development

ECONOMIC
- Income distribution, Employment equality, Education
- Health, quality of life, Crime, Population, Social and cultural values

SOCIAL
- Decision-making, Capacity building, Technology, Public awareness, Information & Communication

ENVIRONMENTAL
- Sustainable resource management, pollution, Land use, Security

OBJECTIVE

To Study the "cause and effect" relationship between Construction-related Occupational Exposures and Sustainable Development.
Health Surveillance and Medical records
Upper and Lower Respiratory Tract Infections; Others; Tooth Ache / Dental Problems, Carries, Bleeding Gums, Oral Sores, Body Sores, S.T.D.S (Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Penile Sores, Genital Sores, Herpes) Psychosocial conditions; Alcohol and Drugs, Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Fatigue

Of the lost time recorded within the firm, over 50% was
Urinary Tract Infections (U.T.I.S) Crime & violence Ergonomic complaints; Backache, Chest Pain, Findings collated, Cases of ill health led to more prolonged lost work days,
General Health Conditions and Occupational Diseases / Ill Health; Arthritis, Abdominal Risks arising from regular occupational exposure may
Skin Conditions; Abscesses, Boils, Eczema, Skin Infection, Athletes Foot Allergies; Allergic

Comparison between lost work days due to injury and due to ill health

Over 30% of the company’s workforce had registered some form of occupational exposure, requiring medical attention
Of the lost time recorded within the firm, over 50% was due to ill health and occupational diseases compared to less than 50% due to injuries and occupational accidents.
Cases of ill health led to more prolonged lost work days, than mere injuries.
Risks arising from regular occupational exposure may not manifest immediately as ill health; some time must elapse before the onset of symptoms.
DISCUSSION

- Effective OSH management requires regular Risk assessment as a step towards limiting exposure; to identify hazards, evaluate associated risk and determine appropriate ways to eliminate or control the hazard.
- This would guarantee improved worker protection hence; good health (social), continued earning (economic), better worker participation (institutional) and protection of the environment (environment).
- Beyond the worker; injuries, illnesses and fatalities have financial implications, which significantly influence the economic vitality of the firm and the nation at large, and thus sustainability over the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Sustainability calls for;
- local action (at enterprise level) for global change
- a process (of continuous improvement) rather than a target (say of zero accidents)
- Giving more than you ‘take out’ not expecting more than you ‘put in’
- Balance between social, economic, environmental and institutional considerations.

Sustainability can not be achieved without employers taking more responsibility for people and their environment.

REFERENCES

2. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety www.ccohs.ca
3. Indicators of Sustainable Development: Guidelines And Methodologies, publication of the United Nations, UN Commission on Sustainable Development

ANY QUESTIONS?

"Being good to people and the environment is the way to do business"

“We measure what we value, and We value what we measure.”

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!!!