1725 YOUNG WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ADDRESS RISKS

Susan Gunn. *I.L.O (ret'd), Geneva, Switzerland*

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Aim of special session The world's largest workforce with many children and high injury/illness rates deserves more attention. New approaches, well-tested and ripe for replication, are presented.

¹JA Demeranville, ²BC Lee, ³N Correale, ⁴Vicki Walker

¹Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

²National Children's Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

³Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

⁴PRIME International

1725a USING NON-TRADITIONAL CHANNELS AND MATERIALS TO REACH YOUNG AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

JA Demeranville. *Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations*

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Introduction Agriculture is one of the most hazardous occupations in the world based on work-related accidents, disease and death. It is also the sector where the vast majority of child labour is found and the principal source of employment for rural youth in developing countries. Children and youth engaged in agricultural activities are at risk of exposure to a wide range of hazards and are particularly vulnerable due to a number of behavioural and biological reasons. Much of young people's work in agriculture takes place in remote areas and the majority of child labour is unpaid family labour. Therefore, they often fall through the cracks of traditional occupational safety and health systems and inspection. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations is working to reduce hazardous child labour in agriculture and promote safe work for youth in agriculture and related activities. By working through channels such as national agricultural extension systems, farmer field schools and rural radio, FAO aims to raise awareness on OSH issues for young workers. Particular attention is given to protecting children from pesticides. Tools such as visual facilitator's guides for use with farmers, fishers and livestock raisers and E-learning courses aimed at ministries of agriculture, agricultural researchers and producers' organisations have been developed to help mobilise agricultural stakeholders in protecting young workers engaged in agricultural activities, including in family-based work and in the informal economy.

1725b EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR SAFEGUARDING YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE

BC Lee. *National Children's Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety*

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Introduction Agriculture is among the world's most common and most dangerous occupations and the only one that typically allows children into the occupational setting. In 1997 the U.S. launched its National Initiative for Childhood Agricultural Injury Prevention. Surveillance in 1998 revealed that

2/3 of the annual 37 000 injuries and deaths occurred to non-working children (bystanders).

Methods Given the challenge of regulating agriculture, voluntary standards were created via a consensus process involving a multi-stakeholder group. In 1999, the 'North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks' (NAGCAT) were released to assist farm parents in assigning age-appropriate work for children. In 2004, guidelines for 'Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms' were released to guide parents in maintaining a protected recreational area for very young children when off-farm child care is not available. Recently, these guidelines were modified and upgraded as mobile-friendly resources.

Results With federal funding, the NAGCAT guidelines were field-tested. Results demonstrated that using NAGCAT reduced injuries by 50%. Research also highlighted the strength of dissemination strategies, and their application in different populations. Meanwhile, the Safe Play Area guidelines were being shared with young farm parents. Agricultural media coverage was positive and farm organisations and insurance vendors began referencing these preferred strategies for safeguarding children. In the past 30 years the rate of agricultural injuries for working and non-working youth has dropped by more than 60%. Better parenting practices and social norms have improved safety conditions for children living and working on farms.

Discussion These publicly available, voluntary guidelines are an option in lieu of regulations. They can be promoted through different spheres of influence, e.g. farm organisations, health agencies, educators, and the media. They have been translated and modified for use beyond North America and have the potential to safeguard children in developing countries where mechanised equipment is increasingly used in agriculture.

1725c PROTECTING YOUTH FROM PESTICIDES: SUCCESSES OF THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION IN GENERATING DATA AND INCLUDING YOUTH IN RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

N Correale. *Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations*

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Pesticides are among the most serious risks to the health of agricultural workers and surrounding rural communities. Occupational exposure to pesticides occurs while applying, mixing, washing contaminated clothes and empty containers etc. and through different exposure routes. The Rotterdam Convention is a multilateral agreement aiming at protecting human health and environment from the risks of hazardous pesticides and other chemicals that are still on trade and, for this reason, widely used in agriculture. To support developing countries and economies in transition, there is a specific article for detecting problems with certain pesticide formulations in the field. Under this framework, good experience has been gained in collecting data on occupational exposure to pesticides in the field, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups (women, children, young workers, seasonal workers) and in different regional contexts such as in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and in Africa. To provide guidance to Parties, a tool for monitoring and reporting pesticide poisoning incidents (Severely Hazardous Pesticide Formulation – SHPF toolkit) has been developed with information on methodologies for data collection, examples of incident reporting

systems and several awareness-raising materials. Reporting on pesticide incidents to the Rotterdam Convention has the advantage of making those incidents known to the world by sharing information with other countries which experience the same problems with specific pesticide formulations and allowing them to see if risk management measures are properly taken into account at national level.

1725d ACTIVATING THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN SAFE WORK FOR YOUTH AGES 15–17

Vicki Walker. *Prime International*

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Since 2002, global trends in child labour reveal a persistent prevalence of hazardous work by youth 15 to 17 due largely to working conditions that violate legal standards. Rather than address occupational safety and health (OSH) conditions and remove hazards in order to protect youth, companies and employers tend to mitigate risk in their supply chains, by 'over-correcting' and not allowing youth under 18 to work although those over 15 normally have a right to work in the context of country laws and core labour standards based on International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 138 and 182.

This paper demonstrates how years of data highlighting child labour and hazardous conditions of work have resulted in preventing and scaring away employers from hiring or purchasing goods produced from any youth under 18. Through qualitative and quantitative research, we have explored options for addressing the risks of child labour and gaps in younger youth employment. Our focus was to determine how employers and farmers react to youth of legal working age. We researched reports on the topic, and met with over 100 employers, farmers and unionists. Nearly 90% of the situations and inquiries as part of the survey maintained that they do not allow anyone under 18 to work. Over 50% are aware that youth under 18 *may not work in hazardous conditions* however, they are not willing nor have the resources to change the conditions to enable youth to work. This pushes the youth to work illegally somewhere else in hazardous conditions.

We discuss business-led standards and efforts to transition youth from exploitive, hazardous, or harmful labour into safe and prosperous production as key to addressing youth unemployment, low-end jobs, and hazardous child labour.

559 USE OF A RISK ASSESSMENT TO PROMOTE FARMER'S HEALTH

¹J McNamara*, ²P Griffin, ³J Phelan, ³J Kinsella. ¹Teagasc- Agriculture and Food Development Authority, Kildalton, Co. Kilkenny, Ireland; ²Health and Safety Authority, Dublin 1, Ireland; ³School of Agriculture, University College Dublin, Ireland

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Introduction Research in Ireland has indicated that farmers as an occupational group have inferior health outcomes. To assist with addressing this issue, health issues were included in a pilot Risk Assessment (RA) and associated half-day training

course being evaluated for the agriculture sector under OSH legislation. The health RA template required a farmer to specify missing health controls. Farmers could complete the RA document with or without half-day training. At training guidance on health issues was provided using a DVD presented by a medical doctor. This paper provides evaluation on the health related controls specified in the RA for action and opinions of training provided.

Methods RA documents were obtained from farmers who completed it with (n=335) and without (n=140) training and health controls specified for action were tabulated. Opinions were obtained from both farmers (n=291) and trainers (n=51) on the health element of RA training delivered using a Likert-type question with a 5 point scale, with 5 the most positive response. Trainers had the option of additionally providing a comment.

Results A total of 0.32 and 0.14 controls per RA document were specified when completed with or without training. Controls were in the following categories: preventing back injury (2.4%); respiratory protection (9.5%), preventing infection (17.6%), noise exposure control (9.5%), stress/personal health management (56.4%) (obtaining a 1 st aid box made-up 80% of this category) and additional controls (4.8%). The opinion of health messages delivered at training had a mean score of 3.9 among both farmer and trainer respondents. Additionally 25.5% of trainers commented positively on the benefit of health training.

Conclusion The study indicates low uptake of health practices by farmers following RA completion. Training increased the level of specification of controls. Feedback from both farmers and trainers related to the health messages delivered at training was positive.

570 RISK FACTORS OF PESTICIDE POISONING AND CHOLINESTERASE INHIBITION WITH COTTON WORKERS FROM NORTH OF BENIN'REPUBLIC (BANIKOARA AND KANDI TOWNSHIPS)

¹Hinson Antoine Vikkey*, ¹Dossou Fidel, ²Yehouenou Pazou Elisabeth, ³Gounongbé Fabien, ⁴Aguèmon Badirou, ¹Hountikpo Hilaire, ¹Lawin Hervé, ¹Fayomi Benjamin. ¹Unity of Teaching and Research in Occupational Health and Environment, FSS/UAC, Abomey-Calavi (Benin); ²Laboratoire de Recherche en Biologie Appliquée (LARBA), EPAC/UAC, Abomey-Calavi (Bénin); ³Département de Médecine et Spécialités Médicales, FM/Université de Parakou, Parakou (Bénin); ⁴Département de Santé Publique, unité de biostatistique FSS/UAC Abomey-Calavi (Bénin)

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Introduction The use of pesticides saved millions of lives by killing the insects which are known to be potential vectors of disease, however, those pesticides have harmful effects on human health and on the environment public health and environmental problems caused using pesticides outweigh the benefits. The objective of this study is to assess the level of poisoning with the AChE test due to cotton producer's pesticide exposure in the biggest cotton production townships of northern Benin (Banikoara and Kandi), and to identifying the risk factors.

Method Through a cross sectional study, we recruited 190 pesticides sprayers for at least 5 years. They were submitted to a questionnaire and to acetylcholinesterase (AChE) test using the Test Mate model 400 devices (EQM Research Inc)