

**BENCHMARKING HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL (HSE)  
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT PRACTICES IN THE OIL  
INDUSTRY IN KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The management of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) is a critical function in the Kenyan oil industry, both from the statutory compliance perspective and from the point of view of corporate responsibility and risk management. This study therefore sought to identify the key indicators used in measuring Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) performance by the Kenyan oil industry, to establish whether Kenyan oil companies benchmarked their HSE performance measurement practices and to critically examine the challenges faced while undertaking these benchmarking programs.

Descriptive survey was used in this research study. The sample for the study was selected from the population through the convenience sampling technique and primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. Content analysis was used to analyze the data collected.

The study revealed that Kenyan oil companies measured their health, safety and environmental performance using varied performance measurement indicators. The study also revealed few Kenyan oil companies benchmarked their health, safety and environmental performance measurement practices, with a significant proportion concentrating on internal benchmarking. Finally, oil companies in Kenya encountered many challenges when carrying out such benchmarking studies. These include the unwillingness to share information among competing partners, lack of top management commitment, low priority given to the HSE function within company and lack of resources.

The study concluded that benchmarking was a powerful tool for continuous improvement that helped to measure and compare results, highlight gaps in performance and identify the potential for improvement in order to achieve superior performance. Kenyan oil companies needed to benchmark their health, safety and environmental performance measurement practices for continuous improvement. In addition, health, safety and environmental performance measurement was a growing corporate social responsibility and a core business value that should not be compromised for monetary gains. Finally, a balanced scorecard of measures rather than a single measure provided better information on a range of health, safety and environmental performance measurement activities in the Kenyan oil industry.