

Abstract

A baseline survey was conducted in 1995 on management perspectives of occupational health and safety (OHS) structures and practices in Kenya. This was achieved by interviewing management and supervisory staff attending 1 week multi-disciplinary courses that were organized by the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) and the International Labour Office (ILO) at hotel venues in Kenya. The purpose of the survey was to gain some insight into work safety conditions in Kenya and to assess the potential for a new OHS manual to meet existing knowledge gaps. The manual was locally developed in 1993/4 by Kenyan OHS experts in collaboration with colleagues from the Swedish National Institute for Working Life. Results of the survey from 65 participants indicated that most workplace managers were not familiar with the Kenyan work safety legislation. Work injuries were largely attributable to working with dangerous machinery. Occupational diseases and HIV/AIDS were cited as other causes of workplace morbidity and mortality. Although most respondents (70%) were satisfied with their work safety conditions, only 37% said their workplaces were annually audited by labour inspectors while 45% said injured workers were not treated well by management. Many workplaces (65%) violated the mandatory legal requirement on the establishment of health and safety committees. The OHS resource person and course content were rated highly by most respondents (96%). The foregoing results provided the basis of a needs analysis for future OHS programs in Kenya.