Project No. 4-3a

**Region:** Asia  
**Country:** Thailand

**Project:**  
Community-based delivery of Occupational Safety and Health services through primary care units and intra-governmental collaboration: Adopting standards, procedures and services for the informal economy

**Donors:**  
National government regular budgetary allocation  
ILO Project Informal Economy, Poverty and Employment

**Project Description:**  
The action programme of the Ministry of Public Health in collaboration with the Informal Economy (IE) project involves capacity building of primary health care units for occupational health and safety services. In particular, it involves development of primary care unit (PCU) standards, procedures and services that covers prevention, promotion, curative, rehabilitation, and data collection of occupational safety and health (OSH)-related diseases and accidents. It aims to integrate OSH in public health function in order to better reach the working population, regardless of where they are working.

The strategies used in this project are:

1. Develop standards and procedures for PCUs in the following aspect of OSH services: prevention, promotion, diagnosis/cure and rehabilitation
2. Mobilize officials in the local government, labour ministry, and other stakeholders to collaborate on innovating and providing OSH services to informal economy workers
3. Document OSH cases in order to have better information and training.

The role of the public health system in performing these functions is important given that it has the administrative reach that goes down to the community-level where many micro enterprise activities are found. Where work is increasingly is found outside the reach of the labour protection systems this complementary machinery for service delivery must be developed.

Some pilot services innovated by PCUs are as follows:

- Establishment of a “hotline” where people can call to complain about occupational and health conditions.
- Deployment of mobile units which go to villages to listen to do risk assessment. The mobile units hold fora, make a “walk through” survey and listen to people's problems.
- Maintenance of personal health files for patients which include occupation and work-related sickness.
- Inclusion of OSH module for health volunteers’ education as one of the topics which volunteers have to undergo.
- Integration of OSH in home-based health care programme.
- Setting up of surveillance system through documentation and monitoring of diseases using international disease code.
- Promoting stronger role of employers in small scale enterprises in funding health check ups and OSH education among both workers and employers.
- Other initiatives carried out are the following:
  - Water treatment and mobilizing of public commitment through Buddhist rituals to care for the river and not to dispose waste in bodies of water.
  - Providing factories with personal protective equipment.
Successful advocacy among companies to collect/dispose waste created by homeworkers who are producing for companies from raw materials provided by the companies.

**Gender and Ethnic Components:**
Women and ethnic groups in Thailand are being reached through this initiative. While technically spearheaded by the Ministry of Public Health, the PCUs innovate services and activities that are appropriate for local groups. Promotional services incorporate and respect religious and ethnic rituals and ceremonies. Use of women health volunteers and home visits enable PCUs to be sensitive to conditions of women and their families. PCUs have the vantage position of understanding reproductive health care which they bring to bear in their new competency in occupational health care.

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