Risky jobs – occupational exposure to air pollution

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Air pollution
A silent killer!
3 BILLION WORKERS!
Work → Health
(occupational disease/work related ill health)

Health → Work
(medical fitness for work)
Why is health of workers important?

- Productive age group
- Costly
- Affects individuals, families, communities and countries
• About 1.2 billion workers worldwide work outdoors most of the time, in particular in agriculture, construction, transport, street vendors, street sweepers, traffic police officers etc
• All these workers are vulnerable to exposure to outdoor air pollution.
Occupational exposure to outdoor air pollution among workers? What’s the importance?

- Most outdoor workers belong to the informal economy – agricultural and construction
- Considerable numbers of female agricultural workers
- Socio economically deprived and more chances of having household air pollution
- Minimal occupational health services for them
• Increasing traffic congestion in most of the countries will continue to grow endangering the health of traffic police officers
• More construction and more workers getting exposed to outdoor air pollution
• Vigorous physical activity among workers and inhalation of more pollutants
• Legislation related to air pollution control is not satisfactory in most developing countries
• Air pollution control is not stringent in many developing countries endangering the health of outdoor workers
More exposure since they work!!

Higher risk of adverse health outcomes

Stroke
Heart Disease
Lung cancer
Chronic Lung Diseases
Do we know the real burden????

We need more research on occupational exposure to air pollution
Indoor air pollution affecting health of workers

- Still a major problem

- Occupational exposure to air polluted with carcinogens, pathogens, fumes, smokes, dusts and fibres at the workplace kills every year almost one million workers
Effective control measures are available

1. Elimination
2. Substitution
3. Engineering Controls
4. Work Practice/Administrative Controls (Training & Procedure)
5. Personal Protective Equipment
However, can we be satisfied with indoor air quality in most workplaces around the world?
Costs

• Health costs
• Economic costs
• Cost of suffering
Key messages

• More research on occupational exposure to air pollution will generate evidence to better facilitate making policy decisions

• Strengthening the provision of occupational health services to workers working indoors and outdoors

• Legislation needs to be strengthened to control occupational exposure to air pollution among workers in all occupations

• Cost effective control measures are present to control indoor air pollution and should be practiced
Thank you!