



PROTECTING WORKERS
Health Series No. 6

Raising Awareness of Stress at Work in Developing Countries

**A modern hazard
in a traditional
working environment**

**Advice to employers and
worker representatives**



World Health
Organization

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PREFACE

This brochure on work-related stress in developing countries is part of the 'Protecting Workers' Health series'. It is published by the World Health Organization (WHO) within the Occupational Health Team. We thank TNO Work & Employment in The Netherlands, a WHO Collaborating Centre in Occupational Health, for authoring the booklet as part of the Global Workplan of the WHO Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health.

The purpose of this booklet is to raise awareness for employers and worker representatives of work-related stress in developing countries. Work-related stress is an issue of growing concern in developing countries due to important developments in the modern world; two of the most significant being globalisation and the changing nature of work. Raising awareness at an early stage seems all the more important because work-related stress is also a problem which is far from being resolved in developed and industrialized countries.

Although the focus of this booklet is on developing countries, the problem of work-related stress is also significant in countries in transition who are subjected to rapid and drastic economical and social changes (for example in Russia), where there is an increased demand for adaptation of workers, the over-riding of traditional values, the re-orientation of the occupational health system, and generally poor working conditions. Traditionally, the focus of Occupational Health and Safety initiatives is on chemical, biological and physical exposures, while the psychosocial risks at work are still largely neglected and their causes and consequences still insufficiently understood as they pertain to the developing country context. The current division between working conditions and the (physical) work environment makes the inclusion of the psychosocial risks at work harder to identify by most of the Occupational Health and Safety professionals.

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