



THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH DIMENSION OF COVID-19 IN UGANDA

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Presentation Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Impact of Covid-19 on OSH workplace systems
- ✓ COSH responses to COVID-19
- ✓ Challenges
- ✓ Proposed actions
- ✓ Conclusion





Introduction

- 1,313 cases out of 301,286 tests
- 9 deaths, 1,138 recovered cases and 166 active cases
- Containment measures taken included:
 - Closure of all education institutions-remain closed
 - Suspension of public and private transport include air. Only air transport is suspended
 - Suspension non-essential services. Lifted except entertainment
 - Promotion of hand and respiratory hygiene as well as social distancing in public spaces





Impact of COVID-19 on OSH

- Rendered past Risk Assessment & attendant control measures irrelevant
- COVID-19 prevention measures have increased the cost of doing business
- Work reorganisation and rising business costs led to telecommuting and layoffs
- Layoffs has led long working hours and its associated occupational health risks
- Long working hours and risks of loss of employment has triggered stress
- Poor ergonomics at home increase risk of musculoskeletal disorders
- OSH inspection staff and budget over stretched





COVID-19 OSH Responses

- Developed workplace SOPs prevention and control
 - Employee/customer awareness, Hand and respiratory hygiene, sanitising workplaces, work reorganisation and OSH workplace governance
- Workplace targeted COVID-19 risk communication
- Encouraged use of adequate and sufficient PPEs especially for frontline workers
- Preventive training and monitoring of frontline workers
- COVID-19 focused workplace inspections
- Preventive training and monitoring of frontline workers





Challenges

- Realignment of resources in the of the budget cycle
- Promotion of OSH for workers in telework
- Lack of conclusive/contradicting evidence on the nature and transmission of COVID-19 virus within the scientific world
- Rising OSH related business costs amidst no/declining enterprise revenue
- Rising domestic gender based domestic tension
- Limited knowledge prevention measures by employers and workers





Proposed policy and legislative actions

- Review of risk assessment protocols to take into account COVID-19
- Review medical surveillance guidelines
- Review OSH inspection checklist
- Review OSH law to implement reforms and make it relevant for future crisis
- Review of laws to recognize COVID-19 as an occupational disease
- Development of guidelines for promotion of OSH for teleworkers
- SESRIC should coordinate COVID-19 focused OSH policy research





Thank You

