

Methodology Report

Consultation with Footwear Factory Workers

(Report of a pilot study)

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The Ngoc Ha Factory Management deserves thanks not only for assisting with the logistics and allowing us access to the workers, but also for agreeing to serve as the pilot for this project. Their willingness and cooperation provides an example we hope will inspire other factories to participate in the programme.

The Footwear Association demonstrated commitment to the project and encouraged the survey team, as well as facilitating initial contact with the factory.

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Finally I would like to thank the management of ActionAid for believing in the value of this project and for providing the necessary resources to enable us to see it through. It has been a fascinating and rewarding process from which many of us have learnt much along the way.

We hope that the experience gained during this pilot will provide a sound basis for the Vietnam Business Links Initiative, and will result in improvements in the lives of the workers of Ngoc Ha Factory and the thousands of others like them.

Juliet Edington
March 2001

Executive Summary

This report details the process and resulting lessons from a pilot survey in a footwear factory carried out by ActionAid as part of the Vietnam Business Links Initiative (VBLI). The overall aim of the VBLI is to improve conditions in footwear factories, providing a healthier and safer environment for workers. The objectives of this pilot survey were to:

- Design, test and refine a methodology that can be used more widely as part of the VBLI
- Build ActionAid's own understanding and experience of adapting methods it has used in rural areas to an urban workplace context
- Elicit information on workers perception of health and safety in the footwear factory
- Document our findings from the factory – to provide a) information to the factory management, which can assist them in improving the situation, and b) information to the VBLI, which will inform the design of future workers consultations, as well as the training modules of the project.

The pilot was carried out during February and March 2001, and involved consultation with approximately 10% of the workforce at Ngoc Ha Shoe Factory in Hanoi. Fifty-one workers completed questionnaires and 49 participated in group interviews, using participatory tools and techniques.

The pilot survey generated an enormous amount of information and learning. A separate report has been written on the specific content findings on health and safety from the Ngoc Ha Factory Workers. This report details the methodology and lessons learnt during the process only. While there are a number of very specific points documented in the report, the main overall lessons include:

- Special attention is needed to ensure that the benefits of using participatory methods (in terms of people analysing their situation so that they can take action) can be achieved in a factory setting
- Buy-in by the factory management and their active involvement in the preparation is essential
- Stakeholder groups and their specific roles in the process need to be discussed and agreed
- It is important to ensure there is a commitment to respond to the issues raised
- The survey team needs to be familiar with the context, conditions and people they are working with
- The consultation process and methodology need to be flexible and the survey team skilled in adapting them
- Composition of the groups being interviewed is crucial to ensuring active participation of all
- Structured time for reflection, learning and modification, needs to be built into the process
- All methods should be tested on a small pre-pilot test group before going live.

We have attempted in this report to provide a framework and guidelines for consultations that will provide workers with an opportunity to voice their views and concerns on health and safety in factories. Ultimately we hope this will contribute to improved conditions for workers in footwear factories across Vietnam.

Acronyms

AAV **ActionAid Vietnam**

H&S **Health and Safety**

INGO **International Non Government Organisation**

PWBLF **Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum**

SCUK **Save the Children UK**

VBLI **Vietnam Business Links Initiative**

VCCI **Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

I Introduction

I.1 Background

This pilot survey forms part of the larger Vietnam Business Links Initiative (VBLI). The VBLI aims to improve conditions in footwear factories, providing a healthier and safer environment for workers. It does this through building local business skills and good governance through forging links between multinational corporations, local enterprises, government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

The VBLI has a number of different components of which this survey is one part. ActionAid Vietnam (AAV) was responsible for the design and implementation of a pilot survey with factory workers, which aimed to understand the workers perception of health and safety issues in their workplace. As well as testing a model for consulting with workers, the information gathered will inform the design of the VBLI training module to ensure that it addresses needs identified by the workers themselves.

The pilot study took place during February and March 2001 and took just over five weeks. It involved a significant amount of time of two senior ActionAid staff (one working almost full-time on the project), as well as shorter inputs from three other ActionAid staff and one member of staff from Save the Children UK (SCUK). The costs of the pilot were born by ActionAid and SCUK as a voluntary contribution to the VBLI project.

I.2 Objectives

The objectives of the pilot survey were to:

- Design, test and refine a methodology that can be used more widely as part of the VBLI
- Build ActionAid's own understanding and experience of adapting methods we have used in rural areas to an urban workplace context
- Elicit information on workers perception of health and safety in a footwear factory
- Document our findings from the factory – to provide a) information to the factory management to assist them in improving the situation, and b) information to the VBLI to inform the design of future worker consultations as well as the training module.

I.3 Context

The footwear industry is one of the fastest growing export industries in Vietnam; exports grew from 750,000 pairs of shoes in 1990 to 140 million pairs in 1998. It is a labour intensive industry which employs over half a million people.

Ngoc Ha Shoe Company is a State-Owned Enterprise situated in the centre of Hanoi occupying 10,000 square metres. It has three lines of production; two in women's shoes the other canvas shoes. The factory employs around 1,000 workers, 40% of whom have joined the factory in the last year. Eighty per cent of the work force is female, 30% are migrants and the average age of a worker is 25 years old.

I.4 Contents

This report details the pilot methodology and lessons learnt. It is hoped the report will provide the VBLI with a model for future consultations with workers, as well as being of interest to other individuals and organisations. A separate report is being prepared, in Vietnamese, which details the specific findings of the consultation with workers from Ngoc Ha Shoe factory.

This report is divided into four sections. This introductory section provides information on the background to the pilot as well on the objectives, and context. Section II provides details of the process and methodology. Section III documents the key lessons learnt and Section V contains some concluding statements.

Details of the questionnaire and group interview framework, as well as details on the methodology and lessons learnt from both exercises, are included as Appendices.

II Process and Methodology

February 19th – 26th	<p>ActionAid Initial Design ActionAid drew up preliminary plans for the consultation process, drawing on existing experience within the organisation, together with a thorough review of relevant available external documentation (from Vietnam and elsewhere). It was agreed that the pilot should be carried out in just one factory and cover around 10% of the total factory workforce.</p> <p>The plan set out a two-pronged approach, consisting of multiple choice questionnaires (to be completed individually by factory workers), followed up by group interviews using participatory tools and techniques. The draft plan was circulated to the VBLI Management Board for comments, which were incorporated.</p>
February 26th	<p>Meeting between ActionAid and VBLI Project Team at VCCI ActionAid presented and agreed the draft plan with the VBLI team at VCCI</p>
March 1st – 9th	<p>ActionAid prepare questionnaire, survey design etc ActionAid developed a draft questionnaire and circulated it to the VBLI Management Board for comments, which were incorporated.</p>
March 1st	<p>ActionAid & VBLI Project Team meet Footwear Association ActionAid presented the plan and requested the support of the Footwear Association in selecting and contacting an appropriate factory to implement the pilot. The Footwear Association agreed to contact Ngoc Ha Footwear Company.</p>
March 6th	<p>Ngoc Ha Footwear Company agree to preliminary meeting The Footwear Association contacted Ngoc Ha Shoe Factory (which the VBLI Management Board had visited in February) to seek their agreement to pilot the survey in their factory. The VBLI Project Coordinator set up a meeting.</p>
March 6th – 7th	<p>VBLI Project Assistant translates questionnaire into Vietnamese</p>
March 7th	<p>Survey Team is formed and ActionAid brief team member from SCUK ActionAid assigned two staff members to work on the pilot (one local, one expatriate), together with a third (expatriate) who would provide technical advice and training.</p> <p>ActionAid approached two other International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) to join the survey team (specifically looking for a woman to ensure the gender composition for facilitating interviews was balanced). Save the Children UK (SCUK) agreed to one of their Senior Project Officers joining the team.</p> <p>These four people are hereafter referred to as ‘the survey team’.</p>

March 8th	<p>ActionAid, VBLI Team & Footwear Association meet Ngoc Ha Factory management ActionAid presented the planned process and a draft of the questionnaire for approval. The factory management agreed to the pilot being carried out, approved the questionnaire and gave the ActionAid and VBLI staff a tour of the factory.</p>
March 12th	<p>The survey team carries out questionnaire survey at Ngoc Ha factory The two Vietnamese members of the survey team (1 ActionAid and 1 SCUUK) took the questionnaires to the factory where they were completed by 51 workers (27 women, 23 men and 1 unspecified) representing 5% of the total factory workforce).</p> <p>The survey team discussed further with the factory management, arrangements for the group discussions.</p> <p>VBLI Project Assistant tabulates data from questionnaires</p> <p>Survey team review lessons learnt through the questionnaire process</p>
March 13th – 14th	<p>Survey Team prepares for group interviews with workers The survey team spent two days designing the group interviews; Analysing the results of the questionnaires and identifying key issues to be explored, producing a framework for the discussions, selecting appropriate participatory tools, and providing training and practice in applying these tools. (See Appendix III)</p>
March 15th – 16th	<p>The survey team run group discussions with factory workers The two Vietnamese members of the survey team facilitated group discussions, two female members of ActionAid staff acted as note-takers. A total of 49 workers, representing approximately 5% of the total number of workers were interviewed in six groups over one and a half days. The composition of the groups was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x groups of 8 people (all women) • 2 x group of 8 people (6 women and 2 men) • 1 x group with 9 people (3 women and 6 men)
March 16th	<p>Review of methodology and lessons learnt The survey team (including notetakers) met directly after completing the interviews to review the logistics and methodology of the pilot and to draw out the lessons learnt.</p> <p>Notetakers type up the content of the 6 group interviews</p>
March 19th – 26th	<p>ActionAid produce reports The ActionAid survey team members produced two reports. One, in Vietnamese, that provides details of the findings from the questionnaires and interviews at Ngoc Ha Factory and this report that details the methodology and lessons learnt.</p>

The two final steps in the process: feedback to Ngoc Ha workers and management and presentation of the report to the VBLI participating organisations, had not taken place at the time of finalising this report, but are scheduled for April 2001.

III Lessons Learnt

Specific lessons on the two phases of the process are documented in detail in Appendix II (on the questionnaire) and Appendix IV (on the interviews with workers). However, the overall process of the pilot survey generated a number of lessons, many of which will be generic to any similar process, which are summarised briefly below.

- The philosophy behind participatory methods is to encourage people to analyse their situation so that they can take action. Special attention is needed to ensure that this can be achieved within a factory setting (particularly with regard to understanding the scope for worker action and the necessity for sufficient time and for a comfortable and confidential environment for respondents).
- Buy-in by the factory management and their active involvement in the consultation preparation is essential for ensuring that the workers are given the time, space and confidence, to voice their views openly. Without this commitment from management the validity of the information provided by the workers may be questionable.
- Stakeholder groups and their specific roles in the process need to be discussed and agreed. For example managers need to ensure buy-in from other managers and supervisors, as well as ensuring that the survey is scheduled at an appropriate time to ensure people can participate fully and actively without loss of earnings or feeling under pressure of time.
- It is important to ensure there is a commitment to respond to the issues raised. This is crucial to ensure the best use (and respect) of people's time and views but is also important in preventing people becoming cynical about giving information through finding that nothing happens as a result.
- The survey team needs to be familiar with the context, conditions and people with whom they are working, to ensure that all aspects of the consultation are appropriate and useful. Significant time in the factory, during the preparation phase, is necessary to ensure this.
- The consultation process and methodology need to be flexible and the survey team skilled in adapting it, to ensure the maximum benefit is derived from each interaction. What works with one individual or group does not necessarily work in the same way with others.
- Composition of the groups being interviewed (e.g. by sex, level of responsibility etc) is crucial to preventing domination by individuals and ensuring active participation of all.
- One-to one interviews (with a few people), to clarify and provide more depth on what the burning issues in the factory are, for whom, why etc., would be a useful way of eliciting from people their concerns in more detail.
- Structured time for reflection, learning and modification by the team needs to be structured and built into every process from the start.
- All methods should be tested on a small pre-pilot test group before going live.

IV Conclusion

Since this was a pilot project, the process of the survey (what we did, how it worked, what we learnt) was as much a focus as the results themselves. In that respect it was successful since it generated a huge number of valuable lessons on how the process could be improved. The lessons detailed in this report will be built into the model for future consultations with factory workers, as well as potentially influencing the way other parts of the VBLI project are designed and implemented.

In order to expand the scope and impact of the VBLI, and to promote sustainability, it is anticipated that during the next phase of the project (based on the experience of this pilot), ActionAid will provide training on how to carry out such consultations. Individuals from other participating organisations (e.g. the Footwear Association, interested government agencies, other NGOs and factories themselves) will be invited to attend the training. It is hoped that these people/organisations will then be able to take this work further.

It was the necessity of designing a participatory process that could be scaled-up in this way that presented the greatest challenge to the survey team. How to design a participatory consultation process able to generate a sufficient volume and quality of information, at the same time as remaining simple, quick and cheap enough for others to want to replicate. Pilot studies invariably take a significant amount of time and resources since they involve the design, testing and modification of a model. However, we hope that the model presented here proves simple and clear enough for others to use and anticipate that any subsequent worker consultations will take significantly less resources (time and money). However, in order to assess the longer-term success of this pilot, it will be important to monitor these factors during the next round of consultations, to ensure that this is the case.

We have attempted in this report to capture a framework for consultations that provides factory workers with an opportunity to voice their views and concerns on health and safety. We hope this will contribute to improved conditions for workers in footwear factories across Vietnam.

Appendix I: Questionnaire on Health and Safety in the Factory

Questionnaire on Health and Safety

This questionnaire is part of a consultation process that aims to understand your perceptions of health and safety in the factory, your concerns and suggestions for improvements. These views will be collected together, documented and presented to the management to assist them in understanding your needs and priorities. The management has helped to select a random selection of respondents for this survey, which includes you. This questionnaire will remain completely anonymous. Please answer questions as frankly as possible, it is only with accurate information that this survey can contribute to making positive changes in the factory.

Name of factory

What is your specific job in the factory.....

Sex: Male/Female.....

Age.....

Number of years working in the factory.....

Below are a series of multiple choice questions. For each question, please mark with a tick (✓) in the left margin, the answer you wish to select. Unless specifically stated please select only one answer for each question. Where further information is requested please write in the space indicated by the dotted lines.

Example:

Do you work at the Ngoc Ha Shoe Factory?

- ✓ a) Yes (if yes in what part of the factory.....)
- b) No

General H&S Issues

1. How satisfied are you that your workplace is safe?

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Unsatisfied

2. Which of the following (if any) make you feel unsafe at work? (Please tick as many answers as apply)

- a) Dusty/polluted Air
- b) Equipment/machines
- c) Chemicals

- d) Access to emergency exits
- e) Exhaustion
- f) Co-workers/management
- g) Other, (please specify.....)

3. Are there factory rules and procedures regarding occupational health and safety?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

4. Do the management ask for your views on the policies and procedures regarding health and safety?

- a) Always
- b) Usually
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely/Never

5. Are there people specifically responsible for health and safety in the factory?

- a) Yes (if yes what level of people management/supervisor/worker/other
- b) No
- c) Don't know

6. If you see a health and safety hazard in your workplace, and are concerned, do you report it?

- a) Always (who do you report it to.....)
- b) Sometimes (who do you report it to.....)
- c) Never

7. Are workers penalized for breaking health and safety rules?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Never

Chemicals

8. Do you know the names of the chemicals you are working with?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with any chemicals in my job

9. Which of the following information is clearly displayed, in Vietnamese, where chemicals are in use? (please tick as many answers as apply):

- a) Information on chemical health hazards
- b) Information on chemical handling procedures
- c) Instructions on what to do if a worker is accidentally over exposed to the chemical
- d) Instructions on what to do in the case of a chemical spill
- e) Instructions on what to do in the case of a chemical fire
- f) I do not come into contact with any chemicals in my work

10. Is the information on chemicals you are provided with easy to understand?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) No information is provided
- d) I do not come into contact with chemicals in any part of my job

11. Do you feel the way chemicals are transported round the factory poses any risks to your health and safety?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with chemicals in any part of my job.

12. Are chemical waste containers that are empty?

- a) Reused by workers or the local community
- b) Reused in the factory
- c) Disposed of
- d) Disposed of and then reused by workers or the local community
- e) Other (please specify.....)
- f) Don't know

13. Were you trained in how to work safely with chemicals when you joined the factory?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with chemicals in any part of my work

14. Have you received training in chemical safety procedures since?

- a) Yes
- b) No

15. Have you been trained in what to do if there is a chemical spill?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with chemicals in any part of my work

16. Are there washing facilities close-by for if you accidentally get chemicals on your skin or in your eyes?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

17. Do workers who are ill (as a result of chemicals) or who are pregnant stop working in an area with chemicals?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Machines

18. Did you receive training on how to use the machines safely when you joined the factory?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with machines in any part of my work

19. Have you received any training since then on how to use the machines safely?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with machines in any part of my work.

20. Have you received training on what to do with machines you work with in case of an accident?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with machines in any part of my work.

21. Are the machines you work with fitted with sufficient guards and emergency stoppage facilities to prevent accidents?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not come into contact with machines in any part of my work.

22. Are the machines you work with regularly checked and well maintained and repaired?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Others

23. Do you get enough time to rest away from intense heat during your work?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) My job does not expose me to intense heat

24. Is drinking water freely available in the factory?

- a) Yes
- b) No

25. Are you able to stop to get water as often as you need it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

26. Do you find the ventilation system in the factory is satisfactory to protect your health?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Protective Clothing

27. Do you wear any special clothing/equipment to protect yourself from hazards?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) My job does not exposure me to any chemicals or machines that can be hazardous

28. Has the factory provided you with this protective clothing/equipment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

29. Is protective clothing/equipment maintained, repaired and replaced frequently enough?

- a) Yes
- b) No

30. Do you feel that the protective clothing/equipment you wear adequately protects you against hazards at work?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Fire and other Emergency Evacuation

31. Does the factory have procedures on how to get out/ evacuate the factory in the case of a fire or other emergency?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

32. How many times in the past year have you taken part in an emergency evacuation practice in the factory?

- a) More than twice
- b) Once or twice
- c) Never

33. Are there fire extinguishers close to your work area?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

34. Are the fire extinguishers easily accessible?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

35. Have you been trained in how to use the fire extinguishers to put out a fire?

- a) Yes
- b) No

36. Is there an emergency exit door close to your work area?

- a) Yes

- b) No
- c) Don't know

37. Are the emergency doors locked?

- a) Yes (if yes why are they locked...)
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Accidents & First Aid

38. Have you ever had an accident at work?

- a) Yes (if yes what was it caused by.....)
- b) No

39. Do workers receive compensation if they are injured during an accident at work?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

40. Are there people in all areas of the factory, specifically trained in First Aid?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

41. Are there people in all areas of the factory, specifically responsible for First Aid?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Health and Health Services

42. As a result of your work, have you had any of the following symptoms more than 3 times during the last 3 months? (please tick as many answers as apply)

- a) Weakness/Fatigue
- b) Head ache
- c) Blurred vision
- d) Respiratory problems
- e) Stomach pain
- f) Frequent cold
- g) Digestive disorder/Diarrhea
- h) Nausea
- i) Skin problems/Rashes
- j) Dizziness
- k) Hearing problem
- l) Back ache
- m) Migraine
- n) Other, please specify.....

43. Are there health services available at the factory?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

44. Is the treatment you receive at the factory clinic?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very good
- c) Good
- d) Adequate
- e) Poor
- f) I have never been to the factory clinic

45. If you are ill as a result of your work which of the following places are you most likely to go to for medical advice/services?

- a) factory clinic
- b) commune/district health post
- c) pharmacy
- d) traditional medicine doctor

Please write below any suggestions you have for how health and safety could be improved in the factory or any areas of health and safety that we have not mentioned above?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION
WE WILL REPORT BACK TO YOU ON THE OVERALL FINDINGS OF THIS SURVEY**

Appendix II The Questionnaire – Background & Lessons Learnt

A translation of the questionnaire used is provided in Appendix I.

II.1 Design

During the formulation of the questionnaire it was agreed a multiple choice questionnaire would be the simplest and quickest way of getting the core information needed to inform the follow-up discussions with groups of workers. The questionnaire focused on health and safety issues in the factory. Care was taken to explain clearly on the questionnaire how many answers could be selected for each question. The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into Vietnamese. (See Appendix I).

II.2 Sample

The sample size for the questionnaire was 5% of the total workforce of the factory (51 workers from a total of approximately 1,000). The composition of the respondents was 27 women, 23 men and 1 who did not specify their sex. The split between men and women does not reflect the composition of the workforce, which is 80% female, but was a result of trying to capture the perspectives of workers in all the different parts of the factory. Although the percentage of men in the factory is lower, many of them work in areas of the factory staffed by men only (e.g. transporting chemicals, working with heavy machines), but which it was felt it was important to include in the survey.

The survey team had emphasized the need for a random selection, but with proportional representation of the different areas/jobs (and therefore exposure to the different hazards) in the factory. However, in the event the management/supervisors selected the workers to participate, based on whom they were able to release from each of the different parts of the production line at that particular time. In addition it was found that workers distributed the questionnaires between themselves depending on who felt they could spare the time. Although this was not 'random' in the same way as a computerised statistical programme, it was considered by the team to be sufficiently random (in that the management was not selecting workers based on who they wanted to answer the questionnaire but rather on who was available).

II.3 Completion

Two facilitators (one from ActionAid and one from Save the Children) took the questionnaires to the factory. They were taken separately, (one by the factory doctor, the other by the HR/OD Vice-Manager), to different groups of workers. Due to difficulties in workers leaving the production line, the questionnaires were distributed to 51 workers at their workstations on the production line. The survey team staff were available to the workers, while they completed the questionnaires, to answer queries and provide clarification. In a number of cases the survey team had to ask the workers the questions (while they worked) and fill in the workers answers on the questionnaires. Completing the questionnaire took anything from 20 minutes to just over an hour.

II.4 Analysis

The VBLI Project Assistant tabulated the results of the questionnaire. The survey team used these results to identify the main areas for further exploration. Another member of ActionAid Vietnam staff carried out more detailed analysis of the questionnaires using Excel.

The survey team carried out a review of the methodology used for this phase of the survey immediately after the questionnaires had been completed. Those findings are documented below.

II.5 Lessons Learnt

Use of the questionnaire generated a number of useful lessons and recommendations:

- **Need to ensure that the way selected workers are categorised (to ensure representation from each area of the factory) is clear.** A combination of factors (limited understanding by the survey team of the operation and structure of the factory, and by the factory management of the purpose of categorising people), resulted in categories which did not prove useful. In the end the categories were not considered clear/reliable enough to merit separate analysis of each category. The factory had categorised groups of workers based on the hazards they are exposed to (e.g. chemicals, dust, noise etc), however, the same hazards can be experienced by those in different jobs and the overlap between the groups was unclear.
- **A pre-test of the questionnaire would help identify areas for modification before wider distribution.** It would be useful to pre-test the questionnaire with a few people to sense-check areas for clarification or modification in advance. It emerged that certain questions once translated into Vietnamese were either unclear or confusing (e.g. questions 9 and 43).
- **Different questionnaires for different groups of people would yield more useful information.** There were challenges in devising one questionnaire to be used with people carrying out a number of different tasks/jobs and thus exposed to a number of different hazards. The shortcomings of a single questionnaire were highlighted since people selected specific answers (rather than 'Don't know'), even though it emerged they did not in fact know the subject (e.g. people that don't work with machines giving details related to working with machines). An initial attempt was made to limit the extent to which this distorted the accuracy of information, through analysing the results of each group of workers separately. However, this was abandoned due to the problems with the categories - as explained in the bullet point above.
- **Need to ensure that every list of possible answers includes one choice to cover responses that we may not have anticipated.** Certain questions did not include an option of 'other' or 'there is no information available'. This will have influenced the quality of the information gathered as where this option was not offered people may have either a) not answered or b) selected an answer anyway (even if it did not reflect reality) because instructed to do so.
- **Time for completing questionnaires needs to be flexible.** Workers completed the questionnaire at very different speeds. Those familiar with a questionnaire format took only 20 minutes while others (particularly those with lower levels of literacy) needed up to an hour. The level of explanation necessary also varied significantly from person to person.
- **Having NGO staff present to provide clarification on the questionnaire is useful.** Two members of the survey team were present while workers completed the questionnaire. They

answered questions and provided explanation and were also able to gather incidental information (through observation and comments made by the workers). In addition it was felt that having NGO staff present reduced the chances of one person telling others what the answer 'should' be.

- **Completing the questionnaires outside the factory would produce more open responses.** While it was hoped that questionnaires could be completed outside the factory (or at least in a separate and private room in the factory), a number of factors (e.g. workers homes are far apart, length of shifts, production deadlines, space in the factory etc) prevented this happening. The questionnaires were therefore completed at the workstations in the factory. Some workers were clearly anxious about being honest and open on their response since supervisors, the health worker and the management were close-by.
- **Management providing encouragement to the workers would promote more open responses.** While the factory management was keen to participate in the pilot, workers needed more reassurance that their active and open participation was encouraged. Several workers expressed concern that commenting on their workplace to outsiders could lead to repercussions and/or jeopardize their job.
- **Communication between factory management and supervisors is crucial.** While the factory management was very willing to participate in the pilot, again this had not been adequately communicated to the supervisors, who sometimes refused to release staff to complete the questionnaire. Either the management or the survey team needs to take the time to fully communicate the purpose and requirements of the survey to the supervisors.
- **Ensuring those who participate do not lose earnings would increase cooperation from supervisors and active and enthusiastic participation by workers.** Although the survey team had understood that there would be no loss of earnings for participating workers, once the survey was underway it emerged that this was not in fact the case. Workers are paid based on the production output of their team. Supervisors were therefore reluctant to release workers, and in many cases workers were also reluctant to be released, as this would reduce the production output of the team and ultimately their pay.
- **Factory management need to be included much more in the preparation:** Sufficient time needs to be set aside to prepare for the questionnaire phase with the factory. Although it was felt that the factory management understood the project and purpose of the questionnaire, this had not been communicated clearly enough to the supervisors and workers.

Appendix III: Framework for Interviews with Workers

Analysis of the questionnaire revealed the following as areas for further exploration during the group interviews:

Hazard Prevention/Worker Protection

- Provision, knowledge, use, access, and views on – protective facilities (equipment/clothing etc)
- Awareness, knowledge, involvement, enforcement and monitoring of H&S regulations, procedures and responsibilities
- Quality and effectiveness of training and information provision

Impact of hazards on health and safety

- Nature of hazards, impact on health

Health and Safety Services

- Provision, knowledge, use, access, quality, entitlements and views on First Aid, Clinic, Eyewash and drinking water

The Following Framework was developed over the two day design phase:

III.1 Define the area, locate and assess the problems

What do we need to know?	What tools will we use?
1.1 Location and access to fire extinguishers, emergency exits 1.2 Location and access to information on hazards/H&S etc 1.3 Location and access to first aid kits, eyewash facilities, drinking water etc 1.4 Location of health centre/clinic 1.5 Location of people responsible for First Aid, fire fighting, etc 1.6 Location of hazards: chemicals, heat, dust etc 1.7 Locations requiring protective facilities/equipment/clothing	1.1-1.7 Mapping & Transect walk (if necessary and feasible)

III.2 Assess the situation and identify workers' needs

What do we need to know?	What tools will we use?
2.1 Provision, use, effectiveness & enforcement of protective facilities- guards/clothing etc	2.1 – 2.4 Group discussion
2.2 Knowledge and use of fire extinguishers, exit routes etc	
2.3 Accident and emergency procedures (fire, chemical spill etc)	
2.4 Reporting procedures, follow-up	
2.5 Frequency, quality and effectiveness of training	2.5 Timeline
2.6 The impact on health of hazards identified in section 1.6	2.6 Group list exercise
2.7 The most serious hazards (and reasons why)	2.7 Pairwise-ranking
2.8 Seasonality of hazards (if any)	2.8 Seasonal calendar
2.9 Provision, access, use and effectiveness of services and their respective responsible persons (clinic, First Aid, Eyewash etc)	2.9 Group Discussion

Suggestions/Recommendations on each of the above will be elicited at the end of the discussion on each point

III.3 Resources Required

Staff	Materials
2x facilitators/report writers (1 man, 1 woman) 2 x note-takers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x A0 Flip Charts • 20 x Marker Pens (different colours) • 2 x Rolls of Masking tape • Sweets (for ranking exercise)

Appendix IV Interviews with Workers – Background & Lessons Learnt

IV.1 Design

The group interviews with workers were designed to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the workers on health and safety in the factory. The survey team members spent two days designing the process for the group interviews. The first stage was to look at the data generated by the questionnaires to identify the emerging issues. Based on this a framework for the group discussions was drawn up and the appropriate participatory tools and techniques selected. The final session of the design phase included refresher training and practice in applying these tools and techniques. (See Appendix III for details of the methodology and tools for each section).

IV.2 Sample

A total of 49 workers, representing approximately 5% of the total number of workers (1,000) were interviewed in six groups. The composition of the groups was as follows:

- 3 x groups of 8 people (all women)
- 2 x group of 8 people (6 women and 2 men)
- 1 x group with 9 people (3 women and 6 men)

The sample included people representing all the different jobs carried out by workers in the factory. It included some who had joined two weeks previously and others who had been working there for up to 12 years. Two of the all female groups consisted of women all carrying out the same job while the remaining groups had a mixture of people with different jobs.

The survey team requested a random sample of workers (with representation for the various jobs/work areas), selected from those who had not completed the questionnaire. As above in the questionnaire phase, the management/supervisors selected the workers to participate, based on whom they were able to release from the production line at that particular time. In the event approximately 10% of those in the group interviews had also completed the questionnaire.

IV.3 Implementation

The two survey team members ran groups concurrently and between them facilitated six group interviews, over one and a half days. In both cases the first group interview took two hours with all subsequent groups taking around 1 hour and 45 minutes. Two ActionAid staff members acted as note-takers for the groups.

IV.4 Analysis

As well as the flip charts produced during the group interviews, notes of all the group sessions were typed up directly after the final interviews by the notetakers. The facilitators also typed up their own notes of the interviews. One member of ActionAid staff then analysed all the documented information (from both the interviews and questionnaires) and consolidated the findings in one report.

The survey team reviewed the effectiveness of the methodology immediately following the group interviews. The findings from that methodology review are documented below.

IV.5 Lessons Learnt

The group interviews generated a number of useful lessons and recommendations:

- **Carrying out the consultation in the workers' living area and outside working hours proved unfeasible.** The survey team felt that the most comfortable environment in which to elicit workers opinions would be outside of their working area and outside of working hours. Despite the insistence of the factory management that the consultation should take place in the factory, in the event it emerged that the original plan would have been unfeasible anyway. The workers live far apart from one another, in many cases a long way from the factory (travelling up to 2 hours to get to work). Most have no spare time outside of work (with 12 hour shifts and 4 hours travel a day).
- **Having sufficient and appropriate space in which to hold the interviews is important.** The team had seen in advance, the meeting room they were told could be used for the interviews. Although since it was located in the factory it was not considered ideal, it was at least found to be of adequate size. However, in the event this room was needed for other meetings and the team had to switch between different rooms, some of which were too small, too noisy or not private enough.
- **Random sampling can prove problematic in a commercial setting.** The survey team had emphasized the need for random sampling and asked to make the selection themselves. However, due to production deadlines the management selected the sample based on who could be released from the production line at the time of the consultations. In the event the selection was considered to be sufficiently random (in that the management was not selecting specific workers based on those whose views they wanted the team to hear). However it was clearly not as random as if a computerised statistical programme had been used to make the selection.
- **Having single sex groups is preferable in generating more active participation of all:** In mixed groups of men and women the women participated less actively than in groups of just women.
- **Groups consisting of people with the same level of responsibility would lead to more open discussion:** In one group a team leader was interviewed together with the regular workers. This resulted in domination by the group leader and a reluctance to be open by the other workers. If team leaders are to be interviewed, this should be done separately from the regular worker groups, to avoid inevitable power dynamics. To ensure the integrity of the groupings, it is essential for the survey team to take time to understand the different positions of responsibility in the factory. In this case the survey team were unaware of the group leader position (also workers but with a position of higher power and responsibility), and had not therefore specifically stated that these people should be excluded from the groups of regular workers interviewed.
- **Having a mixture of groups with workers from the same job and others with workers from different jobs proved effective:** Two groups in the sample contained only workers with the task of stitching, while the rest of the groups included people from different jobs. The mixed groups were effective in providing an overview of the situation while the single job groups provided an opportunity to explore certain issues in greater depth.

- **It is good to have a balance between people who have been in the factory for many years with those who have recently arrived.** Workers who have worked longer in the factory were able to give a historical perspective. However, it was also useful to understand from those who had joined more recently what information and training they had received when starting work (which many others were unable to recall clearly).
- **Need to take care not to let those who have been in the factory longer dominating discussion.** In mixed groups it was difficult to prevent those who had been with the factory longest dominating the discussion (particularly during the prioritisation exercise). It was useful for the facilitators to know how long each worker had been with the factory so they could encourage newcomers to speak and ensure all participants had an opportunity to voice their opinions.
- **Introductions and icebreakers should be built into the process.** In the first groups the facilitators had some difficulty opening the discussions and encouraging people to participate actively. It was felt that spending ten minutes on introductions and an icebreaker, to create a friendly atmosphere and establish trust among the group, would be a beneficial part of the process.
- **It can be helpful to begin group interviews with simple closed questions.** In some groups, particularly those with a high proportion of people that were either new to the factory or from other provinces, starting the interviews with some simple closed questions and providing examples was found necessary to build people's confidence.
- **Need to ensure that the management understands the need for confidential consultations.** Different members of the factory management walked in and out of the rooms during the interviews (including in one instance taking down the names of those being interviewed). This clearly affected the quality and openness of discussion and the confidence and comfort of those being interviewed.
- **The culture of a workplace influences the openness of the response.** Workers who believe the factory management is open, are more likely to be candid in their response than those who perceive the management as less open.
- **It is important that the methodology is flexible and that facilitators are capable of making quick adjustments.** In a number of cases the facilitators found they had to either drop or modify a particular exercise or tool they had intended to use. For example the matrix proved too complicated for some groups and had to be adapted. The timeline was also difficult for those who could not remember when things had happened and/or confused training with receiving information (the timeline exercise was dropped with the group with the longest serving workers and that with those who had joined most recently). In all groups it was found expedient to have a group discussion rather than use a seasonal calendar. Fortunately the way the sessions had been designed enabled the facilitators to do this without compromising the information obtained or disrupting the process.
- **It is useful to have notetakers who understand the issues involved.** In certain cases note taking was hampered by the use of technical language that the notetakers were unfamiliar with. Ideally notetakers familiar with the terminology would be used.
- **Care needs to be taken not to raise unrealistic expectations, particularly in a pilot.** While the fact that this was a pilot (in which the methodology was being studied as much as the information gained from workers) had been communicated to management, again it had not been sufficiently

explained to the workers (either by the management or the survey team). The expectations of workers had therefore been inappropriately raised and they presumed that the consultation would be followed by improvements to their workplace. This was compounded by the fact that another INGO had previously carried out a survey which was followed by a long training project in the factory, workers therefore presumed the same process would follow.

- **Timing of the consultations needs to be carefully planned.** Although March is not normally a busy time, the factory had a contract deadline at the end of the week in which the survey took place. The pressure the management and workers were under was evident to the survey team. Had the survey been carried out during a less busy period both management and workers would have been more relaxed about the time needed to carry out such a survey.
- **The time of year of carrying out the survey needs to be considered when analysing results.** A number of workers mentioned that hazardous factors are influenced by the time of year (e.g. problems with heat in the summer, light during the winter). It is therefore important to bear in mind the timing of the survey when looking at the results.
- **Interviews should ideally be spread over several days.** Spreading interviews out over several days would reduce disruption to production. Having six group interviews in a day and a half was difficult for the factory to manage at the same time as trying to meet an order deadline. Furthermore, the survey team felt that their own observations and learning would have been enhanced by having time to reflect after each session, as opposed to reflecting together on all the groups at the end of the exercise (at which point it was difficult to recall the specifics of each).
- **In-depth interviews would be useful to complement the questionnaire and group interviews.** The survey team felt that in-depth interviews, with representatives from each of the different areas of the factory, would have been useful to probe more deeply into particular problems and cross-check the information gleaned during the questionnaire and worker interview exercises.
- **Negotiating time in a factory context is more difficult than in a rural setting.** One of the major challenges for the survey team was negotiating time with the management and workers, both in advance and during the survey. The atmosphere (charged with a sense of urgency) reflected the fact that participation in the exercise had a clear financial cost both to the workers and the management.
- **Facilitators need patience.** The facilitators found that they required a lot of time and patience, not just in carrying out the interviews, but in dealing with negotiations, and checks by the management, some of whom appeared to remain wary of the process.
- **The benefit to the workers of having participated in the exercise was not evident.** The workers will benefit (by default), from the exercise, if the management addresses the issues they raised. However the philosophy behind participatory methods is to encourage people to analyse their situation so that they can take action. It is debatable as to whether the workers themselves reaped this benefit from participating in the exercise. It was felt that these benefits could be better secured by ensuring that: a) the exercise is carried out a time when the factory is less busy (and therefore more time can be dedicated to the process) and b) workers' suffer no financial loss as a result of participating and are therefore able to focus on the exercise rather than worrying about needing/wanting to get back to the production line.