



Impressions from the International Scientific Conference and Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety in Formal and Informal Mining

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On behalf of the ICOH scientific committee on Mining Occupational Safety and Health, and the Nordic Institute for Advanced Training in Occupational Health (NIVA), we would like to express our most sincere gratitude to all of you who participated in the conference and workshop held in Odense, Denmark the past August. We are very thankful with those who were involved in the planning and celebrating of the activities as well as the presenters of orals and posters and the keynote speakers. We also acknowledge all the practical support from the Clinic of Occupational Medicine at Odense University Hospital and the Danish National Research Centre for the Working Environment (NFA). We also want to thank the different abstract reviewers for their contribution to the scientific program.

Apart from these, the following collaborators and co-sponsors helped with the dissemination of information about the event, with their active participation in the event or with donations that allowed the participation of delegates from low- and middle-income countries: Research University of Southern Denmark (SDU), Greenland Center for Health Research, Danish Society for Occupational and Environmental Medicine (DASAM), Department of Pulmonary Medicine Odense University Hospital, Workplace Health without Borders (WHWB), the Danish NGO Diálogos, ICOH SC Occupational Health and Development, ICOH SC Industrial Hygiene, and ICOH SC Small-Scale Enterprises and the Informal Sector and the International Social Security Agency (ISSA).

Thirty-two percent of the participants answered to the post-conference evaluation. We received very positive feedback as well as useful suggestions to be considered during the organization of a future MinOSH conference. The evaluation is available at our MinOSH webpage (www.ich-minosh.com).

The post-conference evaluation allows us to conclude that the event was successful. We reached around 100 participants from 26 different countries with about half of the participants coming from middle- or low-income countries. This was partly possible due to the special scholarships granted to the best abstracts from presenters from low- and middle-income countries as well as the diverse and relevant topics included in the scientific program. Also, the combination of a conference and workshop might have contributed to the high interest and number of participants in both events.

Participants had many diverse backgrounds such as engineers, researchers, doctors, geologists, anthropologists, doctoral students, miners and officers and came from different countries worldwide, all enriching the presentations and discussions. Moreover, the participation of artisanal and small-scale gold miners who did a wonderful practical demonstration on how gold is washed and concentrated by smelting without the use of mercury, is something that has hardly been part of such an event ever before.



During the conference, there were outstanding presentations not only from the keynote speakers but also from the oral and poster sessions. Topics included a wide variety of exposures (e.g. dust, mercury, among others) and diseases (e.g. pneumoconiosis, silicosis, cancer, hearing loss, poisonings, developmental impairment of children, accidents, among others) related to mining activities at small and large scale and both at a local and global level. Also, the role of working unions and workers' representations and ethics in relation to health examinations were discussed. Both theoretical and practical lectures were given. All the abstracts presented at the conference can be found in the conference book available in our webpage <http://icoh-minosh.com/>. Videos of the keynotes' presentations are also available there.

There were possibilities for networking during the event, and we are sure many shared ideas and contacts. If you need contact information from someone, do not hesitate to contact us at minosh.icoh@gmail.com.

Some participants became MinOSH members during and right after the conference. If you also want to become a MinOSH member, please visit: <http://icoh-minosh.com>. If you want to become an ICOH member, please visit: <http://www.icohweb.org/>.

In conclusion, this conference and workshop showed the fruitful result of an interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange of knowledge and ideas from many different countries.

Thank you all and see you in the next MinOSH conference in the future!

