



Safety & HR Specialist

# **DEALING WITH CHALLENGES OF PROTECTING WORKERS FROM OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH HAZARDS**

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KEMPISKI HOTEL, DECEMBER 2022, NAIROBI.**



# SESSION OUTLINE

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Defining Occupational health hazards

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Differentiating safety and health hazards

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Kenya occupational health hazards management case study-October to November 2022

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Analysis of the challenges

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Dealing with the challenges

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Conclusion and way forward

# INTRODUCTION

- Occupational Health Hazard (OHH) is anything which when not well taken care of result in illness.
- Be definition, health is a state of well being not only physical but mentally too.
- Ideally, OHH impacts the internal system which may manifest internally and or externally.
- ILO indicates that of the world's 2.7 billion workers about 2 million deaths are attributable to occupational diseases and injuries and these are because of OHH
- The damage is acute in the area of safety, chronic in the area of occupational health and persistent in the case of environment.
- Unfortunately people do not react to the damage that they cant immediately see

# DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SAFETY AND HEALTH HAZARDS



## OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY HAZARDS

- Effect to individual is by contact
- An obvious/common danger identified by sight, touch, hearing etc
- Impact is immediate=accident
- Knowledge is common, easily understood
- Controls of hazards can easily be done

## OCCUPATIONAL HH

- Effect to individual is by exposure
- Often hidden danger identified by tasting, testing, analysis, knowledge e.t.c
- Impact builds slowly= ill-health
- Knowledge is lagging e.g what triggers allergic reaction
- Controls rely on software or behavioral safe person

# OHH AWARENESS-KENYA CASE STUDY..



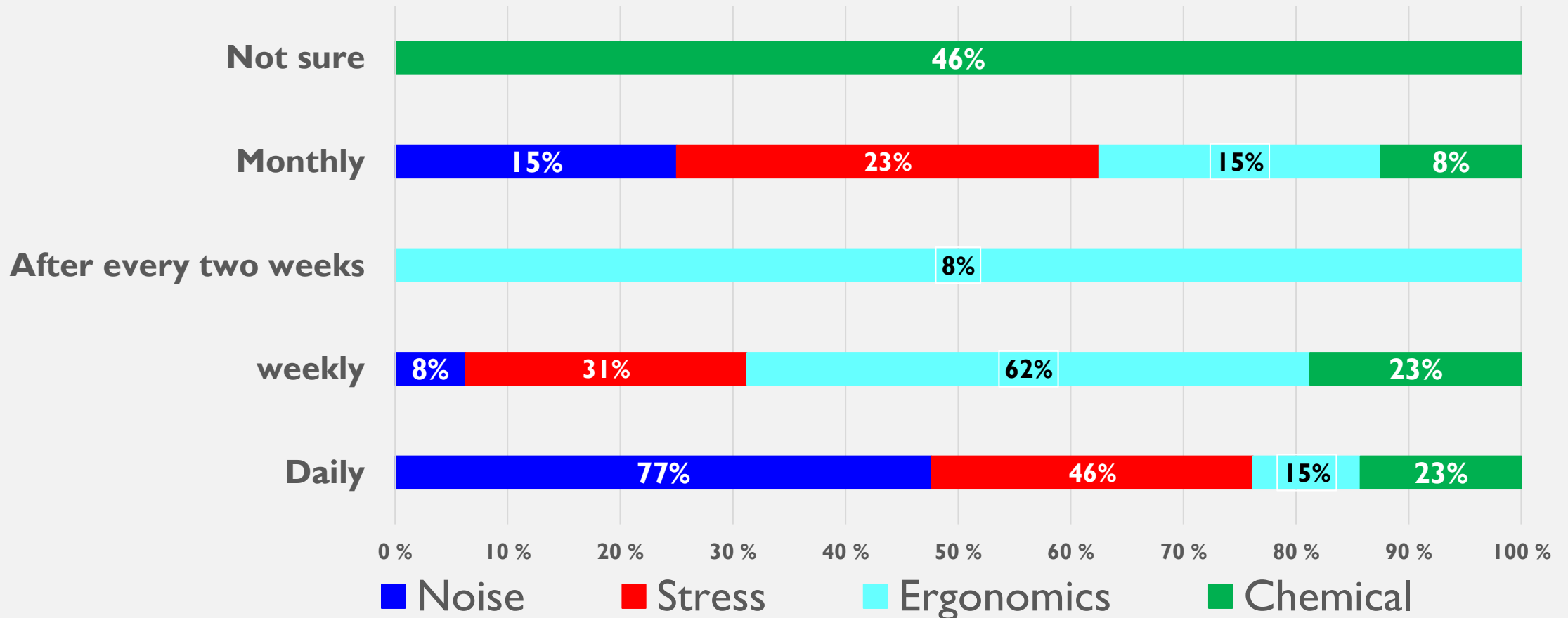
- A study conducted between October and November 2022 with 13 OSH practitioners in private sectors being the correspondents. This study did not consider health sector professional.
- Among the most common OHH I considered included:
  - a) Noise (Physical)
  - b) Stress (Psychological)
  - c) Ergonomics and
  - d) Chemical

# OHH AWARENESS-KENYA CASE STUDY..

- The study considered the following areas:
  - a) Frequency of interaction with OHH
  - b) Workers' awareness of OHH
  - c) Information content of local legislation to OHH
  - d) Organization program for the promotion of workers health to OHH
  - e) OHH Risk assessment

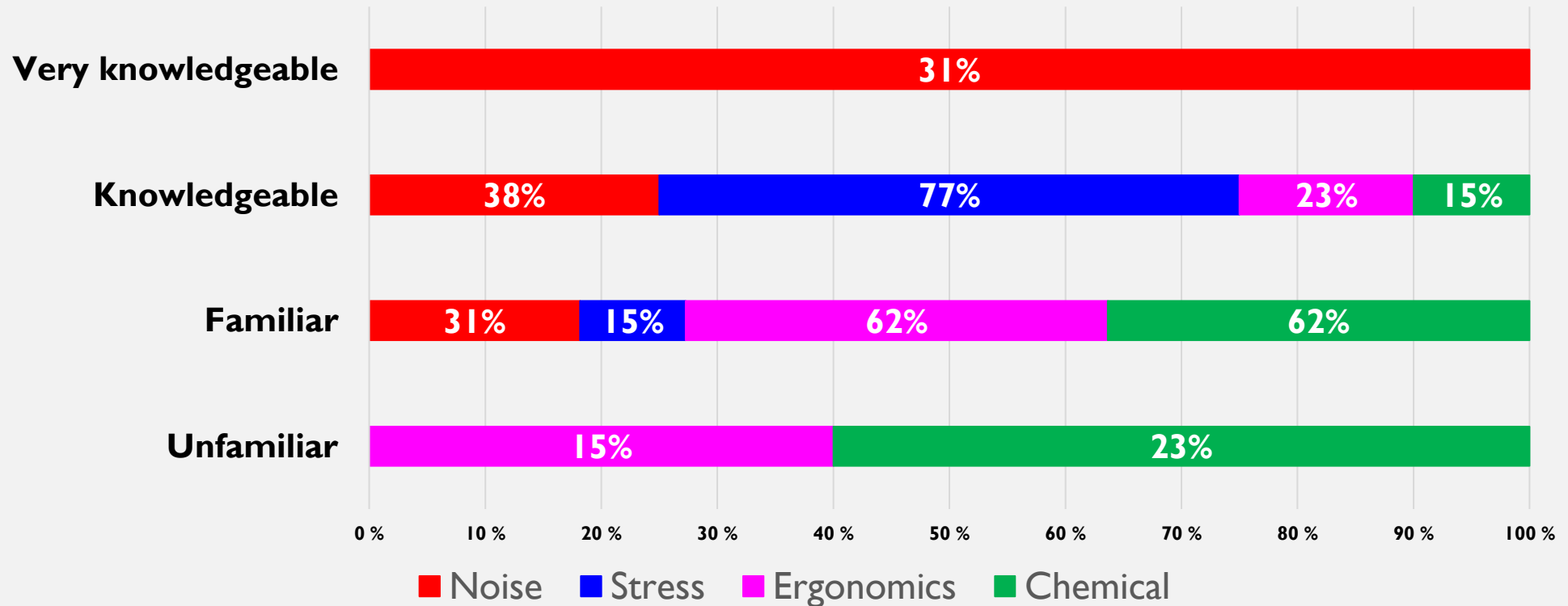
# SAFETY PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION WITH OHH AT WORKPLACE.

## Interaction with health hazards at workplace



# WORKERS' AWARENESS TO OHH

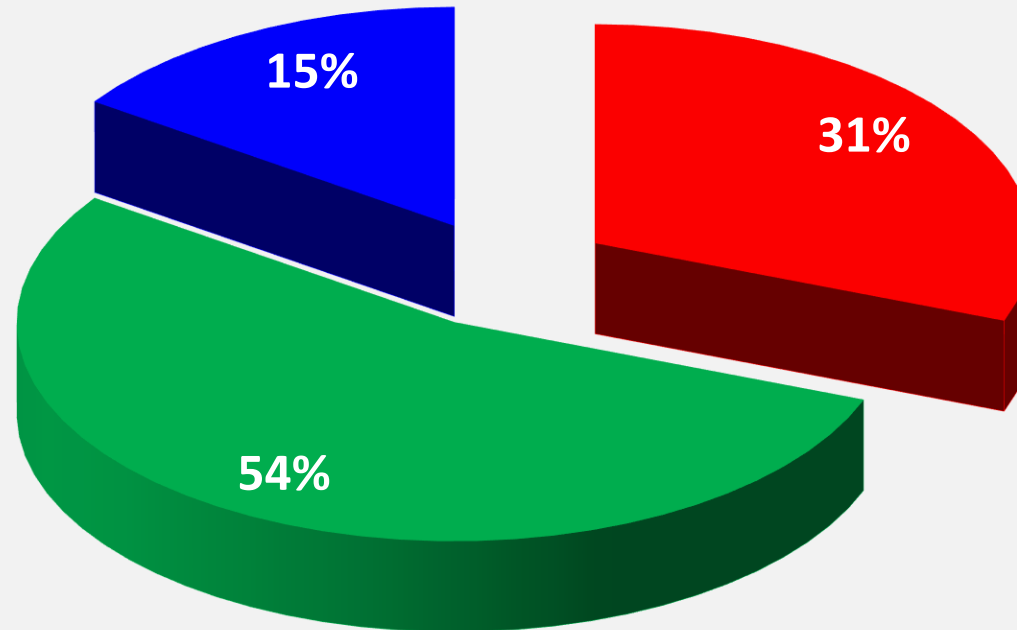
## Workers awareness to health hazards





# LEGISLATION CONTENT TO OHH

## Thoughts on local legislation dealing with health hazards

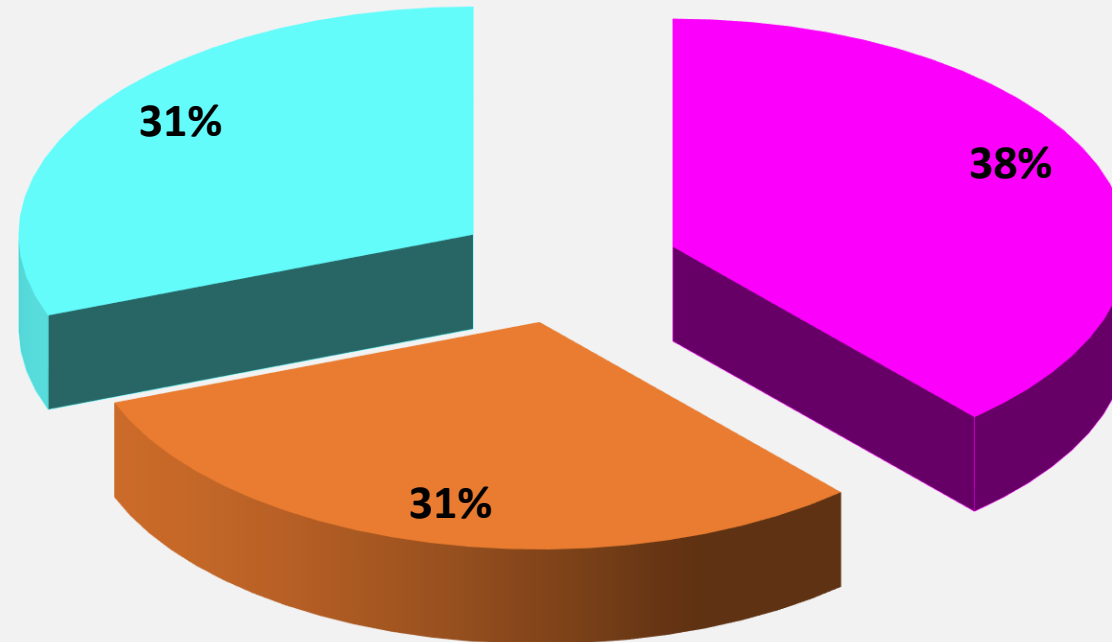


■ Scanty regulations ■ Foundational ■ Adequate ■ Robust

# ORGANIZATION HEALTH HAZARD AWARENESS PROGRAM



## Annual Occupational health hazard awareness program



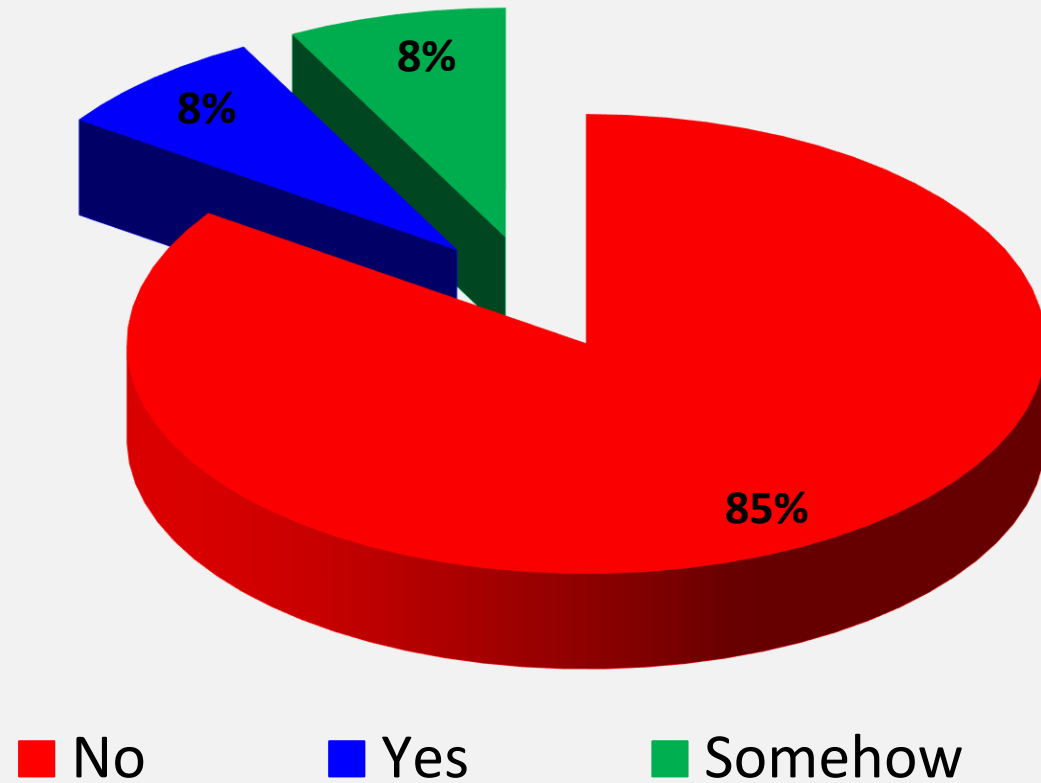
■ No

■ Yes

■ Sometimes

# ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIZATION HEALTH HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT

## Availability of Occupational health hazard risk assessment



# CHALLENGES IN DEALING WITH OHH

Challenges  
from local  
legislation

Challenges to  
Safety  
Professionals

# CHALLENGES FORM LOCAL LEGISLATION..

Foundational information with no robust information on threshold limits. For example

- *LN 60 of 2007 5(2) Where the exposure limit of a hazardous substance is not provided for in Schedule I to these Rules, it shall be the responsibility of a supplier or manufacturer of such substance to provide a provisional exposure limit.*
- *15 (2) Every employer shall ensure that workers are trained and certified by a competent person, on continuing basis in the practices and procedures to be followed for safety in the use of chemicals at work.*

# CHALLENGES FORM LOCAL LEGISLATION.

Enforcement of requirements

No content of the need of specific  
OHH Risk assessment such as COSHH

# CHALLENGES TO SAFETY PROFESSIONALS..

## Safety professional lacking adequate knowledge on Occupational Hygiene:

- Few training institutions in Occupational hygiene with no specialized courses eg noise measurements, air quality, ergonomic assessment etc
- Most courses are not generic to Kenya and so are not tailor made to handle the local occupational health hazards challenge.
- Few experts to assess, monitor and provide controls in occupational hygiene.
- Expensive gadgets for monitoring occupational hygiene
- Inadequate knowledge of proper PPE with assigned protection Factor (APF) eg for respirator
- Lack of awareness to workers due to incompetent OSH professional on the subject matter of requirements

# CHALLENGES TO SAFETY PROFESSIONALS..

## Challenges in managing health of workers

- Inadequate Occupational nursing and doctors
- Expenses/lack of proper and adequate insurance to take care of chronic condition
- Inadequate monitoring instruments in our hospitals for early detection.



# CHALLENGES TO SAFETY PROFESSIONALS.

Scanty programs/budget by safety professionals in promoting healthy lifestyle and work life balance

- No specific health risk assessment to guide on health programs at workplace
- No legislative requirement on health programs
- Operational budget constraints to run such programs in workplaces

# CONCLUSION

- Dealing with Challenges in Managing OHH will require
  - 1. Change of Leadership mindset and corporate commitment—recognize OH as a strategic enabler of sustained economic growth
  - 2. Life cycle approach to OH, investment in infrastructure, technology and management systems—Safety from inherent design
  - 3. Awareness, Education and Training
  - 4. Regulatory framework and compliance

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**THANK YOU.**

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