



**FOOD FEDERATION AND ALLIED
WORKERS UNION OF ZIMBABWE**

United we stand and Divided we fall - My responsibility your responsibility

FFAWUZ COVID-19 INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS ON THE LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE

Background

COVID-19 has impacted negatively on the Labour market leaving many out of employment. FFAWUZ as a result of the challenges faced by many workers, engaged the Ministry of Labour, National Employment Council, NSSA and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions with a view of establishing the level of compliance within the world of work. It is critical to note that representatives from the above institutions first reported at their respective workstations before joining FFAWUZ for their inspections.

The exercise was done in the following respective towns Harare Bulawayo, Kadoma, Chegutu, Chiredzi, Masvingo, Gweru, Kwekwe and Mutare targeting all companies under Food Detergents and Beverages Industry. This activity was made possible by the support from Cooperating Partner 3F and also recognizing IUF for the role they also played in the fight against the pandemic.

Methodology

FFAWUZ which organizes workers in the Food and beverages Sector, got to various sites without alerting employers nor workers, all for purposes of getting what was really obtaining on the ground. It was guided by the use of the checklist which had all the questions designed along the lines of the WHO Guidelines and own Statutory Instruments 083 of 2020. On average depending on the size of the establishment the team spent two hours at each workplace. It is important to highlight that an hour was spent on being cleared before the actual entry into the workplace.

Respondents

Since we wanted to ensure for the realization of the objectives of the integrated inspections targeted from each establishment or enterprise were focal point persons, workers committees and the Human Resources Departments to respond to the questions on page three to four.

Does your company/union have a COVID-19 management committee/team?

Does your Company have a COVID-19 management response plan (for purposes of prevention or possibility of an outbreak)?

Has your Safety Health and Environmental Policy been reviewed to include COVID-19 requirements?

Are workers /management included, immediately isolated when they show signs/symptoms of COVID-19?

Procedures for employees to immediately report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19?

Does your Company carry out COVID-19 Awareness programs?

Are communication measures on COVID-19 and OSH in Place?

Does the company have Hand washing points with soap/use of hand sanitizers?

Posters promoting hand washing

Has your company procured Thermometers for Temperature screening at all entry points (for prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals)?

Does the Company carry out Provision Routine environmental and surface cleaning and disinfection including regular wiping of work stations/frequently touched surfaces?

Has your Company promoted Maintenance of social distancing of 1-2 meters?

Has your company put in place measures to decongest the workplace/station through shift work, flexible working hours?

Does your company have a workplace isolation room or centre for confirmed COVID-19 cases?

Does your Company provide training on COVID-19 risk factors and principles of prevention of its spread and how to use the PPE correctly?

Has your Establishment Installed physical barriers, such as clear sneeze guards?

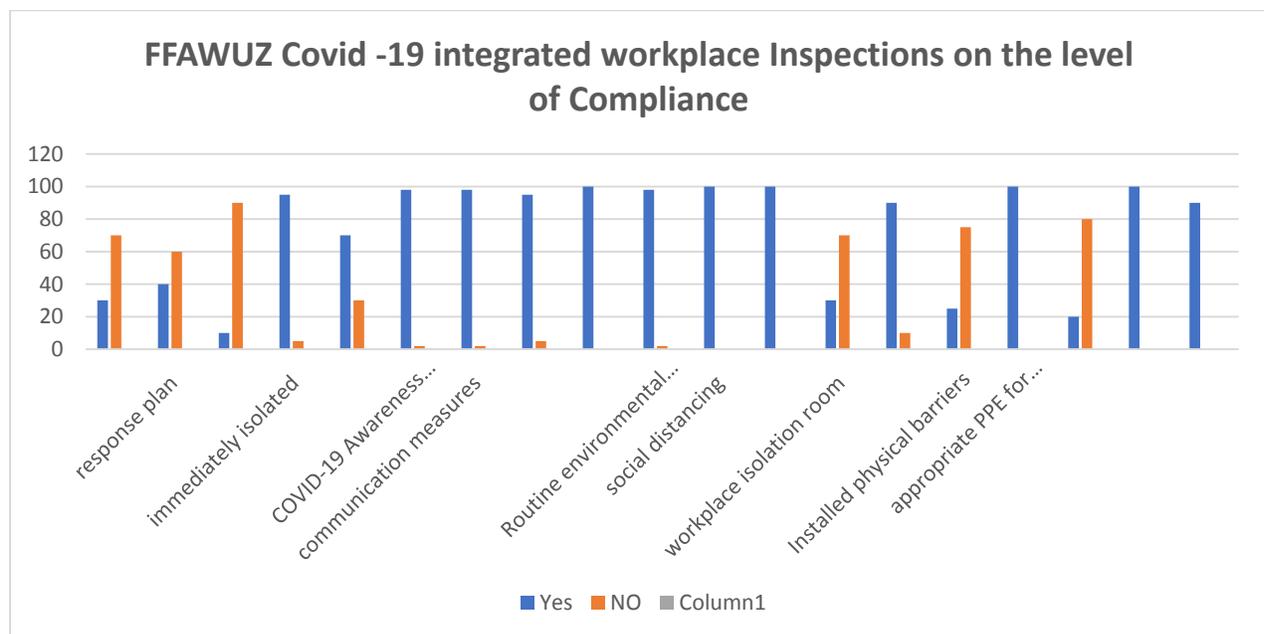
Are all the workers management included provided with appropriate PPE for COVID-19?

Does the Company have a Waste Management for COVID-19 program?

Does your company have a Focal point person or lay counsellors?

Are COVID-19 Guidelines/Instruments posted on notice boards ion of face Masks to all employees?

The Graph below is an illustration of the responses got from various work places in the Food and Allied industries. The Union was able to reach out to 51% of the companies and the exercise is ongoing.



Covid-19 management team

Thirty percent of the companies confirmed having put in place a covid 19 management team comprised of workers and management whilst seventy percent had not yet done so.

Companies that had not yet put in place such a structure simply indicated that they were in the process of doing so.

Response Plan

On response plan, sixty percent had no plan in place, whilst forty percent had developed a response plan. The companies without the plans indicated that they were still in their draft formats.

Review of the Safety Health and Environmental policy

Ninety percent of the companies had not yet reviewed their policies to include Covid-19 requirements, whilst ten percent developed addendums on covid 19 and standard operating procedures.

Immediate Isolation

Most employers ninety percent of them confirmed isolating employees, management included if they showed signs and symptoms of Covid-19 whilst ten percent did not. They informed the team that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the differences between the general symptoms related to colds and flu, though in principle they encouraged people to stay home if they developed flu like symptoms.

Reporting Procedures

Seventy percent of the establishments had reporting procedures in place whilst thirty percent did not have such in place.

Awareness Covid-19 Programs

Ninety five percent of the companies interviewed carried out awareness programs whilst five percent did not carry out workplace awareness programs as they relied on social, print and electronic media.

Communication measures

Ninety five percent had communication measures in place and only five percent did not. They justified their reasons to lack of resources as they viewed the whole role out covid -19 program quite expensive.

Hand Washing points and Provision of Sanitizers

Ninety five percent complied, but five percent did not and these were mostly upcoming companies. As a team we encouraged them to adhere to the Guidelines and the statutory instruments in place.

Temperature screening at all entry points

There was hundred percent compliance by all the Companies visited, but they expressed some of the concerns over some thermometers which at gave the same reading to every one whose temperature was taken.

Provision of Face Masks

All the companies provided their workers with face masks which were either disposable or washable as it had become mandatory that all be provided with such.

Posters promoting hand washing

There was also hundred compliance and the beauty is that most of the posters developed by FFAWUZ were posted at all the workplaces we visited and that development was viewed by the inspection team as very positive.

Routine environmental Surface cleaning and disinfection

The Inspection team as regards routine environmental cleaning and disinfection was confirmed by all companies visited this included regular wiping of the workstation frequently touched surfaces.

Decongesting the workplace

Hundred percent of the companies had decongested their work place through flexi working hours and shift work.

Isolation Room

Most companies, seventy percent did not have the isolation rooms and they were in the process of establishing such rooms. The

remaining thirty percent was not certain when they would have such isolation rooms. The inspection team took time to explain the advantages of setting up such a room.

Social Distancing

All the companies observed social distancing, including those which were still up coming.

Training on Covid-19 Pandemic

Ninety percent confirmed running training programs on covid-19 at the workplace targeting both management and employees.

Installed physical barriers such as clear sneeze guards

Twenty five percent of the companies installed physical barriers whilst seventy five percent had not.

Waste Management for covid -19

Only twenty percent had a covid -19 waste management program and eighty percent did not have any program. Those that had such a program worked together with local authorities.

Appropriate PPE

Most employers 100 percent of them provided their employees with appropriate PPE at all times.

Focal Point Persons

Hundred percent of Companies visited had focal point persons in place and these were Human Resources Managers and Safety and Health managers in some companies.

Covid -19 Guidelines posted on Notice Boards

All the companies confirmed postage of covid-19 guidelines on the notice boards for all the employees to read.

Challenges noted

Some companies have not yet fully subjected their workers to training, instead they have opted to relying on information from the social media. The security personnel responsible for **temperature screening** not trained as para medics or First Aiders in order to appreciate handling of the medical issues which we viewed as very low. That in itself compromised the question of medical confidentiality as all the temperature readings of all individuals were left open to everyone to see.

The waste management aspect on covid-19 is a challenge that's subjecting other workers or individuals to a possible exposure to the Virus. Some Companies visited have not fully complied at all citing financial challenges and the only level of compliance being temperature screening and provision of hand sanitizers at entry point. Testing challenges associated with the costs has not been done, only a few have taken their employees for testing and the beauty about it is that they have subjected them to the Rapid diagnostic testing and Polymer chain reaction which is 99% accurate as opposed to the RDT which is only 70% accurate.

Video comments from Ministry of Labour, Business, Workers Representatives (addendum attached)



Labour Official

Employer Rep

Employer Rep

Employee Rep

Conclusion



The integrated inspections are ongoing and these have also reduced the gap between the Union and the membership, at the same time has seen the workers coming in their numbers to join the Union. The other point is that the majority of employees are now knowledgeable and understand the epidemiology of the COVID-19 pandemic and what steps to take for purposes of prevention of its spread. This has been demonstrated through some CSR programs initiated by some of the Companies that have gone all out to also support the local communities.