

PROMOTING SAFETY AT WORK IN COOPERATION WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

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Background The project is a pilot study of promoting safety at work in cooperation with the local community. Similar models called 'A Safety Community' already operate around the world in different environments. In this project we achieved the commitment of the municipalities to promote safety in local businesses.

Purpose Prevention of accidents at work by creating a net of local partnerships within the communities aiming to promote appropriate initiatives.

Methods Two cities have been chosen for this pilot—Raanana, a Jewish city, and Um El Phahem, an Arab city—and both have a large number of small businesses (up to 25 employees), lacked any safety guidance. An intervention programme included a risk survey, a follow up of the recommendations, guidance for workers and hearing tests. The municipalities were responsible for recruiting the firms and granting excellence certificates to safe businesses.

Results In both cities about 70% of the businesses responded positively to participation in this pilot. About 50% of the hazards found in the risk survey were eliminated by businesses owners. Direct contact has been established between the workplaces, the municipalities and the local occupational clinics.

Significance This project is innovative in Israel. There is no other project in which the municipalities are involved in the improvement of safety in the workplaces.