

Workplace risk assessment

EBRD briefing note

Covid-19

April 15 2020

Briefing to clients during the coronavirus crisis: The Covid-19 pandemic gives rise to unparalleled environmental, health and safety and social risks and impacts, presenting significant challenges to companies and their workforces, their contractors and suppliers, as well as to host communities across the economies where the EBRD invests. The EBRD has prepared briefing notes to highlight some critical areas of concern that many clients may need to address in their Covid-19 response planning, together with references to additional resources containing further details of how to minimise or mitigate risks and impacts. The information provided in this briefing note will be updated as necessary.

This briefing note is not a compliance document and should be taken only as a source of information and analysis. It does not constitute medical or legal advice and is not a substitute for professional advice from international public health organisations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), national public health authorities and national governments, which should be consulted for qualified and more detailed information. We strongly encourage our clients to seek daily updates from these sources as the coronavirus pandemic evolves. No representation, warranty or undertaking, expressed or implied, is made in respect of any information contained herein or the completeness of the content of this briefing note, or any conclusion or judgements described herein. Certain parts of the briefing note link to external internet sites. No responsibility is accepted for the content of any external references.

The risk of Covid-19 is relevant across all economies and sectors where the Bank invests and is not restricted to operations in the healthcare sector. Like any business risk, the risk of workers and local communities contracting Covid-19 needs assessment, which should be carried out regardless of the stage of a project, and appropriate measures should be introduced to manage the risk. It is paramount that your business operations follow the national guidance provided by your country, although technical guidance to help you prepare

your business for Covid-19 is available on the World Health Organization website (www.who.int).

The EBRD has developed a workplace risk-assessment checklist (see below) that can provide you with specific and practical questions you may wish to consider when assessing the risks of Covid-19 at your workplace. This list is not exhaustive, although it may provide you with ideas on where you may need to modify your operational procedures and practices to prepare and manage the risk.

Concern	Questions to consider
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Are all workers and contractors aware of the actions that the WHO recommends should be taken to reduce the risk of contracting Covid-19?▶ Have you developed a Covid-19 action plan that is tailored to your operations?▶ Do you need to mobilise any additional resources to support the implementation of Covid-19 actions?▶ Has someone been nominated to take responsibility for your Covid-19 action plan to ensure it is being implemented effectively?▶ What information do you need to share with workers, contractors, visitors and customers?▶ What communication methods are used and how frequently?▶ What training is required for workers and contractors? Do they know how to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly?▶ Have workers been trained in the hazards, risks and control measures associated with the recommended actions relating to Covid-19?▶ Can some work tasks that carry a risk of Covid-19 infection be avoided? If they cannot be avoided, can they be modified to reduce the risk of worker exposure (remote working, staged working and so on)?▶ Do you need to modify your existing procedures and instructions so that workers undertake their tasks in a different way?▶ Is there adequate supervision of workers and contractors to ensure that revised methods of working and new procedures are followed?▶ Are additional safety rules required and how will these be enforced?▶ Have you identified high-risk or vulnerable workers and introduced appropriate measures to protect them?▶ Do you need to collaborate with any local communities or the local public health authorities?

Concern	Questions to consider
Cleaning and infection control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What cleaning regimes do you have in place and how are these being modified to take account of the Covid-19 risk? ▶ Are cleaning frequencies adequate for the risk in particular work areas and common touch points? ▶ Are sufficient supplies of suitable cleaning and antibacterial materials available for all work areas? ▶ Has the plan considered what actions are required if suitable cleaning materials are in short supply (critical areas only, for example)? ▶ Are cleaners protected from risk by using modified working methods to prevent contact with surfaces and supported by using the correct PPE when cleaning? ▶ Have you identified common touch points such as handrails, door handles, lift buttons and so on, and have you adopted modified measures to prevent contact? ▶ Have sanitising points been clearly communicated to workers, contractors and visitors, with adequate signage? ▶ Do you promote good respiratory hygiene and ensure that tissues and appropriate disposal options are available in the workplace? ▶ Are worker transport methods subject to increased cleaning and has social distancing been introduced?
Hand-washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How do you promote regular and thorough handwashing by employees, contractors and visitors entering your workplaces? ▶ Are there enough washing points with hot water and soap? ▶ Are there any remote areas where handwashing is not available – what are the risks there and how do you address them? ▶ Do you need to establish handwashing points and require handwashing before workers, contractors and visitors enter offices or other buildings?
Multi-use locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How do you manage the risks in sleeping accommodation or other communal areas where workers may congregate, such as canteens, toilets or showers? ▶ Have you introduced social distancing in these areas? ▶ Do you need to close any recreational areas and other locations where social distancing is not possible? ▶ How is the risk of Covid-19 transmission being reduced in office areas? ▶ Can hot-desking arrangements be avoided? Are keyboards and other devices which are frequently used by many people being regularly sanitised? ▶ Can workers work from home and undertake meetings or other engagements remotely by Skype, Zoom, FaceTime and so on? ▶ Is only critical training taking place and other training deferred to a later date? ▶ Can any meetings and large gatherings of workers, contractors and visitors be avoided?
Personal protective equipment (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Is PPE being used in addition to other control measures and only used as a last resort? ▶ What PPE is needed and available for workers, contractors and visitors and is this issued to those at greatest risk? ▶ Have risk assessments been reviewed and have they identified the required PPE for each work task? ▶ Is the PPE the correct selection for the risks and does it provide the protection factor needed? ▶ What international standards are used for the PPE and are technical standards reviewed to confirm protection factors such as breakthrough times? ▶ If respiratory protection equipment (RPE) is available or needed does it provide the correct protection factor, for example, FFP3, FFP2? ▶ Have workers undergone training for the PPE they are to use and have appropriate fit tests been carried out? ▶ Is PPE being changed periodically and disposed of accordingly? ▶ Does the action plan consider the actions required if PPE is in short supply and which workers are deemed critical for use of the PPE?

Concern	Questions to consider
Medical surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are workers informed about all the potential symptoms of the Covid-19 disease and about what to do if they suspect that they have contracted the virus? ▶ Are all workers fit for work or if unwell told to stay at home? ▶ How are workers being assessed to confirm that they are well – for example, self-reporting or physical checks at the start of the day? ▶ What procedures are in place for workers who fall ill with suspected Covid-19 symptoms while at work? ▶ Are current workplace medical arrangements adequate for your workplace? ▶ Do you need to undertake a revised first-aid needs assessment and increase any first-aid provisions? ▶ What protection do you provide to first aiders? ▶ Are you aware of the location of the local medical centres in the event that workers require medical intervention? ▶ Do you have enough first aiders or emergency responders and sufficient cover if some become ill?
Emergency planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are emergency preparedness measures and plans in place to deal with large numbers of workers becoming infected with Covid-19? ▶ Is a communication plan established to inform all key stakeholders including other authorities such as public health authorities? ▶ What will be the impact on your business and can operations continue in a safe manner? ▶ Have critical workers been identified and do you have appropriate measures to shield these workers to ensure any continuity arrangements? ▶ What will be the response if you are informed of a worker who has contracted Covid-19? ▶ Are lockdown procedures developed in the event of project shutdown? ▶ Will operations be safe if you need to lock down and will additional assistance be needed, for example from the police? ▶ If an incident occurs on site, are the local emergency services able to assist or do you need to establish self-rescue and response? ▶ Do you need to avoid certain high-risk tasks due to reduced emergency services coverage during this period?
Local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How do you communicate with neighbours and adjacent business regarding the Covid-19 controls that you are adopting on site and the support that you are offering the community, for example, cleaning, medical equipment or transport? ▶ How would you deal with the delivery of any supplies – such as food or other services or goods – from local communities and from other suppliers? ▶ How will the community be shielded from any workers who may be infected? ▶ How are you limiting employees' movement and interaction with local communities? ▶ Are restrictions in place to prevent social gathering of workers in local communities (for example, in cars, cafes and so on)? ▶ Do you have procedures in place for dealing with specific concerns from local communities about workers carrying out activities that may be considered risky behaviour and about being exposed to verbal or physical abuse for working?

Further resources:

[WHO COVID-19 website](#)

[WHO Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19](#)

[WHO Employers and workers](#)

[WHO Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) technical guidance: Points of entry and mass gatherings](#)

[WHO Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) advice for the public](#)

[WHO Coping with stress during the COVID-19 outbreak](#)

[WHO Travel and tourism](#)

[WHO Travel Advice](#)

[WHO library of resources in various languages](#)

[WHO Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) advice for the public: Myth busters](#)