

# Occupational Health

The situation analysis identified the low priority given to occupational health and the inadequate structure and delivery of occupational health services in South Africa. This is due to the following problems:

- inadequate and fragmented legislation on occupational health and safety;
- fragmentation of functions between different departments involved in occupational and environmental health;
- lack of organisation and co-ordination of occupational health services, and lack of coordination between occupational and primary health care services;
- lack of union and worker participation in the development of policy, occupational health services and implementation thereof;
- the inadequately trained health workers in occupational health and hygiene; and
- the racist legislation with regard to compensation of occupational diseases.

## We call on government to:

- introduce progressive legislation for the establishment of occupational health services accessible to all workers, and to integrate all legislation pertaining to occupational health and safety, in consultation with unions and workers;
- to integrate occupational health as an important component of comprehensive primary health care with an emphasis on prevention, promotion and rehabilitation;
- to ensure democratic participation by unions and workers in the formulation and implementation of occupational health policy;
- to improve and increase the training of occupational health workers including *industrial hygienists, occupational health nurses and worker representatives*; and
- to revise legislation on compensation for occupational diseases and especially to remove racially discriminatory components immediately.

