

Risk Awareness Week Special



Building a Resilient Organization through Effective Risk Management

5-9 October 2020

- 5 October - Webinar: Navigating COVID-19: Health Perspective
- 6 October - Webinar: Managing Human Capital Risk in the New Normal
- 7 October - Launch of Risk Portal, Conference Center (by invitation)
- 8 October - Webinar: Emerging Trends in Kidnap for Ransom
- 9 October - Webinar: Toward a Risk-Aware Culture; Risk Awareness Walk



Head of Clinic highlights ways to navigate associated risks of COVID-19



Dr Samson Adeleke, Head of IITA Clinic.

Risk Awareness Week was celebrated in IITA on 5-9 October. The IITA Risk Management Committee organized virtual webinars on relevant topics and other activities for staff across IITA hubs to emphasize the importance of focusing on risk at the workplace.

The first webinar, presented by Dr Samson Adeleke, Head of IITA Clinic, focused on the risks associated with COVID-19, and ways to successfully navigate through such risks.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all IITA stations experienced a partial lockdown, while ensuring that

essential research and operations continued. About 30 cases of COVID-19 were recorded at headquarters. "All of the cases have fully recovered," reported Adeleke.

According to Adeleke, many of these cases have led to person-hour loss, mental health risks including personal and external stigmatization, an increase in the incidence of non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, reduced attention to other health issues, and increased health-related financial burdens.

A major way to navigate through the risks associated with COVID-19 is compliance with prescribed preventive measures, with a major emphasis on regular and adequate handwashing. Adeleke mentioned that handwashing is a necessary hygienic practice, even without the issue of COVID-19 because the human hands touch numerous surfaces daily.

Other preventive measures include proper wearing of face masks for protection, seeking early necessary medical care and constant check-ups, physical distancing of at least one meter, and practicing a healthy lifestyle.

Hilde Koper, DDG Corporate Services, advised that as a way to manage the risks associated with the virus, staff should always follow all directives against the spread of COVID-19. "Let all staff participate in the Risk Awareness Week, and make IITA safe, and more effective," Koper said.

In support, Sylvia Oyinlola, Head, Administration of Western Africa Hub, said, "We are working towards building a resilient and effective IITA amidst global uncertainties."



David Oluwadare, Risk Management committee member, also spoke on the topic "Emerging trends on kidnap for ransom" in one of the online webinars.



Sylvia Oyinlola, Risk Management committee member and coordinator of the Risk Awareness Week.



Members of the Risk Management Committee with DDG-CS Hilde Koper and Dr Samson Adeleke in a group photo at the opening of Risk Awareness Week.



Risk Management Fitness Walk.



Launch of Risk Management portal by DDG-CS Hilde Koper.

Quotable quote:

"A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him." – David Brinkley

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Managing human capital risk in the new normal



Wole Oladokun, IITA Employee Services Manager

Restructuring organizational working procedures in the COVID-19 context is a practical step every organization should take to ensure effective and productive participation from staff members in achieving corporate and individual goals. During the Institute's Risk Awareness Week with the theme "Building a Resilient Organization through Effective Risk

Management", the need for resilience was emphasized.

Wole Oladokun, IITA Employee Services Manager, in his presentation titled "Managing human capital risk in the new normal", reiterated that a resilient organization leverages on the strength and social networks of resilient individuals to move the organization forward. He underscored that at this time, an organization needs to provide specific competencies, which are implemented in three categories: workforce acquisition, workforce management, and workforce optimization to ensure continuity.

"Human capital management has been redefining itself in the past few years, and those changes are even more visible since the pandemic hit the world," he said. He explained that the COVID-19 attack on the world systems and structures resulted in a complete paradigm shift from the usual approach of managing an organization's most valuable asset, the people. Oladokun advised that in the new normal, remote working with

a firm commitment on delivery expectations should be encouraged for staff convenience and safety.

To effectively build a resilient organization that regards risk management, Oladokun said mitigation plans must be put in place. These measures include increased due diligence before finalizing the virtual workforce acquisition process, increased fund mobilization through improved donor engagement and professionally packaged proposals, improved project execution rate using M&E tools and competencies to track project milestones, exploration of opportunities to sustain collaboration virtually through online working platforms, continuous update on COVID-19, and compliance with safety guidelines. "The importance of supervisor-supervisee communication at this period is key; it should be improved and treated as a priority," he explained. Oladokun said that a little humor at this time will strengthen the relationship and cushion the effect of COVID-19.

IITA builds sustainable risk awareness culture for proper management

"A risk-aware culture is conducive to effective risk management that encourages open and upward communication, sharing of knowledge and best practices, effective identification and mitigation of risks, and allows for more informed and effective decision making in the allocation of resources." This was according to Rasheed Fagbenro in a seminar titled "Towards a risk-aware culture" during IITA's Risk Awareness week.

Fagbenro stated that culture constitutes attitude, behavior, assumptions, language, and how they influence each other. He further explained that culture at the organizational level is the aggregate of how staff relate to each other and external parties. This means that the mode of communication within an organization defines its culture.

He noted that the International Standard of Risk Management defined risk culture as a management culture where employees and stakeholders are aware of the importance of monitoring and managing risk. This is done by

identifying risks and factors that could delay the attainment of objectives, causing organizations and the employees to think ahead of ways to overcome any risk that arises.

IITA, as an organization, defines risk as any event, which positively or negatively affects its performance. Because of this, the Institute works to educate its staff on how to be proactive in preparing to prevent negative risks as this will enable it to tackle such risks at an earlier stage.

Fagbenro identified the elements of a good risk culture as leadership commitment, strategic objectives that align with risk culture, and checks and balances. He said that for a risk-aware culture, there should be involvement of people in activities, decision-making, planning, and accountability.

"Promoting the risk awareness culture in all aspects of an organization should not be the duty of the Risk Management Committee, Senior Management, or Board of Directors alone, but that of every staff member," he said.



Rasheed Fagbenro

As part of the celebration of Risk Awareness Week, the Risk Management portal was launched by DDG-CS Hilde Koper on behalf of DG Nteranya Sanginga to help improve the awareness culture on risk management practices in the Institute.