
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

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CAPACITY BUILDING

Activities of the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and UNITAR/ILO/OECD WSSD GHS Partnership

Transmitted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

1. This document provides an update regarding activities in the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme and the WSSD GHS Partnership for the period July 2007 – December 2007.

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme Activities

Country-based Activities

2. Cambodia and Laos have continued the development of GHS implementing legislation and other activities for stakeholder engagement. Cambodia completed awareness raising workshops for business and industry and for public interest and labour organisations.

3. Senegal has completed its GHS pilot project. Indonesia, Nigeria, Philippines, Thailand and The Gambia are in the final phase of their pilot projects to develop a national GHS implementation strategy.

4. With support of the Government of Switzerland, Uruguay will initiate national GHS enabling activities, undertake a capacity assessment for GHS implementation, and hold a national GHS workshop during 2008.

Regional Activities

5. The GHS Capacity Building Workshop for Public Interest and Labour Organisations (PILO) of the ASEAN Region, was held 7-8 May 2007 in Jakarta, Indonesia. Participants met to review the PILOs capacities assessment in the ASEAN region and as a result, the Southeast Asia Public Interest and Labour Organisation Chemical Network (SEApChemNet) was established. In follow-up, the coordinating organisation, the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations, has developed a website for the network. This can be found at: <http://www.fomca.org.my/english/page.php?ppid=290&pageid=291>.

6. A regional GHS workshop for West Africa (ECOWAS) is planned to take place in April 2008 in Abuja, Nigeria, in collaboration with WHO, the ECOWAS secretariat, and the support of the Governments of Switzerland and Germany.

7. UNITAR continues to work with SADC to further support GHS implementation in the region as they develop a regional GHS standard through SADCSTAN (the Southern African Community Standardization body). The technical review meeting to discuss the draft regional standard previously scheduled for late 2007, has currently been postponed to early 2008.

8. Initial preparations are underway and financial support is being sought for an “Americas” regional/western hemisphere GHS workshop, possibly to be held in late 2008. Interested parties are encouraged to contact UNITAR.

Guidance, Training and Resource Materials

9. UNITAR has developed drafts of two GHS training courses (Course 1: General GHS Overview; Course 2: Classifying Chemicals According to the GHS, and GHS Labels and SDSs). The draft of Course 1 is available as an INF document, which also provides further details on deadlines for comments. Course 2 was reviewed at a special technical working group meeting on 11 December 2007 and will continue to be developed.

10. As many of the initial pilot projects are in their final phase, an evaluation was sent to pilot countries for comments on the guidance document “Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy”. Based on feedback from country experiences, UNITAR plans to update the guidance document during the first half of 2008.

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

11. The second meeting of the WSSD Global GHS Partners was held on 12 July 2007 in Geneva. The meeting brought together representatives of governments, business and industry groups, public interest and labour organizations, and international organizations; and was organized through collaboration between UNITAR, ILO and OECD, the founding members of the Partnership. Participants agreed on a number of recommendations on strengthening operational activities and partnership services, mobilization of financial resources to support partnership activities, and recommendations specifically for UNITAR/ILO to continue support of the Partnership. For more information please visit: www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs/ghs13.html. See also para. 14 in relation to SAICM.

12. Based on comments received on the July 2007 draft, UNITAR/ILO have finalised the report of the results of the survey on the preparation for GHS implementation in non-OECD countries. This report is available on the UNITAR website and has also been submitted to the Sub-committee Secretariat (UNECE).

13. The participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), also in collaboration with UNECE, have developed an outline for a proposed guide regarding “IOMC: Assisting countries with the transition phase for GHS implementation”. This outline was discussed at the 28th IOMC Meeting in October 2007 and a first draft of the guide is expected to be prepared during the first half of 2008.

14. In support of document INF.9 submitted by the SAICM Secretariat, and as the focal point for GHS capacity building, UNITAR/ILO would be pleased and willing to coordinate GHS-related implementation and capacity building project proposals for submission to the Quick Start Program Trust Fund (QSPTF). UNITAR has significant experience with such proposals, and has to date been involved with 37 approved QSPTF country projects related to SAICM with UNITAR as the executing agency. Countries and organisations interested in collaborating with UNITAR for SAICM QSPTF proposals are encouraged to contact UNITAR.

15. UNITAR would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland, the European Union, and the OPCW for financial support to UNITAR/ILO implemented Partnership activities, including the Partnership Secretariat, national GHS implementation projects, and regional and global workshops.

16. GHS capacity building activities organized by UNITAR/ILO continue to be funded by extra-budgetary resources. UNITAR/ILO welcome suggestions and proposals from the SCEGHS regarding how ensure sustainable funding to meet the growing demand for GHS capacity building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

17. UNITAR will continue to update the SCEGHS on these and other activities over the course of the next year.
