

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

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(UNITAR)

Introduction

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-December 2010.

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme Activities

Country-based activities

2. Jamaica completed the situation and gap analysis report as well as comprehensibility testing. A national GHS workshop to discuss, *inter alia*, the results of these reports, raise awareness, and to discuss further national GHS implementation activities was held on 27 July with the participation of involved government ministries and stakeholder representatives. The country initiated a legal analysis for all four sectors concerned by the GHS and is developing detailed draft sectoral implementation plans for each of the four sectors.

3. The Gambia and Zambia have begun 2-year capacity building and implementation projects, with the support of the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund (QSPTF). Project inception meetings were held in both countries to initiate activities on 18 August for Gambia and 24 September for Zambia. Train-the-trainer sessions are being conducted in Zambia from 13-15 December.

4. Congo and Barbados will initiate their respective GHS Projects with support of the QSPTF early next year.

5. In October 2010, new country projects were also approved for Chile, and related projects involving GHS activities in Madagascar and Togo, supported by the QSPTF.

6. The activities of the project “Strengthening National and Regional Capacities to Implement the GHS in ASEAN” have started in Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand. The activities in China and Indonesia will start soon. The project is funded by the European Union.

Regional activities

7. A GHS Stocktaking Workshop for Southeast, East and Central Asia took place from 15 to 17 September 2010, with funding from the Governments of Switzerland and Germany and the European Union, as well as the support of the World Health Organization (WHO) and significant Chinese government participation. The Conference brought together around 120 participants from 20 countries from Central, East and South-east Asia. Conference documents, presentations and other information are available on the event page of UNITAR website: <http://www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs/events/asia-stocktaking-workshop>. The report of the meeting is under development and will also be posted on the workshop website.

8. A regional GHS project for Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, hosted by Moldova, was approved for support from the QSPTF in October 2010. Project activities are expected to take place in 2011.

Guidance, training and resource materials

9. The guidance document on “Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy” was updated and published in September 2010. The document was revised based on the experiences and feedback from our country, business and industry, and civil society partners, as well as international experts (and the Programme Advisory Group (PAG)). It is available at: <http://www2.unitar.org/cwm/publications/ghs.aspx>.

10. The revised Comprehensibility Testing package (September 2010) is now available for use. The package includes, *inter alia*, the comprehensibility testing manual, questionnaire, sample safety data sheets, and guidelines for interviewers. It is available at: http://www2.unitar.org/cwm/ghs_partnership/ct.htm.

11. UNITAR continues to work on the development of two GHS training courses. The Basic Training Course provides a general overview of the process followed to develop the GHS and its main components. The Sub-Committee was given an opportunity to review the Basic Training Course in December 2009. Subsequently, the course has been pilot tested in several venues (in Australia, Jamaica, Zambia, and Uruguay), and feedback has been received. This feedback will be used to update and refine the course prior to its being converted to an online training format and made available for use on the UNITAR website, planned during 2011.

12. The Advanced Training Course addresses the technical aspects of the GHS in more detail, focusing on classification of physical, health, and environmental hazards. The process used to develop the course involves a group of experts who have volunteered their time and efforts to review and contribute to the training materials. The course will also ultimately be converted to an online format and made available on the UNITAR website. At this point (December 2010), a complete draft of the entire course is near to completion. The next step will be to distribute the draft to the expert group for review, planned for February 2011, and incorporate their comments on the entire package. Following that review, the revised draft will be made available to the Sub-Committee for input, planned for March 2011. It will be placed on a website for this purpose and the Sub-Committee members will be notified when it is available (and provided with a deadline for review and comment). Following inclusion of the Sub-Committee's input, UNITAR would

like to make it available for pilot testing in several venues, similar to the process used for the Basic Course. We expect this to occur prior to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee, and would appreciate the Sub-Committee agreeing to this process at this current session.

13. The Advanced Course includes a number of examples of classifications to help students understand how to apply the criteria. Many have been considered already by the Sub-Committee, particularly in the area of mixtures; others have been taken from guidance developed by the European Union. The availability of worked examples is an important aspect of the training, and is an area where the technical contributions of the Sub-Committee are particularly needed to help ensure the utility of the program. If any members have such examples they would like to contribute to the course, please send them to UNITAR for inclusion (jennifer.silk@unitar.org). Additional examples submitted at the time the Sub-Committee reviews the course would also be welcome.

Partnership programmes

14. On 15–16 September 2010, UNITAR/ILO was invited by the State Committee on Standardization, Metrology and Patents of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the CIS-Center (Moscow) to participate to the third International Conference of CIS Countries on “The regulation of chemical product safety, UN Recommendations and European regulations (GHS, REACH and CLP)” which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

15. In the first quarter of 2011, Qatar will host a 2-day GHS workshop for six countries of the Gulf Coordination Council, GCC (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates) supported by the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia and UNITAR/ILO.

16. A training workshop on the GHS is scheduled for 10-11 March 2011 in Durban, South Africa, held back-to-back with the Second International Conference on Transport of Dangerous Goods and the Environment (organized by RPMASA). The training will be conducted by the Orange House Partnership (OHP), in collaboration with UNITAR/ILO.

Other matters

17. UNITAR/ILO continues to greatly appreciate the efforts of the Programme Advisory Group (PAG) and the GHS Training Course Review Group for their time and expert inputs to our projects and activities.

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

18. UNITAR would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland, the Government of Germany, and the European Union for financial support to UNITAR/ILO implemented Partnership activities, including the Partnership Secretariat, national GHS implementation projects, and regional and global workshops. Other in-kind contributions, such as that from US OSHA, are also kindly acknowledged.

19. 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.

20. UNITAR will continue to update the Sub-Committee on these and other activities over the course of this year.
