

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

Seventeenth session
Geneva, 29 June – 1 July 2009
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

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 January-June 2009.

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme Activities

Country-based activities

2. Cambodia has completed their national GHS capacity building project and Lao PDR has continued their GHS capacity building activities. Vietnam has continued their work to develop sectoral implementation plans and undertake awareness raising.
3. Uruguay developed a national GHS capacity assessment and held a National GHS Workshop on 20-21 April 2009. The GHS capacity building project in Jamaica is also expected to begin in second half of 2009.
4. A proposal by The Gambia for follow-up GHS implementation activities was accepted for funding through the SAICM QSP Trust Fund (sixth round, earlier in 2009). This next phase of GHS capacity building will focus on legal implementation and development of enforcement mechanisms. UNITAR will work with the Gambia to support these efforts. For Zambia, whose SAICM QSP Trust Fund project was accepted in the fifth round (2008), UNITAR and Zambia are working with the SAICM Secretariat to initiate project activities. Other countries have indicated interest to pursue GHS capacity building projects using this funding mechanism in 2009-2010, and UNITAR will support these countries to prepare related proposals upon request.

Regional activities

5. UNITAR and the Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centre in Nigeria are organizing a pilot testing workshop in July 2009 to conduct GHS training to test the training materials developed

under the UNITAR/Basel Convention agreement on the “Development of GHS training modules in the context of Africa”, funded by the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI) in the context of their programme, “Towards a Non-Toxic Environment in Africa”.

6. The Sub-Regional GHS Conference scheduled to take place in 2009 in Beijing has been rescheduled for 2010. This project is funded by the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, and with support of WHO and significant Chinese government participation; invited participants are expected to come from countries of Central, East and South-east Asia (countries such as Japan, Korea and Mongolia may also participate).

7. Participants at the Caribbean regional SAICM workshop held in Barbados, 10-13 March 2009, formally requested UNITAR to convene a Caribbean regional GHS workshop, if possible in 2010.

Guidance, training and resource materials

8. UNITAR has completed a draft of the “Introductory GHS Training Course” and complimentary powerpoint which will together serve as training materials for this basic course. It is expected that these draft materials will be pilot tested at several venues in the next year before being updated and finalised. UNITAR, along with a group of expert volunteers from various government agencies and stakeholder groups continue to work to further develop “Course 2: Classifying Chemicals According to the GHS, and GHS Labels and SDS”. This group is in the process of reviewing course materials by lesson, in order to provide the most in-depth feedback to the training materials.

9. Based on feedback from country experiences, UNITAR continues to update the guidance document “Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy”.

Other matters

10. UNITAR has discussed with various donors regarding the possibility of further support for regional GHS capacity building. The European Union has given preliminary approval for a second phase of activities for the GHS in ASEAN, including China (building upon the previous EU/Swiss project executed by UNITAR/ILO during 2005-2007). It is expected that the new project may begin in late 2009 or early 2010.

11. The 2nd session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management was held in Geneva, 11-15 May 2009. During various interventions, a significant number of countries referred to their actions to implement the GHS, or the need for further support and to share lessons learned. For more information: www.saicm.org.

12. UNITAR/ILO continue 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

13. UNITAR would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland, GTZ, the Government of Germany, 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.

14. 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.

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