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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 UNITAR/ILO/OECD WSSD GHS Partnership for the period July - December 2006.

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme Activities

Country-based Activities

2. Cambodia and Laos initiated their national capacity building projects with support of the Government of Switzerland and the European Union. Laos held a National GHS Workshop 25-27 September and a CT Training Workshop 27-28 September. Cambodia held a National GHS Workshop 2-4 October and a CT Training Workshop, 5-6 October. Both countries are currently developing a situation and gap analysis and conducting comprehensibility testing.
3. Indonesia, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, Thailand and The Gambia continued their country-based pilot projects to develop a national GHS implementation strategy. A number of concrete activities toward GHS implementation were completed, including workshops for business and industry, and public interest and labour organizations, and the development of draft GHS implementing legislation.
4. The UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme Advisory Group (PAG) will meet on 11 December 2006 to review programme documents, ensure complementarity with other chemical hazard communication initiatives and provide overall guidance regarding Programme implementation. A report of the meeting will be available on the UNITAR website and provided to the UNSCEGHS Secretariat.

Regional Activities

5. Activities are ongoing for the development of an ASEAN Regional GHS Implementation Strategy. A draft has been developed of the GHS regional capacity assessment, carried out in collaboration with the LESTARI Institute of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Projects involving other stakeholder groups are also ongoing. It is tentatively planned to hold a major regional GHS review conference in ASEAN in April 2007, possibly hosted by Indonesia and in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat.
6. In order to ensure continued communication and to promote further collaboration and coordination in chemicals activities, UNITAR attended the APEC Seminar on GHS Implementation in Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 September 2006.
7. In follow-up to the Informal Consultation with Participants from SADC Countries for Further Development of a Regional Approach to GHS Implementation, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 18 November 2005, UNITAR continues to work with SADC to further support GHS implementation in the region, including development of a regional GHS standard.
8. A workshop for countries of Central and Eastern Europe, hosted by Slovenia and funded by the OPCW, and the Government of Switzerland, was held 24-26 October 2006.
9. A workshop for Arabic region countries, hosted by Egypt and supported by the Government of Switzerland, was held 30 October – 2 November 2006. Workshop recommendations and conclusions for the Arab regional workshop are available on the UNITAR website at: <http://www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs/ghs10.html>.
10. Support for regional workshops is still sought for West Africa, Central America, the Pacific Islands, the Caribbean, and a follow-up workshop for Mercosur and the Andean Community.

Guidance, Training and Resource Materials

11. A Comprehensibility Testing (CT) website was developed where the CT toolkit is available on the UNITAR website. www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs_partnership/ct.htm
12. UNITAR is in the process of updating the GHS Guidance Document on Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy and the Capacity Building Library.
13. UNITAR is continuing development of GHS training courses (on general GHS information, classification of chemicals, and preparation of chemical hazard communication tools), guidance for public interest and labour groups on involvement in GHS implementation, and a legislative case studies report on legal GHS implementation.

Supporting Services

14. The founding partners of the WSSD Global GHS Partnership (UNITAR, ILO and the OECD) hosted a side-event on the GHS at the IFCS Forum V event in Budapest, Hungary in September. Information on the event can be found at: www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs/ghs11.html.

15. UNITAR/ILO hosted a side-event on the GHS at the Rotterdam Convention COP-3 in October 2006. Speakers included representatives from governments, business and industry and public interest and labour organizations.

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

16. UNITAR/ILO and OECD have initiated a survey of the status of activities for GHS implementation to all countries in order to assess the status of GHS implementation in the world. Results of this survey are currently being compiled. In a preliminary review of results, for non-OECD countries, 43 countries have formally indicated to UNITAR that they are interested in capacity development support from UNITAR/ILO related to GHS implementation, including support for regional and national-level capacity-building projects. Moreover, 95% of these countries indicated that implementation of the GHS would facilitate their national implementation of SAICM and other international agreements, such as the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions.
 17. The second meeting of the WSSD Global GHS Partners has been postponed to 12 July 2007.
 18. 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.
 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 SCEGHS on these and other activities over the course of the next year.
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