
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 2008-December 2008.

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme Activities

Country-based activities

2. UNITAR has signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Uruguay for an enabling GHS capacity building project which will include a national GHS capacity assessment and National GHS Workshop in 2009. The GHS capacity building project in Jamaica is also expected to begin in 2009.
3. Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic have continued their GHS capacity building activities. Cambodia completed a National Review Workshop and has completed a National GHS implementation strategy which outlines the necessary actions for GHS implementation in the country.
4. Vietnam held a National Planning meeting, completed comprehensibility testing training, and are in the process of conducting the testing among chemicals users in order to assess GHS awareness amongst the public. The National GHS Workshop, 20-21 November 2008 in Hanoi, provided an opportunity for stakeholders and government agencies to discuss GHS capacity building needs and to develop a framework for moving forward with the implementation of GHS legislation, development of GHS awareness raising and training activities, and a national GHS implementation strategy. The translation of the Purple Book to Vietnamese will be completed by December.

5. A proposal by Zambia was accepted for funding through the SAICM Quick Start Program Trust Fund (fifth round) to support further GHS capacity building in the country. UNITAR will work with Zambia to support these efforts.
6. UNITAR and ILO participated in a National GHS Planning meeting with representatives of the Government of Peoples' Republic of China and other stakeholders on 28 November 2008 in Beijing to discuss GHS capacity building in the country, and to consider activities to support GHS implementation. Over 50 participants representing 40 ministries, agencies and organizations attended. The meeting strongly recommended that China consider a national coordination mechanism for GHS implementation and also consider developing a national GHS implementation strategy.

Regional activities

7. UNITAR and the Basel Convention Secretariat have signed an MOA to develop adapted GHS training materials relevant to the Basel Convention and the Africa Region. UNITAR will work with the Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centre in Nigeria to develop and execute the training.
8. UNITAR is currently discussing with various donors regarding the possibility of further support for regional GHS capacity building. Given the importance of coordinating transition periods, legislation and sharing of experiences, a regional approach to GHS capacity building has been considered an important aspect of successful GHS implementation. UNITAR is considering both building upon experiences in regions that have already initiated some GHS capacity building work, as well as engaging with new regions.
9. With support of the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, a Sub-Regional GHS Conference is planned to be held in Beijing in 2009, with significant Chinese government participation and invited participation from countries of Central Asia and South-East Asia (other countries, such as Japan, Korea and Mongolia may also participate).

Guidance, Training and Resource Materials

10. UNITAR is currently developing a complementary powerpoint presentation for the Introductory GHS Training Course. The document and the powerpoint will together serve as training materials for this basic course. UNITAR, along with a group of expert volunteers from various government agencies and stakeholder groups are working 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.
11. Based on feedback from country experiences, UNITAR continues to update the guidance document "Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy".

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

12. A representative of UNITAR participated in the 43rd Joint Meeting of the Chemicals Committee and the Working Party on Chemicals, Pesticides and Biotechnology at the OECD on 6 November 2008, where she presented on the results of non-OECD countries from the UNITAR/ILO/OECD Questionnaire on GHS Implementation, as well as on the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme.
13. The participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), also in collaboration with UNECE, have developed a guide titled, "IOMC: Assisting countries with the transition phase for GHS implementation". This document will soon be available on the IOMC website (<http://www.who.int/iomc/en/>) as well as the UNITAR website.
14. UNITAR would like to acknowledge contributions from the Government of Switzerland, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), the Government of Germany, the European Union, and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for financial support to UNITAR/ILO implemented Partnership activities, including the Partnership Secretariat, national GHS implementation projects, and regional and global workshops.
15. 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.
16. UNITAR will continue to update the SCEGHS on these and other activities over the course of the next year.
