Discussion 2 Digest

<u>Topic of Discussion</u>: Capacity building – tools that are used

Capacity building continues to be a key component of international chemicals and waste management. The **evaluation of SAICM 2006-2015** identified the Quick Start Programme as a successful component of SAICM, with its focus on "initial enabling of capacity building". The current **draft of Strategic Objective A** under the beyond 2020 instrument, in its "considerations" references "**the need for all countries to have basic capacity**". Target **B4** is drafted as "By 20XX **educational, training and public awareness programmes** on chemical safety, sustainability, and safer alternatives and benefit of chemicals have been developed and implemented." Target E5 is currently drafted as "**Gaps between developed and developing countries for** the implementation of sound management of chemicals [and waste] are identified and narrowed".

Mechanisms to support capacity building should be incorporated into all relevant parts of the future global strategy on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. Part VI, Section F of the Compilation of recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 includes key capacity-building principles for consideration by SAICM stakeholders at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5). They include inter alia collaboration with existing initiatives on chemicals and waste management, including multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations bodies, private sector, civil society and academia; recognition and sharing of knowledge and expertise within and among regions; recognition of the need to promote coordination of and access to information for the sound management of chemicals and waste; ensuring the full use of national, subregional and regional information and knowledge to inform global decision making; recognition of the need for gender equity in all relevant aspects of its work.

UNITAR works on several topics that are prominent within the proposed Beyond 2020 framework: the **Globally Harmonised System of classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS)** and **Pollution Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs).** A potential target on the GHS remains currently in the proposed beyond 2020 framework, Target Bxx- By 20XX, all governments have legally implemented and enforce the UN GHS in all relevant sectors. Furthermore, Target B1 on comprehensive data and information, notes that GHS and PRTRs should be considered as indicators for this target (among others). Both the GHS and PRTR are IOMC indicators of progress.

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Oliver Wootton is a specialist in UNITAR's* Chemicals and Waste Management Programme. He has over 10 years' experience working in sustainable development, health, and environment, in Malawi and within the UN. Oliver has led UNITAR's portfolio on the GHS since 2015, coordinating the GHS e-Learning course, managing, and developing national capacity building projects, researching the status of GHS implementation around the world, and serves as UNITAR's focal point to the Global Partnership to Implement the GHS (ILO, OECD and UNITAR, plus a coalition of partners).

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Dr. Olga Speranskaya is a Co-Director of Health and Environment Justice Support (HEJSupport), an international organisation aimed to achieve a healthy environment and environmental justice for people. HEJSupport works at the global, regional, and national policy level and directly with communities affected by toxic chemicals and waste. Dr. Speranskaya is also a Senior Advisor at the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN). She received the 2009 Goldman and 2011 UNEP Earth Champion awards for grassroots environmental activism in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

1. Many participants whose countries did not have a PRTR system in place or were in the process of implementing one were from low-and middle-income countries (LMICs). On the other hand, participants whose countries had a PRTR system tended to be from high income countries (HIC). For those that did not have a PRTR yet, the consensus was that capacity building would be valuable for its adoption. Therefore, renewed commitment and prioritisation of PRTRs, within the Beyond 2020 framework alongside other international agreements, would be valuable. UNITAR has a wide variety of PRTR training tools, and these can help countries identify their needs and initiate the setup of systems: https://prtr.unitar.org/site/home

2. Many of the participants expressed that their countries were in the process of implementing the GHS. Some countries made GHS implementation mandatory. In those countries where GHS implementation is not mandatory, it is only partially implemented. Some participants who said that their country implemented it, stated that it is commonly applied to chemicals and yet to be adopted for pesticides. In some cases, participants commented that pesticide labels still follow the World Health Organization's Guidelines on Good Labelling Practice for Pesticides, and switching systems was a complex process. Though GHS implementation helps to address the illegal trade in chemicals and pesticides, some participants expressed concern that GHS alone is inadequate in addressing the issue of illicit trade. Thus, despite the implementation of GHS in some countries, illegal pesticides remain an issue.

3. Looking ahead, given the importance that the GHS can play in establishing the fundamentals for a chemicals management system, participants highlighted that it is important that countries and stakeholders continue to receive support in GHS implementation. Where possible and relevant, this should include making GHS legally binding and mandatory for implementation by all relevant sectors, to ensure that adoption of the system is as smooth and effective as possible. Like PRTRs, the GHS could serve in a highly supportive role should it be prominently included in the Beyond 2020 framework.

4. Capacity building was discussed as a need in both LMICs and HICs. Issues raised were that despite resources being available, it is often offered in English, which is not the first language of many countries. Additionally, challenges such as enforcement are needed to be addressed for capacity-building initiatives to be successfully adopted.

ANNEX

DETAILED SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION 2

THE DISCUSSION WAS STRUCTURED AROUND THREE QUESTIONS AND THE KEY DISCUSSION INPUTS FROM PARTICIPANTS ARE PRESENTED UNDER EACH QUESTION:

Question 1: Has your country put steps in place to implement a PRTR? Are there specific elements of PRTRs where you think capacity building could be most useful? List your country in your response. What elements of the GHS still require capacity building in your country/ organisation/ sector? List your country, organisation, or sector in your response.

COUNTRY	COUNTRY'S STATUS WITH POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTER (PRTR) AND ELEMENTS OF THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS (GHS) THAT REQUIRE CAPACITY BUILDING
AFRICA	
Ethiopia **Kenya** **Madagascar** **Malawi** **Sudan** **Zimbabwe**	➢ There is no PRTP system in place.
South Africa	➢ In South Africa, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning was in the process of developing an Integrated Pollutant and Waste Information System (which includes PRTR and waste information system for the Western Cape).
Tanzania	➢ The Department of Environment is in the initial stages of implementing the PRTR.
Zambia	➢ Zambia has not implemented a PRTR, however, they are in process of it.
NORTH AMERICA	
Canada	➢ National Pollutant Release Inventory is Canada's Pollutant Release and Transfer Register. The NPRI is an annual, publicly accessible database of information on pollutants released to the environment, or transferred for disposal or recycling, by facilities in Canada.
United States of America	➢ The USA has a toxic release inventory in place as its PRTR system.
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	
Brazil **Dominican Republic**	➢ There is no PRTR system in place.
Colombia	➢ Colombia has a resolution draft of PRTR of which the final resolution is anticipated to be finished in a few months and implemented in 2023.
Guyana	➢ The EPA is currently working on the PRTR implementation in Guyana. However, it is in the initial stage of understanding the PRTR.
MIDDLE EAST	
Iran	➢ Like other low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), Iran is in the process of piloting the PRTR tool, considering long and wide toxicological activities both by Iranian ministries, particularly the Ministry of Health and Department of environment, and academic activities (e.g., IRANTOX, etc.) according to the Strategic Plan to Address Chemicals and Waste.

- In 2017 there were a total of 77 poison control centres in 23 countries of the Asia Pacific region, with the Islamic Republic of Iran having 41 centres. In this region, people living in the remaining 30 countries had no access to a centre.
- Capacity building is needed on:
  - Estimation techniques for release from diffuse sources.
  - Involvement of industries/facilities.
  - Estimation techniques for release from reporting facilities.
  - Involvement of the public.
  - Data collection.
  - Confidentiality of information.

EUROPE	
United Kingdom (UK)	- The UK has a publicly available inventory of pollution from industrial sites and other specified sources, known as the UK PRTR, this is a searchable database providing information on the pollution from a wide range of industrial sites and for 91 pollutants dating back to 2007. - The UK's PRTR can be accessed at the following web link: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-pollutant-release-and-transfer-register-prtr-data-sets#
EASTERN EUROPE	
Belarus	- PRTR is used in the country and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection is the responsible body. It is useful for the country to implement the PRTR to allow for systematizing the sources of emissions and controlling air pollution. - Belarus is in the process of implementing the GHS in their legislation and therefore, the experience of Kyrgyzstan is interesting to explore further.
Kazakhstan	NGOs in Kazakhstan initiated the development of a local PRTR in Ust-Kamenogorsk city, Kazakhstan, that was a good practice example demonstrating the importance of cooperation between NGOs, local authorities, and industry in establishing a PRTR.
International	- Useful information about the PRTR protocol can be found here: https://unece.org/env/pp/protocol-on-prtrs-introduction - The text of the PRTR Protocol and the list of chemicals for reporting can be seen here: https://unece.org/DAM/env/pp/prtr/Protocol%20texts/PRTR_Protocol_e.pdf

Throughout the discussion, informal polls were conducted to help encourage discussion among the participants. They do not provide any representative data

Poll 1: Is a PRTR implemented in your country? (N=25)
- **No – 60%,**
- **Not sure -24%,**
- **Yes - 16%**

Poll 2: Do you think capacity building on PRTRs would be a valuable priority for your country/organisation? List country/organisation. (N=24)

Yes (88%) according to participants from the following countries:
- **Kyrgyzstan, Japan, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Madagascar, Kenya, Iran, Zambia**
- **USA:** Needs outreach and capacity building to make the data from its PRTR/TRI more accessible to the public.
- **Tanzania:** Capacity building is needed and can be done through the Occupational Safety and Health Authority.
- **Malawi:** Chemicals waste management is a bigger health and environmental challenge.
- **Ethiopia:** Capacity building will be a valuable priority for the Environmental Protection Authority.
- **Guyana:** Capacity building is required for the Environmental Protection Agency on PRTRs since, as an LMIC, this skill set is lacking in Guyana, as it is a relatively new area. Another relevant priority is on chemicals management.
- **Brazil:** This issue should be a priority, and capacity building is fundamental. However, in Brazil, there is no information for the public about this issue and its implementation.

Question 2: Based on your knowledge, what is the status of GHS implementation in your country? What successes or challenges are you aware of? List your country in your response. Do you think that GHS implementation helps addressing illegal trade in pesticides and other chemicals and mixtures?

AFRICA

Benin:
> There is a lack of technological capacity.
> Support is needed to reinforce the capacity of non-governmental organisations to disseminate information and tools.

Malawi:
> GHS implementation is still in the beginning phase. There is a need for awareness raising on the transition from the WHO classification to the GHS.
> Identifying illegal chemicals is challenging as the illegal sector recreated labels. As a result, the only reliable way to confirm counterfeits and illegal products is through a lab analysis.

Kenya:
> Kenya developed a draft manual for the use of the GHS for pesticides, of which, the pesticide industry has been made aware of.
> The GHS has mostly been implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture.

South Africa:
> The GHS has recently been legislated in South Africa under the revised Regulation for Hazardous Chemical Agents. All manufacturers, importers, and distributors will be required to comply by the end of September 2022.
> Hazardous chemical substances and mixtures that are intended to be used in a workplace must comply with the requirements on classification, labelling, packaging, and safety data sheets as per the Regulations for Hazardous Chemical Agents, 2021.

Tanzania:
> The GHS is partially implemented in the country. Currently, some chemicals are labelled according to the GHS from manufacturing countries. However, for pesticides, the GHS is yet to be implemented. Pesticide requirements in the country still use the WHO classification.
> The challenges are a lack of political will and technical capacity.
> As the GHS implementation is not mandatory it is partially implemented in the country.

> Though the GHS is not officially legislated, it is an important tool in pesticide management.

Zambia:
> The GHS has been incorporated into legislation and helped to address illegal trade by identifying non-compliant labels.

NORTH AMERICA

USA:
> Though the USA implemented the GHS, it is missing from key sectors, for example, the EPA does not use GHS labelling for pesticides.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Brazil:
> Brazil has a partial legal framework for the GHS, however, despite this many companies still do not meet the GHS requirements.

Guyana:
> For pesticide and toxic chemical trade, all products must be registered by the local authority where the requirement clearly states that the safety data sheet (SDS) and label must be compliant with the GHS.
> For the trade of pesticides and Toxic Chemicals all products must be registered by the local authority and the label must be compliant with the GHS format.
> The Caribbean region recently developed a harmonised labelling standard for the region that is based on the GHS.

MIDDLE EAST

Iran:
> Two awareness and status assessment questionnaires were developed for staff exposed to hazardous chemicals despite the GHS labelling (https://jhsw.tums.ac.ir/article-1-6036-en.pdf).

CENTRAL ASIA

Kyrgyzstan:
> The process was initiated by a non-governmental organisation and supported by the Ministries.

Belarus:

➢ There are challenges with the GHS classification for pesticides in the country.

Poll 3: Does your country require GHS labelling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) to be applied to imported pesticides and other chemicals and mixtures? (N=25)

Yes (76%) according to participants from the following countries:
1. **Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, Sudan**
2. **Dominican Republic**: The system is used for customs when importing pesticides and chemicals.
3. **Guyana**: It is used as a part of the registration process before any chemical or pesticide product is allowed to be imported.
4. **Kenya**: Through the Pest Products Control Board.
5. **Malawi:** Requires either GHS or chemicals SDS during product registration, particularly on pesticides.
6. **South Africa:** It has been adopted in South Africa, but it is voluntary, however, soon it will be compulsory.
7. **Sudan**: The country needs to adopt the GHS, and SDS requirements should be applied when importing pesticides and other chemicals. Furthermore, the GHS and SDS are needed to import pesticides and mixtures.
8. **Tanzania:** SDS is required however, it is not for all chemicals and mixtures. The challenge is that not all end-users understand the language and are not well trained on the GHS.
9. **Zambia**: The GHS is being implemented and is a requirement for labelling and mandatory for all pesticide labelling.
10. **Zimbabwe:** SDS is required for labelling, particularly, for imported chemicals. However, the prevalence of illegal trade hinders the effectiveness of GHS in Zimbabwe.
11. **Other**: In addition to the requirements of supervisory authorities, it is necessary that consumers know what to require from suppliers of chemical products (e.g., GHS labelling, SDS).

No (20%) according to participants from the following countries:
1. **Saudi Arabia, Benin, Madagascar**
2. **Kenya**: Not yet, however, the draft chemical regulations 2019 require the use of GHS for all chemicals. A draft manual on the use of GHS for pesticides has been developed.

Chemicals but not pesticides (4%) according to participants from the following countries:

1. **United States of America**

Poll 4: Will making the GHS legally binding help addressing illegal trade in pesticides and other chemicals and mixtures? (N=24)

No – 88%,
Not sure -8%,
Yes - 4%

Question 3: What capacity building principles should be prioritised in your country? List your country in your response. What global capacity building tools on sound chemicals and waste management other than GHS and PRTR will be important for your country? List your country in your response.

COUNTRY

AFRICA	
Benin	➢ Online capacity building is needed in the country. ➢ A list of approved alternatives against pesticides is needed to inform sensitive stakeholders.
Madagascar	➢ Capacity building on the management of precursor substances, endocrine disrupting chemicals, e-waste, and chemical accident management is needed.
Tanzania	➢ Capacity building is needed on technical assistance on the GHS, the Food and Agriculture Organization's Code of Conduct on pesticide management, e-waste management and alternative pesticides based on SAICM.
South Africa	➢ Capacity building is needed to encourage innovation for clean production processes and technology. ➢ Tools for testing and adequate risk assessments are needed.
NORTHERN AMERICA	

United States of America	➢ Capacity building is desired for green and sustainable chemistry and assessment of alternatives for chemicals of concern.
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	
Brazil	➢ The country is interested in PRTR and GHS.
Dominican Republic	➢ Language is a limitation for the Dominican Republic and other Latino American countries. It is not common to find people that speak English fluently, they can understand English but cannot participate in a course conducted in English.
Guyana	➢ Guyana has a low carbon development strategy and therefore, capacity building in chemical and its nexus with this strategy is needed. ➢ The World Customs Organisation Tariff Codes on Trade in chemicals is useful to determine which chemicals are being traded.
MIDDLE EAST	
Iran	➢ Community needs and enforcement issues should be focused on. ➢ Capacity building that is relatable to NGOs and community workers should be focused on.
EASTERN EUROPE	
Belarus	➢ Intersectional collaboration should be focused on.

Poll 5: Should capacity-building principles be incorporated into all relevant aspects of the outcome of the beyond 2020 strategy on chemicals and waste? (N=19)

**Yes (100%) according to participants from the following countries:**
1. **Zambia, Iran, Sudan, Tanzania, South Africa, Madagascar, and Belarus**
2. **Sudan**: The country needs to incorporate all relevant aspects because of a lack of expertise and regulations to rule the strategy.
3. **Zambia:** The capacity building should be incorporated because not all stakeholders are conversant with what is contained in the strategy. Additionally, stakeholders need to be made aware of what is expected of them to implement it.
4. **Zimbabwe:** Capacity-building principles should be incorporated because of the successful implementation of the "Beyond 2020 Strategy" that requires all relevant stakeholders to contribute. For them to do this effectively, they need to be capacitated.
5. **Other**:
   - Training, enforcement, and surveillance is needed.
   - Legal framework and the implementation thereof.
   - Without capacity building and sharing of lessons learned, the outcomes will not be achieved.
   - Working with the public through specialized NGOs.
   - Most low to middle-income countries have low technical expertise in most international technical tools for pesticide management
   - The capacity building is important for efficiency in the management of chemicals and waste.
   - It is key to build it.
   - Chemicals and waste are an aspect of great concern in our countries.

Helpful resources:
- UNITAR's GHS webpage: https://unitar.org/sustainable-development-goals/planet/our-portfolio/globally-harmonized-system-classification-and-labelling-chemicals
- UNITAR's PRTR platform: https://prtr.unitar.org/site/home
- IOMC indicators: https://partnership.who.int/iomc/iomc-indicators-of-progress-in-implementing-saicm
- Future Policy Award: https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/future-policy-award-winners-announced/
- Compilation of recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, for consideration by the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management: http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/documents/meetings/IP4/Docs/SAICM_IP4_2_compilation-recommendations-SAICM-consideration-ICCM5.pdf
- The Knowledge Platform of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM): http://saicm.org/
- Global Minimum Transparency Standard for Hazardous Chemicals in Products: https://www.globalchemicaltransparency.org/
- HEJSupport online courses on SAICM issues of concern: https://hej-support.org/online-courses/
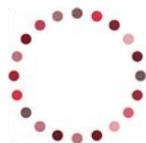
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If you have any question or require clarification on this initiative, please contact the SAICM Secretariat at saicm.chemicals@un.org or UCT at uctcops@outlook.com.

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