

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 January-June 2010.

A. UNITAR/ILO Global GHS capacity building programme activities

1. Country-based activities

2. Jamaica initiated the project “*Training and Capacity Building for the Implementation of the GHS*” late in 2009 and will hold a national GHS workshop 27-28 July 2010. The workshop will present, *inter alia*, the results of the comprehensibility testing, the results of situation and gap analysis, and planned next steps towards GHS implementation. Pilot-testing the basic GHS training course will also be part of the workshop.

3. UNITAR has signed agreements with Gambia and Zambia to initiate GHS project activities under the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund. Project activities started in early May and inception meetings will be held during July 2010 in both countries.

4. Uruguay held an in-depth training course to implement the GHS from 31 May to 3 June 2010. The target audience of this training course included technical experts responsible for classification and labelling, occupational health officers and officials responsible for hazard communication. UNITAR/ILO training materials were used. This training was conducted by and held in collaboration with the Orange House Partnership.

5. The project “Strengthening National and Regional Capacities to Implement the GHS in ASEAN” has been initiated in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and China. Project agreements are under development with all five countries.

2. Regional activities

6. A “GHS Stocktaking Workshop for Southeast, East, and Central Asia” is scheduled to take place from 15 to 17 September 2010, hosted in Beijing, China. The workshop is funded by the Governments of Switzerland and Germany as well as the European Union, and with support of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China, WHO, ILO and UNITAR. A workshop brochure and other information are now available on the event page of UNITAR website: <http://www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs/events/asia-stocktaking-workshop>.

3. Guidance, training and resource materials

7. As part of the UNITAR/ILO work to support countries to implement the GHS, a guidance document on “Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy” was first published in 2005. Since then, UNITAR/ILO have worked with several countries across different regions using this methodology as framework guidance for a systematic, country-driven approach to successful GHS implementation strategy development. Based on the experiences and feedback from our country, business and industry, and civil society partners, as well as international experts, the guidance document has been revised and updated and is now available for comment. The revised draft edition was reviewed at the UNITAR/ILO Programme Advisory Group (PAG) at its meeting of 30 June 2010 and is presented to the SCEGHS as UN/SCEGHS/19/INF.17. We kindly request that comments be provided during the SCEGHS session or in writing (via email) not later than 5 July 2010.

8. UNITAR has completed a draft of the “Introductory GHS Training Course” and complimentary powerpoint presentation 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 before being revised and finalised later this year. 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. The revised edition of the “Companion Guide to the GHS Purple Book” is now available. This June 2010 guide is based on the third revision edition (2009) of the GHS Purple Book. Subsequent editions of this Guide may be updated in view of ongoing revisions to the GHS Purple Book.

10. Based on comments from the countries where the package was pilot tested, the Comprehensibility Testing Package was updated and submitted to the Programme Advisory Group (PAG) members for their comments. This package including, *inter alia*, introductory presentations to the GHS comprehensibility testing, sample Safety Data Sheets and guidelines for interviewers, will be available for the use of countries by the end of this year.

4. Partnership programmes

11. UNITAR signed in December 2009 a Memorandum of Understanding with the *Coordinating Informational Service Center for CIS enterprises* (CISC), located in Moscow, Russia. The objective of this partnership is to enhance cooperation between CISC and UNITAR to implement the GHS in the Russian speaking countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. On 26 March 2010, UNITAR took part in the seminar on National

Strategy to Implement the GHS, organized by the Belarus State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus and CISC.

12. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in early 2010 between UNITAR and the *Orange House Partnership*. The main objective of this agreement is to assist developing countries and emerging economies with the introduction of compliance monitoring systems for chemicals and strengthening of existing programmes for the harmonization of national regulations on chemical safety based on the GHS.

13. UNITAR/ILO was invited by the Government of Tunisia through its Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity to a two-day workshop on "*Implementation of GHS, CLP and REACH in Tunisia*" held 18-19 May 2010 in Tunis, Tunisia. The aim of this workshop was to discuss, at the national level, the status of implementation of the three systems and to learn about the experiences of France and UNITAR/ILO with implementation.

14. UNITAR/ILO was invited to attend the Occupational Safety and Health Branch Annual Conference 2009-2010 held in Hong Kong, SAR on 25 February 2010. An introductory presentation on the GHS and an overview of the UNITAR/ILO Global Programme on Capacity Building for Implementation of the GHS was given.

5. Other matters

15. 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.

B. WSSD Global partnership for capacity building to implement the GHS

16. 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 and Australia, are also kindly acknowledged.

17. 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.

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