

Protecting People, the Environment, and Facilitating Trade
Through Chemical Hazard Communication

WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)

Annual Report 2008



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research



ORGANISATION
FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT



**PARTNERSHIPS
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

About WSSD Partnerships for Sustainable Development



Partnerships for sustainable development -- voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at implementing sustainable development -- were an important complementary outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002. At its 11th Session in May 2003, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) reaffirmed that these partnerships contribute to the implementation of intergovernmental commitments, recognizing that partnerships are a complement to, not a substitute for, intergovernmental commitments.

Additional information about Partnerships can be found at:

<www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/partnerships.htm>.

*The GHS Partnership Secretariat gratefully acknowledges
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A Message from the Founding Partners

2008 was a year when increasing numbers of countries and the private sector turned from planning for GHS implementation to taking further concrete actions. For example, in December 2008 the European Parliament and Council adopted the new Regulation on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures which aligns existing EU legislation to the GHS. In the USA, the draft proposal to revise the existing workplace Hazard Communication Standard to adopt the provisions of the GHS is undergoing the final stages of review prior to publication. Brazil recently issued proposed standards for terminology, classification, labelling and SDS based on the GHS. These and other activities worldwide – many highlighted in this report – demonstrate the strong motivation of countries to implement the GHS, but also highlight the enormous task ahead.

As countries and regions take more decisive action to implement the GHS it will become increasingly important to coordinate GHS implementation dates and transition periods around the globe. While the WSSD originally set a goal of 2008 to implement the GHS worldwide, many countries are still in the initial stages of harmonisation. As previous surveys from UNITAR/ILO and OECD suggest, however, interest in implementing the GHS is strong and 2008 may in fact be a watershed in GHS implementation. And in order to support a system that is implemented globally, a number of countries (including those supported by UNITAR/ILO) are well placed to implement the GHS.

Implementation of a system such as the GHS may require initial investments, but in the long run will support more efficient production and trade of chemicals, thereby reducing costs – a valuable benefit in challenging economic times. As the GHS grows in international importance, it is becoming increasingly vital to include developing, transition, and least developed countries in efforts to implement the system and to realise global benefits to human health and the environment. Based on experience to date, the network of expertise found within the Partnership means it is well placed to continue to provide important support. We invite ideas and suggestions for ways to improve mobilization of resources, strengthen the reach and effectiveness of the Partnership, integrate the GHS into international chemicals management and development planning efforts, and continue to further develop GHS capacity building and knowledge management around the world.

UNITAR, ILO and OECD appreciate and would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, the OPCW, and the Swedish Chemicals Agency in 2008. Equally important, we would like to thank the members of the Programme Advisory Group of the UNITAR/ILO *Global GHS Capacity Building Programme* who have provided continued technical and advisory support. Other governments and major groups are invited to join the Partnership and support core activities in 2009-2010 in order to meet the continued growing interest and commitment for GHS capacity building in developing and transition countries.

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Selected Partnership Highlights 2008

- Regional GHS Workshop for Countries of ECOWAS successfully held 13-15 May 2008 in Abuja, Nigeria, resulting in a communiqué recommending the establishment of Regional Committees to coordinate GHS implementation and the formulation and enactment of common GHS implementing legislation to be approved by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.
- Cambodia and the Philippines complete their national GHS capacity building projects
- The People's Republic of China host a National GHS Planning meeting in Beijing on 28 November 2009 to catalyse a national coordination process for GHS implementation
- Vietnam initiates a national GHS capacity building pilot project
- A GHS project proposal submitted by Zambia, in cooperation with UNITAR, was accepted by the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund, confirming that the GHS is an important tool for enabling implementation of SAICM

1. The WSSD Global GHS Partnership

The GHS

Communicating hazards of dangerous chemicals to workers and the public is a key foundation for protecting human health and the environment.

Communicating the hazards of dangerous chemicals to workers and the public is a key foundation for protecting human health and the environment. As a major break-through in this area, the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) was adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS (SCEGHS) in December 2002 and endorsed by ECOSOC in July 2003. The GHS has the ultimate goal of ensuring that information on chemical hazards (such as on labels and safety data sheets) is made available to workers and consumers in a harmonized and comprehensible format in countries around the world.¹

Internationally, chemical safety, including hazard communication and GHS implementation, is one of the issues that received specific attention at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). It was agreed to “encourage countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008”. This target had also been adopted by the third session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety in 2000. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), adopted in 2006, also includes significant activities related to the GHS. The GHS is the major international tool for effective chemical classification and hazard communication.

UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme

The UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme supports national and regional GHS capacity building activities, and develops and pilots training materials.

Early feedback from developing countries documented that widespread adoption of the GHS and effective chemical hazard communication requires that adequate support, training and technical assistance be made available to committed countries in need of building appropriate GHS-relevant legal and technical infrastructures.

In response to growing requests from countries for GHS capacity building, UNITAR and ILO initiated in 2001 the *UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Training and Capacity Building Programme*. The Programme aims at assisting countries and regions to build capacities for the implementation of the GHS by forming pilot project partnerships, and providing guidance documents, training materials, expert training and educational, awareness-raising and resource materials regarding the new system. Details regarding 2008 progress are found throughout this Annual Report and can

¹ Further information about the GHS can be found in Annex 1.

also be found at the UNITAR/ILO Programme website at:
<<http://www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs>>.

Initiation of the WSSD GHS Partnership by UNITAR, ILO and OECD

Over 25 governments, international organizations and NGOs responded with strong interest to participate in the Partnership.

In April 2002, UNITAR and ILO, in collaboration with OECD, initiated the *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS* as a way to mobilize resources and implement a number of specific support activities to strengthen capacities at all levels and sectors – in particular in developing and transition countries – towards implementing the GHS in sectors such as industrial workplaces, agriculture, transport and consumer products. Today, the Partnership is comprised of over 25 governments, international organizations, business and industry groups, and public interest and labour organizations, and continues to grow. Any parties interested in joining the Partnership are welcome to contact UNITAR.² The Partnership website is:

<http://www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs_partnership/index.htm>.

² Further information on the history of the GHS Partnership can be found in Annex 2. Information on other international bodies and initiatives relevant to the GHS can be found in Annex 3.

2. Partnership Objectives and Framework Workplan

Goal and Objectives

The WSSD GHS Partnership strives to mobilize support and catalyze partnerships for capacity building activities at the global, regional and national levels.

The goal of the WSSD GHS Partnership is to mobilize support and catalyze partnerships for coordinated activities at the global, regional and national levels to strengthen capacities in developing countries and countries in transition towards effective implementation of the GHS. In the medium and long-term, the Partnership is expected to lead to a decrease in environmental and human health related effects attributable to the use of hazardous chemicals. It thus makes a direct contribution to important objectives of sustainable development including protection of marginalized groups, protection of water supplies and drinking water, poverty eradication and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Specific objectives of the Partnership include mobilization of resources for:

- awareness raising and capacity development for GHS implementation at the regional level;
- awareness raising and capacity development for GHS implementation at the national level; and
- development of GHS guidance, training and resource material.

Partnership Programme Areas and Activities

To be recognized as a contribution to the Partnership, an activity should fall within any of the following four Programme Areas and make a significant contribution towards achieving Partnership indicators. The Partnership's programme areas are:

- (1) GHS Capacity Development at the Regional Level
- (2) GHS Capacity Development at the National Level
- (3) Development of GHS Awareness Raising, Capacity Building Guidance and Training Materials
- (4) Supporting Activities and Services for GHS Capacity Development

Projects and activities executed through the UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme are directly linked to the above Programme Areas and constitute a core contribution to the Partnership. Other Partnership activities can be implemented directly

by Partners, working in close collaboration with the UNITAR/ILO Programme and its Programme Advisory Group. See text box below.

What Constitutes a Core GHS Partnership Activity?

The GHS Partnership attempts to mobilize support for a number of agreed activities. Activities constitute a contribution to the GHS Partnership if they fall within the programme areas, as agreed at the first Meeting of the Partners. Activities are either implemented through the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme or directly by Partners. In all cases, activities are coordinated through, and technically reviewed by, the Programme Advisory Group (PAG) of the UNITAR/ILO GHS Programme. Not all core Partnership activities are therefore executed by UNITAR/ILO. Countries and organizations may also execute Partnership activities independently, if the activity contributes to one of the Partnership indicators and is coordinated through the PAG. It is also recognized that many other valuable GHS capacity development activities are organized independently of the WSSD GHS Partnership. Those activities do not belong to the core program of the Partnership, but are presented in a special section of the annual reports for the Partnership.

Partnership Indicators

The recommended indicators are the following:

- Number of Regional GHS Awareness Raising Workshops organized in major regions.
- Number of Regional GHS capacity assessments and implementation strategies prepared.
- Number of Regional partner organizations identified.
- Number of Country-based pilot projects on GHS Action Plan Development completed in each UN region, including: awareness raising workshop, situation analysis, action plan development and implementing legislation.
- National GHS Action Plan projects initiated in the greatest possible number of countries.
- GHS and hazard communication awareness raising materials prepared, peer-reviewed and widely disseminated.
- GHS capacity building guidance and training materials prepared, peer-reviewed and pilot tested.

2008 Financial and In-kind Contributions to the WSSD GHS Partnership

UNITAR/ILO/OECD would like to thank the following countries and organizations for their contributions to the Partnership in 2008:

A. Support of Partnership Coordination and Secretariat

B. 2008 Financial Support to Core Partnership Activities

UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme

Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) Switzerland USD 83,000

*for East and Central Asia GHS Capacity Building Project (2008-09)

GTZ on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany USD 26,000

*for the Vietnam National GHS Capacity Building Project (2007-09)

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemicals Weapons USD 16,000

* for the Regional GHS Workshop for ECOWAS Countries (This figure excludes the costs borne by OPCW of the international travel of a number of participants)

Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI) through the Basel Convention Technical Cooperation Trust Fund USD 70,000

*for Development of Training Modules on the GHS in the Context of Africa

Other Core Partnership Activities

Government of Germany through the World Health Organisation USD 66,000

*for the Regional GHS Workshop for ECOWAS Countries and the WHO GHS ECOWAS Seminar

C. In-kind Financial Contributions in 2008 to Core Partnership Activities

UNITAR would like to recognise in-kind contributions from partners which generally included provision of expertise for workshops and trainings, and support and facilitation of meetings and events: the United States, the Government of Nigeria, and the Economic Commission of West African States.

*Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars

3. GHS Capacity Development at the Regional Level - Programme Area 1

Countries within regions often share similar needs and approaches towards chemical hazard communication. Also, regional economic cooperation or free trade initiatives increasingly include environmental, labour and health related issues. This programme area includes activities such as regional GHS awareness raising workshops, regional capacity assessments and the facilitation of regional GHS implementation strategies.

Initial indicators for this Programme Area include the following:

- Number of Regional GHS Awareness Raising Workshops organized in major regions.
- Number of Regional GHS capacity assessments and implementation strategies prepared.
- Number of Regional partner organizations identified.

2008 Activities and Progress Made

West Africa (ECOWAS)

In support of cooperation in the subregion, the Regional GHS Workshop for Countries of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) was held 13-15 May 2008 in Abuja, Nigeria. The workshop was sponsored by the Governments of Germany and Switzerland, and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemicals Weapons (OPCW) and organized in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Environment, Housing and Urban Development, Nigeria, the ECOWAS Commission, the World Health Organisation, and UNITAR/ILO. Over 100 representatives from government, business and industry, and public interest and labour organisations from all 15 countries of ECOWAS participated in the workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop, a communiqué was agreed by workshop participants on next steps and necessary actions for GHS implementation. Workshop presentations, reports and outcomes can be found on the workshop website at:

<www.unitar.org/cwm/ghs/ghs15.html>.

In addition, on 12 May 2008 a one-day health-sector workshop on the GHS and SAICM was held in Abuja, Nigeria. There were 23 representatives from 13 ECOWAS countries. Information was provided about the relevance of the GHS to the health sector, and a number of chemical safety priorities were identified for possible SAICM QSPTF projects. On 13-15 May 2008, the health sector participants joined the regional workshop on GHS implementation,

The GHS Regional Workshop for ECOWAS resulted in the agreement of a communiqué on actions for GHS implementation.

providing an opportunity to make links with GHS stakeholders in other sectors.

Plans for 2009-2010

East and Central Asia Regional GHS Workshop

Asia is a key region for capacity building for GHS implementation.

A “Regional Workshop on Chemical Hazard Communication and GHS Implementation for Countries of East and Central Asia”, is currently scheduled for late 2009 in Beijing, China. The purpose of the workshop will be to discuss experiences with chemical hazard communication in East and Central Asia and consider concrete measures related to GHS implementation, including, in particular, the coordination of implementation among regional trading partners. It is expected that countries that have already engaged in significant GHS capacity building within the region, for example, a number of Southeast Asian countries – as well as Japan and Korea – will also be invited to share experiences and lessons learned.

GCC Regional Workshop

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretariat, Qatar Ministry of Environment, UNEP ROWA and UNITAR/ILO will hold a Regional GHS Workshop for the Arab States of the Gulf, 10-11 June 2009 in Doha, Qatar. Representatives of customs, environment and occupational health and safety and other sectors related to the GHS from all GCC countries will be invited to attend.

SADC

The regional technical review meeting scheduled for 2007 has been further postponed to 2009. Using the South African standard for GHS as a basis, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Standardisation body (SADCSTAN), will work to develop a standard for regional application of GHS for the 14 countries of SADC. UNITAR/ILO, with financial support from the Government of Switzerland, continue to support this effort.

Outstanding Requests for Regional Workshops

While a number of regional strategies and workshops have been held since the founding of the Partnership, a number of geographic regions continue to request support for regional approaches to GHS implementation. UNITAR/ILO have received (to date) requests for regional capacity building activities from the following:

Central America (Central American Commission on Environment and Development, CCAD)

In January 2007, the Central American Council of Environment Ministers, composed of Environment Ministries from all Central American countries and Dominican Republic, adopted an agreement reiterating their commitment to achieve the 2020 Johannesburg goal (and restated at Dubai, ICCM, 2006). The agreement further asks the CCAD Executive Secretariat to coordinate with UNITAR/ILO to strengthen national and regional capacities with the objective of implementing the GHS in Central America.

Countries and organizations interested in supporting a regional workshop are encouraged to contact UNITAR.

The Caribbean

At the “Caribbean Workshop on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and related chemicals and hazardous waste management instruments”, held in Bridgetown, Barbados, 10-13 March 2009, UNITAR was requested to convene a workshop for Caribbean stakeholders to raise awareness on the benefits to be derived from the implementation of the GHS.



4. GHS Capacity Development at the Country Level - Programme Area 2

Country-based GHS capacity building projects serve to catalyse national GHS implementation through multi-stakeholder and multi-sector collaboration. They also provide a testing ground to review drafts of GHS-related guidance and training materials. The results of national GHS activities provide important feedback to the international community regarding opportunities and challenges associated with GHS implementation in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Activities in this programme area include support of national GHS awareness raising workshops, GHS situation and gap analysis and national GHS implementation strategy development involving government, business and industry, and public interest and labour organisations.

Initial indicators for this Programme Area include the following:

- Number of Country-based pilot projects on GHS Action Plan Development completed in each UN region, including: awareness raising workshop, situation analysis, action plan development and implementing legislation.
- National GHS Action Plan projects initiated in the greatest possible number of countries.

2008 Activities and Progress Made

People's Republic of China (PR China)

On 28 November 2008, PR China organised a National GHS Planning Meeting in Beijing, which was a formal launch of China's GHS implementation efforts. Over 50 participants representing 40 ministries, agencies and organizations were in attendance. The meeting recommended that China consider a national coordination mechanism for GHS implementation and also consider developing a national GHS implementation strategy. UNITAR and ILO representatives participated in the meeting to support future cooperation for GHS capacity building in the country and the wider region. This meeting was supported, in part, by the Government of Switzerland.

Photo 1: Participants at the China National GHS Planning Meeting



Cambodia

As a result of activities completed under their GHS Capacity Building project, in 2008 Cambodia developed a National Implementation Strategy (NIS) and draft sub-decree on GHS implementation. On 26 December 2008, Cambodia held a National Review Workshop including over 50 participants from various government agencies, academia, NGOs and labour organisations, and provincial governments. The workshop was an opportunity for participants to provide final comment and feedback on the NIS and to formulate a resolution among all stakeholders to commit to GHS implementation. The key elements of the agreed NIS include, *inter alia*, that: a permanent cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder coordinating mechanism should be established in order to support GHS implementation and other sound chemicals management initiatives, such as SAICM; further capacity development, education and awareness raising on the GHS should be conducted; participatory mechanisms for stakeholders be involved in the GHS should be improved; and further financial support from donors and international organizations will be sought to support next steps in GHS implementation. Cambodia will continue to execute agreed activities from the NIS based on available resources.

The Philippines

In 2008, based on the outcomes of the activities of the capacity building project, the Philippines completed the development of a National GHS Implementation Strategy combining elements of their draft sectoral implementation plans. These were reviewed at the National GHS Strategic Planning and Review Workshop which was held on 13 February 2008. It was attended by 71 participants from concerned government agencies, business and industry, civil society, academia and other stakeholders. An important outcome of the workshop was the development of a Strategic Plan outlining the goals, activities and suggested implementation mechanisms for the remaining actions needed to achieve effective implementation of the GHS in the four sectors affected by the GHS.

A resolution to implement the plan and move forward with agreed actions was also endorsed by all concerned stakeholders. Meanwhile, the GHS Implementing and Coordinating Committee is preparing the Final Draft of the Joint Administrative Order for the Implementation of GHS. It was also agreed that implementation would start with single chemicals which are listed in the PCL (Priority Chemical List), Chemical Control Act and those single chemical substances with high production volume. It is expected that the transition period for GHS implementation will be three years.

The Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) focused its efforts on raising public awareness by disseminating GHS materials, including 3,000 posters and 3,600 brochures. Moreover, OSHC conducted learning sessions and in-plant training on GHS in January and June respectively, which benefited a total of 142 participants and 87 companies. On 25-27 May 2008, a special course on GHS during the Seminar on the Safe Use of Chemicals at Work was delivered, which involved 26 companies with 37 participants. At the 11th National Occupational Safety and Health Congress held on 10 October 2008 by OSHC, Dr. Hiroshi Jonai, Professor of Nihon University, Japan presented a paper entitled "The Status of Globally Harmonized System Classification and Hazard Communication of Chemicals (GHS) Implementation".

Vietnam

During 2008, Vietnam completed a GHS situation and gap analysis conducted through surveys and inter-sectoral interviews. They also completed GHS comprehensibility testing (CT), including a workshop on the contents and methodology of CT for interviewers and field testing (30-31 October 2008). The workshop was attended by 28 participants including graduate students of the Chemical Faculty of Hanoi National University, who were trained as

interviewers, while the rest were representatives of working groups, companies where interviews would be conducted, and relevant ministerial agencies. After the training, field interviews were conducted in seven companies, three fertilizer and pesticide selling agents, and two farms using pesticides. There were a total of 205 respondents.

A National GHS Workshop was held on 20-21 November 2008. Attending the workshop were 42 delegates from relevant ministries (Ministry of Industry & Trade, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment, Ministry of Police, Ministry of Education and Training), associations and labour organizations. The workshop reviewed the situation and gap analysis, results of CT, and initiated work to develop sectoral action plans to address priority GHS implementation activities to begin in 2009. Representatives of the Swiss Embassy, GTZ, UNITAR, and Nihon University of Japan participated as resource persons.

Photo 2: Vietnam National GHS Workshop Group Photo



Plans for 2009-2010

New Pilot Countries

Jamaica

For 2009-2010, with funding from the Government of Switzerland, UNITAR/ILO will support Jamaica in a 2-year GHS implementation pilot project. Activities under this project include a national GHS workshop, development of situation and gap analyses, development of a National GHS Implementation Strategy, and other GHS implementation and capacity building activities.

Uruguay

In 2009, Uruguay will conduct an enabling 9-month GHS project which includes a GHS situation and gap analysis and a National GHS Workshop (planned for April 2009). It is expected that the results of these activities will lend momentum to GHS implementation in the country.

Zambia

Zambia was awarded a SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund grant for activities to strengthen capacities for SAICM implementation and support GHS capacity building. This project will build on activities completed over the course of the 2001-2003 pilot project. During the previous project, Zambia established a national situation analysis and undertook comprehensibility testing to examine necessary actions needed for GHS implementation in the relevant sectors and among the various stakeholders. Zambia also made progress in drafting a National GHS Standard – the *Zambian Standard on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*. This new project will focus on finalising and adopting the standard and providing more in-depth training on the GHS in order to further enable SAICM implementation in Zambia. The project will also share experiences in the region, particularly the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Outstanding requests for national capacity building

UNITAR/ILO have 83 requests for capacity building assistance on file, indicating that GHS implementation remains a high national priority.



5. Development of GHS Awareness Raising, Capacity Building, Guidance and Training Materials – Programme Area 3

Activities in this programme area include the development of GHS information brochures and GHS capacity building guidance and training materials, *e.g.* for implementation strategy development, comprehensibility testing guidance, and training modules on various GHS-related topics (such as classification, labelling and development of SDS).

The initial two indicators for this Programme Area are the following:

- A range of GHS and hazard communication awareness raising materials prepared, peer-reviewed and widely disseminated.
- A range of GHS capacity building guidance and training materials prepared, peer-reviewed and pilot tested.

2008 Activities and Progress Made

GHS Training Courses

UNITAR/ILO continued the development of GHS training courses in 2008. A draft of the course “Introduction to the GHS” was completed, including training text and a PowerPoint presentation. In addition, UNITAR/ILO are currently exploring options for adapting this course into an online format (“e-learning”). For the Advanced GHS Training Course, a process was initiated for an expert group to review the draft lessons on classification. This group meets regularly via teleconference to discuss necessary revisions and development of the materials. These courses are being developed in response to strong demand from pilot countries and others, and supported by the discussions at the November 2005 Global GHS Workshop.

IOMC GHS Resource Guide

The participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), also in collaboration with UNECE, developed a guide titled, “IOMC: Assisting countries with the transition phase for GHS implementation”. This document will be made available on the IOMC website (<http://www.who.int/iomc/en/>) as well as the UNITAR website.

Plans for 2009-2010

Over the coming years, a number of guidance and training materials may be revised or further developed. These will be developed based on the feedback from pilot countries and lessons learned from project activities.

Guidance Document on Developing a Regional GHS Implementation Strategy

Using the lessons learned and feedback from the ASEAN Regional GHS Capacity Building project, as well as ongoing efforts in other regions, such as SADC, UNITAR plans to develop a standardised guidance document on regional GHS strategy development. This guidance document will retain the flexible nature of the ASEAN project while providing systematic and comprehensive guidance which can be tailored to a region's specific needs. This document could then be made available to other regions that are working to coordinate regional GHS implementation.

Revised Guidance Document on Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy

For countries that have finished their pilot projects, UNITAR developed and distributed a questionnaire on the project and guidance materials. The results of this survey have been compiled and are currently being used to update the guidance document on Developing a National GHS Implementation Strategy. It is expected that a revised draft will be available in 2009.

Training Courses on the GHS

Over the course of 2009-2010, UNITAR will pilot test the draft training course on Introduction to the GHS. The expert group will continue to review and revise the Advanced GHS Training Course lessons on classification and the hazard communication portion of the training course will continue to be developed.

UNITAR and Basel Convention GHS Training

UNITAR and the Basel Convention Secretariat have signed an MOA to develop adapted GHS training materials relevant to the Basel Convention and the African region. UNITAR will work with the Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centre in Nigeria to develop and execute the training.

Other Training and Guidance Materials

The widespread and effective implementation of the GHS will require the development, revision and use of guidance and training materials across a number of GHS-related subjects. In addition to the completion of the activities listed above and subject to availability of resources, UNITAR/ILO, working together with interested partners, may pursue in 2009-2010 other opportunities for development of awareness raising and guidance materials, for example:

- A guide on GHS in the context of “mainstreaming” and the Millennium Development Goals;
- A brochure on GHS as a tool for the implementation of international chemicals management agreements;
- GHS Awareness Raising Clearing House website; and
- Capacity Building Guidance and Training materials for implementation of the UNRTDG and the GHS for the transport sector.

Countries and organizations that are interested in sponsoring such activities are encouraged to contact UNITAR.



6. Supporting Activities and Services for GHS Capacity Development – Programme Area 4

Activities in this programme area include the provision of supporting services for GHS capacity development which do not easily fall in to any of the previous Programme Areas. They include, for example, activities such as a GHS capacity needs assessment surveys, development of a GHS capacity building website, and side events and presentations.

2008 Activities and Progress Made

GHS Presentations

Third Arab Conference on Occupational Safety and Health

A UNITAR representative provided a presentation on the GHS at the Third Arab Conference on Occupational Safety and Health in Manama, Bahrain. The conference, organized by the Ministry of Labour of Baharain, in cooperation with the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO), under the title “Better Occupational Health and Safety,” was held 4-6 November. About 500 participants from regional governments and international organisations attended.

Third Latin American Conference on Chemical Accidents and Second Meeting of Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Centres

UNITAR provided a presentation on the GHS and GHS capacity building at the Third Latin American Conference on Chemical Accidents and Second Meeting of Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Centres, 3-5 November 2008, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in collaboration with CIQUIME

(http://www.ciquime.org.ar/iii_conferencia_latinoamericana_sobre_accidentes_q.html).

Sixth UNU/GIST Joint Programme Workshop on “Sound Management of Hazardous Chemicals and Sustainable Energy”

At the invitation of the United Nations University and Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST) in Korea, UNITAR participated and discussed the GHS at the Sixth UNU/GIST Joint Programme Workshop on “Sound Management of Hazardous Chemicals and Sustainable Energy”, 20-23 October 2008.

UNEP ROWA Regional Workshop for Preparations of the 2nd OEWG on Mercury

At the 15-18 June 2008 UNEP Regional Workshop for Preparations of the 2nd OEWG on Mercury in Doha, Qatar, a presentation on the relevance of GHS for mercury management was given.

Plans for 2009-2010

During 2009-2010, UNITAR, ILO, OECD and other Partners will continue to support a range of GHS-related capacity development activities as opportunities arise, including presentations at related meetings and events.

7. Related Initiatives and Activities in 2008

A number of GHS activities were implemented in 2008 which were not directly co-ordinated through the UNITAR/ILO Programme Advisory Group, but nevertheless are important activities contributing to the WSSD goal of GHS implementation.

National Activities

Brazil

In 2008, the GT-GHS Working Group held two meetings in Brasilia to consider terms of reference and decisions needed regarding implementation issues (revision of legislation to be in line with GHS, transitional periods, application of the building block approach, etc.). Currently, the Ministry of Health is in the process of translating the Purple Book into Portuguese. Meetings in Sao Paulo and Brasilia were convened to discuss the harmonization of the translation of expressions and certain words, with the participation of more than 12 governmental and private institutions. It is expected that the translation will be finished in the first quarter of 2009.

The Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT), through the Commission of Studies of Information on Safety, Health and Environment related to Chemicals (CB-10), issued standards for public comment for terminology, classification, labelling and SDS based on the GHS. The approved standards will be published in the coming year.

A large number of awareness raising events on GHS also took place in 2008, including:

- GHS and Household Cleaning Materials, organized by ABIPLA, in September, in Sao Paulo, with 80 participants;
- GHS and TDG, organized by SINDIQUIM, ABIQUIM and the Ministry of Labour, in November, in Porto Alegre, with 120 participants;
- GHS and REACH, seminar and one-day training course, organized by INMETRO in partnership with the European Union, in September, in Rio de Janeiro, with 40 participants;
- GHS and its implementation, panel in 1st Congress of Contingency and Emergency Plan, organized by PETROBRAS, in September, in Rio de Janeiro, with 30 participants;
- GHS and its implementation, panel in the Brazilian Congress of Occupational Hygiene, organized by ABHO, in September, in Recife, with 300 participants;
- Explanation on GHS and its implementation, to the Brazilian Standing Tripartite Commission (CTPP), responsible for health & safety regulations, from the Ministry of Labour, in November, in Brasilia.

To promote regional cooperation, a representative of the Ministry of Health of Chile visited Brazil in October. The purpose of the visit was to share experiences with the implementation of the GHS, to be informed about the status of implementation of the GHS in Brazil and to visit the Ministries (Health, Labour, Trade and Environment) and the chemical industry association (ABIQUIM) involved in GHS issues, in Brasilia and Sao Paulo.

Japan

Based on the 2nd revised edition of the GHS, Japan is revising its Japanese Industrial Standards (JIS) for labelling and SDS and will make new JIS-classification accordingly, as well as revise the old version of its classification manual and technical guidance during 2008-2009. Japan will also complete a new manual and guidance for mixtures and translate it into English. In order to better understand the classification criteria and labelling system of the GHS, Japan has made educational materials in Japanese and in English, which are available in CD format and downloadable from the website. Japan continued to classify substances beyond the 1500 completed in 2007. The computer software for GHS classification of mixtures is expected to be available in English before the end of 2009. The awareness raising resources and results of these classifications can be found at: <www.safe.nite.go.jp/english/ghs_index.html>.

Within the region, and over the last four years, Japan has carried out GHS capacity building training courses in ASEAN countries. Three training courses are currently provided for beginners, for instructors and for classifiers respectively. Participants who have completed these courses are contributing to capacity building in ASEAN countries as lecturers in training courses as well as leaders in the private sector.

Republic of Korea

In Korea, the Ministry of Labour revised the “Enforcement Regulations of the Industrial Safety and Health Act” and “Chemicals Management Act” in December 2006. As part of this, and in order to conform to the GHS, a “Notice for the Classification/ Labelling of Chemicals and MSDS Drawing” was issued by Ministry of Labor on 27 June 2008. The transition period for these new regulations is until 30 June 2010 for substances and 30 June 2013 for mixtures.

The Ministry of Environment revised the “Enforcement Regulations for the Management of Harmful Chemicals Act” in November 2007, and established the “Regulations for the Classification and Labelling of Hazards, etc.” in July 2008, in which 1,566 chemicals were classified. It is expected that the regulations will be implemented after setting the transition period for substances until 30 June 2011

and for mixtures until 30 June 2013. Moreover, since 2008 the Ministry of Environment has been reviewing the implications applying GHS classification and labelling to mixtures.

Since 2007, the Government of the Republic of Korea has been offering a free training program which runs at least once a month. On 20 October 2008, the University of Korea organized a GHS seminar at which UNITAR provided a presentation on the GHS and discussed opportunities for further collaboration. Participants included representatives from the University, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, KOSHA (Korean Occupational Safety and Health Administration), National Emergency Management Agency, and the private sector.

As of 1 January 2009, GHS-based SDSs for 6,314 chemicals have been completed and it is expected that 5,000 others will be added in the second half of 2009. In addition, by operating a GHS Hazards Homepage (<http://www.nier.go.kr>) and a unified GHS homepage of the government (<http://www.ghs.go.kr>), information related to GHS is available to businesses and the public.

Image 1: Screenshot of the Korean GHS Homepage



Malaysia

The Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) of Malaysia has prepared a Draft Occupational Safety and Health (Chemicals Classification, Labeling and Safety Data Sheet) (CLASS) Regulations, incorporating GHS elements. The CLASS regulations are anticipated to be gazetted by 2010 and will be implemented in

stages. These regulations propose a transition period of one year for substances and three years for mixtures. Together with the CLASS regulations, a list of hazardous chemicals including about 200 substances will be published and periodically updated. Meanwhile, the Malaysian Standard on GHS was finalized by the Malaysian Standards Committee and is now awaiting approval. This standard has been developed based on the 2nd revised edition of purple book. In addition, translation of the second revised edition of purple book into Malay language was completed. DOSH is preparing GHS modules for the public and for classifiers. These modules include awareness raising, basic, intermediate 1 (for single substances) and intermediate 2 (for mixtures).

Switzerland

A stakeholder consultation on the legislative proposal to amend the Chemicals Ordinance was launched between 20 February and 5 May 2008. It involved governments of the Cantons as well as relevant industrial and professional associations and other NGOs. The proposed amendment aimed at - *inter alia* - enabling substances and mixtures that are placed on the market for industrial use to be classified and labelled according to the criteria of the GHS in order to reduce trade barriers and contribute to internationally harmonized communication of chemical risks. The official report on the outcome of the stakeholder consultation has been published by the federal authorities in November 2008 (French version: <www.admin.ch/ch/f/gg/pc/documents/1578/Ergebnis.pdf>). Almost all replies from stakeholders supported the proposal that chemical products for industrial uses can be classified and labelled according to the GHS. The revised Chemicals Ordinance has been adopted by the Federal Council of Ministers on 14 January 2009, and the new rules on classification and labelling of industrial chemicals entered into force on 1 February 2009. Full implementation of the GHS in Swiss legislation, including regulations that trigger obligations based on classification of substances and mixtures (referred to as downstream legislation) will be carried out at a later stage.

Thailand

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of Thailand, in cooperation with Mahidol University, developed a GHS self-learning CD. This CD, along with other GHS capacity building materials can be accessed at:

pcs.fda.moph.go.th/csnet/download.asp?type=GHSinterest. The CD contains simple information about the GHS for school children with games and awareness raising materials, and for university students with technical information about GHS classification, labelling and SDSs. The FDA distributed copies of the CD to schools, universities and vocational colleges, and libraries. A sample picture of the

distributed CD is found in Image 2 below. In consultation with educational experts from the Thailand Environment Institute, the FDA is now preparing a project to develop a learning process about the GHS for school children, with pilot testing planned in two schools in 2009.

Image 2: Cover of the Thai Awareness Raising CD



United States

In the United States, GHS implementation primarily affects four key regulatory agencies: the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Labour Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Each agency has its own statutory authorities and implementing regulations and would need to adapt them appropriately to implement the GHS.

Transport of Dangerous Goods regulations in the USA are based on the 15th revised edition of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. Criteria for physical hazards have been substantively aligned with GHS via HM-215I rule-making. In addition, harmonization with the 15th revised edition of the UN Recommendations, including adoption of aquatic toxicity criteria was finalized in January 2009 via HM-215J rule-making.

The Department of Labor/Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has completed a draft proposal to change its existing Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to adopt the provisions of the GHS. The proposal, based on comments received following publication of an Advance Notice of Proposed Rule-making (September 2006), is undergoing the final stages of review prior to publication and will include a preliminary economic analysis. OSHA continues work on several guidance products and compliance assistance tools that will facilitate the transition from the current

HCS to the GHS.

The primary Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program that would be affected by GHS implementation is the pesticide registration program, which involves EPA review and approval of all pesticide labels. EPA has focused efforts on addressing stakeholder concerns raised in an October 2006 public workshop and on improving communication and outreach through an upgraded web site and other means. Pilot activities have been initiated (on a voluntary basis) to develop GHS-compliant classification and labelling for a select group of pesticide products. A White Paper outlining initial thoughts about potential application of GHS to pesticide labels is available at: www.epa.gov/oppfead1/international/globalharmon.htm. Documents from a stakeholder workshop are also available at this site; public comments on the White Paper are available at: www.regulations.gov (Docket No. OPP-2004-0205).

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) staff have undertaken analyses of the potential impact of GHS on existing policies. A policy statement on GHS is posted on the website at: www.cpsc.gov/phth/GHSpolicy.html.

Regional Activities

East Asia

China, Japan and Korea cooperated on a project to conduct comparative research on the GHS for the harmonisation of GHS implementation in North-East Asian countries. Further, a manual for the classification and labelling of target materials has been drawn up to compare these countries (Korea/China/Japan). The first discussion based on outcomes was held in October 2008 in Korea, the second GHS Specialists Conference is expected to be held in March 2009 in Japan, and the third Conference in September 2009 in China.

European Union

On 16 December 2008 the European Parliament and the Council adopted the new Regulation on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, Regulation (EC) 1272/2008, OJ L 353 (CLP Regulation), which aligns existing EU legislation to the GHS (see Image 3). The new act will complement the REACH Regulation on the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals. The CLP Regulation entered into force on 20 January 2009 and will, after a transitional period, replace the current rules on classification, labelling and packaging of substances (Directive 67/548/EEC) and mixtures (Directive 1999/45/EC). According to the new rules, the deadline for substance classification will be 1 December 2010 and for mixtures will be 1 June 2015. For

more information: ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/ghs/index_en.htm.

Together with the compromise package for the CLP Regulation, the European Parliament and the Council adopted two related acts, which adapt further Community acts to the new rules on classification and labelling, Directive 2008/112/EC, OJ L 345 and Regulation (EC) 1336/2008, OJ L 354. The publication of the adopted acts in the Official Journal before the end of 2008 makes the EU one of the international leaders in the actual uptake of the UN GHS.

Meanwhile, the preparation of detailed guidance for the application of GHS criteria is under development in the framework of REACH Implementation Project 3.6 (RIP 3.6), taking account of the expertise of experts from EU Member States and industry. It is expected that the guidance will be finalised around mid-2009. In parallel to specific guidance, general guidance is also being developed, focussing on basic features and procedures related to classification and labelling in the EU context. The guidance provides a quick overview of the new legal requirements for classification and labelling in the EU, i.e. suppliers of chemicals and non-EU target groups. This guidance document should be available around spring 2009.

Furthermore, the European Commission will organise a Conference on "EU and world-wide rules for classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals" on 17 June 2009 in Brussels. The conference aims to inform authorities, industry and other stakeholders about the new provisions for classification, labelling and packaging in the EU, placing them in the global context of GHS. It will explain the main features of the new legislation, focusing on practical aspects. It will also provide up-to-date information on the CLP guidance documents and tools. Further information about the conference is available at:

ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/information/events/index_en.htm.

Image 3: First Page of the EU GHS-based Regulation

31.12.2008	EN	Official Journal of the European Union	L 353/1
I			
<i>(Acts adopted under the EC Treaty/Euratom Treaty whose publication is obligatory)</i>			
REGULATIONS			
REGULATION (EC) No 1272/2008 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL			
of 16 December 2008			
on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, amending and repealing			
Directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC, and amending Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006			
(Text with EEA relevance)			
<p>THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,</p> <p>Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 95 thereof,</p> <p>Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,</p> <p>Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee ⁽¹⁾,</p> <p>Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty ⁽²⁾,</p> <p>Whereas:</p> <p>(1) This Regulation should ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment as well as the free movement of chemical substances, mixtures and certain specific articles, while enhancing competitiveness and innovation.</p> <p>(2) The efficient functioning of the internal market for substances, mixtures and those articles can be achieved only if the requirements applicable to them do not differ significantly between Member States.</p> <p>(3) A high level of human health and environmental protection should be ensured in the approximation of legislation on the criteria for classification and labelling of substances and mixtures, with the goal of achieving sustainable development.</p>	<p>(4) Trade in substances and mixtures is an issue relating not only to the internal market, but also to the global market. Enterprises should therefore benefit from the global harmonisation of rules for classification and labelling and from consistency between, on the one hand, the rules for classification and labelling for supply and use and, on the other hand, those for transport.</p> <p>(5) With a view to facilitating worldwide trade while protecting human health and the environment, harmonised criteria for classification and labelling have been carefully developed over a period of 12 years within the United Nations (UN) structure, resulting in the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (hereinafter referred to as 'the GHS').</p> <p>(6) This Regulation follows various declarations whereby the Community confirmed its intention to contribute to the global harmonisation of criteria for classification and labelling, not only at UN level, but also through the incorporation of the internationally agreed GHS criteria into Community law.</p> <p>(7) The benefits for enterprises will increase as more countries in the world adopt the GHS criteria in their legislation. The Community should be at the forefront of this process to encourage other countries to follow and with the aim of providing a competitive advantage to industry in the Community.</p> <p>(8) Therefore it is essential to harmonise the provisions and criteria for the classification and labelling of substances, mixtures and certain specific articles within the Community, taking into account the classification criteria and labelling rules of the GHS, but also by building on the 40 years of experience obtained through implementation of existing Community chemicals legislation and maintaining</p>		
<p>⁽¹⁾ OJ C 204, 9.8.2008, p. 47.</p> <p>⁽²⁾ Opinion of the European Parliament of 3 September 2008 (not yet published in the Official Journal).</p>			

UNEP/Regional Office for Western Asia

In 2008 UNEP/ROWA promoted the GHS by highlighting its role through the following forums:

- *5-10 April 2008; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia–Regional Training Workshop on GHS*, held back-to-back with the SAICM Arab Coordination meeting & meeting of the Arab Technical Group on MEAs on Chemical & Waste Management. Based on this workshop it was recommended that UNEP\ROWA should consider organizing a training workshop on GHS as a priority in 2009 and upon fund availability, in cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS), UNEP, and partner countries, along with participation of key speakers from relevant international organizations.
- *4-5 May 2008; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia-2nd Joint Meeting of GCC Groups on Ozone, Chemicals & Customs*. A presentation was given on GHS and it was recommended to organize training workshop in Doha, Qatar, during which ROWA will provided technical support and invite related experts.
- *4-6 November 2008; Cairo, Egypt-Meeting of the Arab Technical Group on Hazardous Waste & Chemical MEAs*. During the meeting, participating countries were encouraged to include GHS in their national and regional strategies of environmentally sound management of chemicals.
- *23-26 November 2008; Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic- Arab Symposium for Sound Management of Chemicals*. One of the main aims of the symposium was to brief various sectors on GHS and how to implement the same on national & regional levels.

International Activities

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

In 2008, the following OECD proposals were adopted by the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS, subject to editorial changes: a proposal for a new GHS chapter on Ozone Depleting Chemicals and consequential changes in other parts of the GHS, a proposal for the revision of the GHS Chapter 3.4 *Respiratory or Skin Sensitization* regarding strong versus weak sensitizers, and a proposal for the revision of GHS Chapter 4.1 *Hazardous to the Aquatic Environment* and Annex 10 *Guidance on transformation/dissolution of metals and metal compounds in aqueous media* regarding the validation of the Transformation/Dissolution Protocol. A progress report on terrestrial environmental hazards was also submitted to the Sub-Committee, as well as two reports related to the validation of the Transformation/Dissolution Protocol, which support the proposal for revision of GHS Chapter 4.1 and Annex 10. The Task Force on Harmonization of Classification and Labelling met in April 2008 at

OECD, following an expert group meeting on terrestrial environmental hazards and a meeting of an extended validation management group for the validation of the Transformation/Dissolution Protocol.

The Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI)

The Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI) is engaged in institutional cooperation with Macedonia, Serbia and Viet Nam with a particular emphasis on implementation of the GHS. These countries are all establishing framework legislation in the area of chemicals risk management. Pursuant to such laws they introduce detailed regulation on the classification, labelling, packaging and safety data sheets of chemicals. Emphasis is placed on capacity building, enforcement, stakeholders' involvement, and the transfer of institutional experience.

UN Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS/UNECE

In 2008, the UN Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS (SCEGHS) and the UNECE as Secretariat to the SCEGHS, continued to support the GHS through biannual meetings of the UNSCEGHS in July and December. Further information may be found at: www.unece.org/trans/main/dgdb/dgsubc4/c4age.html.

UNECE are also monitoring GHS implementation around the world through the following website:

www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

GHS classifications are now made for new and updated International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSCs). The corresponding hazard statements, signal words and symbols are included on the ICSCs. The ICSCs are written by WHO participating institutions as part of a joint programme run by WHO and ILO, supported by the EC. They are available free of charge to the end-user on the ILO website at: www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/cis/products/icsc/index.htm, the INCHEM website at: www.inchem.org and the NIOSH website at: www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcs/icstart.html. To date GHS classifications have been included on 178 ICSCs.

Other Related Activities

Chemical Industries Association of the Philippines (SPIK)

The Chemical Industries Association of the Philippines (SPIK) conducted a series of GHS Trainings and Workshops in 2008, including their GHS Basic and Intermediate Courses on 17-18 January 2008 with 28 trainees, GHS Advanced Training Seminar on

29-30 August 2008 with 23 trainees, and a GHS Basic and Intermediate Seminar Workshop with 33 trainees. In addition, SPIK representatives participated in the AOTS Training Programs in Japan during 2008, including a Training Program on Industry and Environmental Protection for ASEAN: GHS Practitioners Course 28 January – 8 February 2008, the Training Program on Industry and Environmental Protection for ASEAN: GHS Instructors Course on 13 – 21 October 2008, and the Training Program on Industry and Environmental Protection for ASEAN: GHS Practical Skills Course on 8 – 19 December 2008.

Hong Kong, PR China

In Hong Kong SAR, current regulations on hazard communication are operated mainly under several regulations by different authorities, including the: Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance and its (Dangerous Substances) Regulation – for use of chemicals in workplaces; Dangerous Goods Ordinance and related regulations – for control during storage, transport by air or sea, etc.; Radiation Ordinance – for control radioactive substances in all aspects; Hazardous Chemicals Control Ordinance; Food and drugs, pesticides Regulations; and Control of Chemical Ordinance, etc. Specific labelling and communication specifications are given in each regulation operated by the own authority.

In preparation for eventual GHS implementation, on 29 November 2008, a three hour introduction on the GHS was delivered by UNITAR for the purpose of raising the interests and awareness of some concerned parties in the region (including neighbouring regions of mainland China). About 100 interested people from different disciplines and sectors attended the event. Hong Kong looks to conduct further training programmes in 2009.

Chemie Pharma Schweiz (SGCI)

On behalf of the Swiss chemical industry, SGCI Chemie Pharma Schweiz is committed to supporting the timely implementation of the GHS in Switzerland. During 2008 two Information and Training Workshops were held with participants from member companies and related associations attending to learn from expert presenters representing both industry and government. The level of interest generated was substantial with both sessions being extremely well attended. To support the broader national industries dealing with chemicals, during 3 separate training sessions SGCI has also supported other Swiss institutions to share the knowledge and expertise, which has been developed and accumulated in-house. In addition, in cooperation with the Slovak Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industry, SGCI has supported the Slovak chemical industry in organizing two training sessions. Finally, participation of

SGCI in the Second Meeting of the Partners of the WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS has helped to strengthen the ties between the national association and UNITAR. Additional benefit can also be realized by extending the involvement through SAICM implementation activities as well as through SGCI resource contributions to the International Council of Chemical Associations at a global level.

Singapore Chemical Industry Council

In order to help build industry capability on GHS hazard communication, the Singapore Chemical Industry Council (SCIC) Limited has developed three training courses on the GHS including the GHS Classifier Course, the GHS User Course and the GHS Awareness Course. So far, 472 participants have attended the courses. Meanwhile, the Singapore Environment Institute conducted the Management of Hazardous Substances Course, incorporating GHS topics to train people to be competent in managing hazardous chemicals used at workplaces.

To assist the industries in implementing the GHS-based labelling and SDS, a new Singapore Standard SS 586 on Hazard Communication for Hazardous Chemicals and Dangerous Goods has been introduced by SPRING Singapore to provide the specifications and standards on Singapore's adoption of GHS. To complement the SS 586, a Guidebook on GHS has been published by SCIC to provide detailed guidance on GHS classification, labelling and SDS preparation.

The Singapore GHS Task Force, comprising members from all relevant competent authorities, and industry and professional associations has proposed a roadmap for GHS hazard communication implementation. The target dates for implementing the GHS for single substances and mixtures are 2011 and 2013 respectively.

8. Further Development of the Partnership in 2009

There will be a number of major chemicals-related events in 2009, including the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-2), the 4th Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, and the likely start of preparations for development of a legally binding instrument on mercury. It is expected that the GHS can play an important supporting role for these and other international chemicals management efforts.

As the agreed international target year for implementation, 2008 was a period of much progress, as countries took the step from planning to concrete action for implementation. In addition, and in order to maximise available funding to support countries in implementing the GHS, the Partnership secretariat (in collaboration with Zambia) successfully submitted a first proposal for funding of a GHS-related project through the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund. This avenue of support could be pursued further in 2009-2010. However, much work remains in making the GHS a truly global system. Nevertheless, 2008 can be seen as the key year for beginning – rather than the deadline – for GHS implementation.

While momentum for implementing the GHS is well established in some regions, in others resource constraints and lack of knowledge have limited similar efforts. In 2009, the Partnership could focus on promoting GHS and awareness raising in countries and regions that have not yet received the capacity building support needed to initiate GHS implementation efforts. Moreover, with increased global awareness of the GHS, efforts will need to focus not only on awareness raising, but also on appropriate training for implementation of the system.

The global community is increasingly recognising the importance of the GHS as a key tool for chemicals management and for supporting the implementation of international chemicals agreements. As countries and stakeholders continue to cooperate at the regional and international levels to coordinate and facilitate a transition towards a harmonised application of the GHS, the Partnership should continue to play a key role in supporting implementation of the GHS in the upcoming year.



Annex 1: A Summary of the GHS

The UN Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) is an important new tool that countries can draw upon to develop national chemical hazard communication systems by providing a basis for the establishment of comprehensive chemical safety programs. It represents an important step in harmonizing national chemical hazard communication systems worldwide and has a great potential to improve chemical safety across all relevant sectors.

The GHS is a consistent and coherent approach to identifying the hazards of chemicals, and providing information on these hazards and associated protective measures to users or those who may be exposed. The system is structured so that appropriate elements for classification and communication, which consider the target population, can be selected. Those who then use chemicals can take the proper steps to protect themselves and the environment.

Target populations include employers, workers, including those involved in transport, consumers, and emergency responders. Others who provide services to these people will also find the information useful (e.g., doctors, nurses, safety engineers and occupational hygienists). The GHS includes harmonized criteria for the definition of physical hazards (such as flammability), health hazards (such as carcinogenicity) and environmental hazards. These internationally-developed criteria are used to evaluate the hazards of both substances and mixtures.

The GHS covers all hazardous chemical substances, dilute solutions and mixtures and addresses how labels and safety data sheets should be used to convey information about their hazards, and how to protect people from these effects. It also provides a basis for safety training and health promotion.

The System is expected to:

- enhance the protection of people and the environment by providing an internationally comprehensive system for chemical hazard communication;
- provide a recognised framework for those countries without an existing system;
- reduce the need for duplicative testing and evaluation of chemicals; and
- facilitate international trade in chemicals whose hazards have been properly assessed and identified on an international basis.

The GHS also can support the implementation of key international agreements on chemicals management:

GHS and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

SAICM provides further international recognition of the need to include GHS capacity building and implementation into overall chemicals management strategies and national SAICM implementation programmes. The importance of implementing the GHS is recognised in the Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) of SAICM where GHS implementation is identified under the overall objective of *knowledge and*

information. The GHS is also included as a SAICM work area in the Global Plan of Action (GPA).

GHS and the Rotterdam Convention

The Rotterdam Convention refers to a “desir[e] to ensure that hazardous chemicals that are exported from their territory are packaged and labelled in a manner that is adequately protective of human health and the environment” (Preamble). Article 13 requires that chemicals listed in Annex III, when exported, are subject to labelling requirements that ensure adequate availability of information with regard to risks and/or hazards to human health or the environment, taking into account relevant international standards. Also Parties shall require that chemicals to be used for occupational purposes have a safety data sheet that follows an internationally recognized format, setting out the most up-to-date information available. The information on the label and on the safety data sheet should, as far as practicable, be given in one or more of the official languages of the importing Party.

GHS and the Stockholm Convention

The Stockholm POPs Convention underlines “the importance of manufacturers of persistent organic pollutants [to take] responsibility for reducing adverse effects caused by their products and for providing information to users, governments and the public on the hazardous properties of those chemicals, (preamble)”. In Article 10 on “Public information, awareness and education”, the Convention encourages parties to use safety data sheets, reports, mass media and other means of communication.

GHS and the Basel Convention

A Basel Convention-UN SCEGHS Joint Correspondence Group has been working towards harmonization of hazard classification systems and to improve consistency at the international level on the use of classification systems for wastes and chemicals. Use of the GHS can help to define hazardous characteristics of wastes under the Basel Convention while satisfying the needs of both international instruments.

More information about the GHS can be obtained from the Secretariat (UNECE) of the UN Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS at:

www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/ghs_welcome_e.html.

Annex 2: History of the WSSD GHS Partnership

Initiation of the WSSD GHS Partnership by UNITAR, ILO and OECD

In April 2002, UNITAR and ILO, in collaboration with OECD, initiated the *WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS*.³ The main goal of the WSSD GHS Partnership is to mobilize resources and implement a number of specific support activities to strengthen capacities at all levels and sectors – in particular in developing and transition countries – towards implementing the GHS for industrial chemicals, agricultural chemicals, chemicals in transport and consumer chemicals. In response to a call for Partners prior to the WSSD, over 25 governments, international organizations and NGOs responded with an interest to participate in the Partnership.

Partnership Announcement at the Johannesburg Summit

In July 2002, the Partnership proposal was submitted to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and placed on the WSSD website following a review by DESA that it met the guiding principles developed by the WSSD Preparatory Committee in preparation for the Summit.⁴ At the Summit the Partnership was formally launched as part of the official WSSD Programme on Friday, 30 August 2002. UNITAR's Executive Director Dr. Marcel Boisard convened a partnership panel including: James Phiri, *Executive Director, Environmental Council of Zambia*, Conchita Poncini, *International Confederation of University Women and President, NGO Committee on the Status of Women*, Larry Kohler, *Specialist, Sustainable Development, ILO*, Kenneth Ruffing, *Acting Director, Environment Directorate, OECD* and Ambassador Beat Nobs, *Head of Division, International Affairs Division, Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL)*.

The WSSD Plan of Implementation and the GHS

Chemical safety, including hazard communication and GHS implementation, is one of the issues that received specific attention at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). In paragraph 23 of the WSSD Plan of Implementation, governments renewed their commitment to the sound management of chemicals across a variety of important sectors. The need for support for developing countries to strengthen their capacities for the sound management of chemicals, through the provision of technical and financial assistance, was highlighted. More specifically, it was agreed to “encourage countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008”.⁵ This target had also been adopted by the third session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety in 2000.

³ Further information on relevant international bodies related to the GHS can be found in Annex 3.

⁴ The list and details of selected Partnerships, including the Global GHS Partnership, can be found at: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/partnerships.htm>.

⁵ A/CONF.199/20, paragraph 23(c).

First Meeting of Partners, July 2003

The First Meeting of Partners was held in July 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives from 16 governments, 8 intergovernmental organizations and 12 NGOs discussed and agreed a number of important elements, including:

- the framework workplan and four Partnership programme areas;
- that Meetings of Partners would take place about every two years, if possible prior to submission of bi-annual progress reports for the Partnership to the CSD Secretariat;
- that the UNITAR/ILO Programme Advisory Group (PAG) will continue to provide technical and coordinating support for Partnership Activities;
- that UNITAR will provide the Secretariat for the Partnership (dependent on mobilization of adequate resources), working closely with ILO and OECD;
- highlighting the importance of ensuring sustainable core funding both to support Partnership activities and to provide the functions of the Partnership Secretariat; and
- linking GHS capacity development needs and implementation activities with other international priorities for sustainable development (such as poverty eradication, protection of water supplies and protection of marginalised groups such as women and children).

A full report of the meeting is available from UNITAR.

Second Meeting of the Partners of the WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS

The Second Meeting of the WSSD Global GHS Partnership was held on 12 July 2007 in Geneva. This meeting brought together key partners and stakeholders to discuss the future of the Partnership and areas of greatest need for further GHS capacity building and implementation. Despite the significant momentum gained since the founding of the Partnership in 2002, resources are currently not sufficient to satisfy the growing demand for GHS capacity building and to maintain the level of activities and services that the GHS Partnership needs to support worldwide implementation.

The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to take stock of progress to date and consider ways to strengthen and expand the GHS Partnership and its network. Partners and other relevant stakeholders provided presentations regarding the importance of the GHS from their perspective, existing efforts and initiatives for GHS capacity building, and areas of need and demand for GHS implementation. Through the presentations, discussions and working groups, a number of recommendations were agreed for a range of important issue areas related to strengthening the Partnership (including ways to improve mobilization of resources, strengthen the reach and effectiveness of the Partnership, integrate the GHS into international chemicals management and development planning efforts, and further develop GHS capacity building and knowledge management), as well as some recommendations that could be addressed in the context of the UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme.

Based on the recommendations and conclusions of the meeting, UNITAR and other Partners are seeking opportunities with countries and organisations to support continued efforts and activities for GHS implementation. The report of the meeting is available at:

www.unitar.org/cwm/publications/event/ghs_partner_meeting_12_jul_2007/report/MOP2_GHS_final%20report.pdf.

Annex 3: International Bodies and Initiatives Relevant to GHS Capacity Building: A Brief Overview

UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS

The UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS (UN SCEGHS) is a policy body which maintains existing and develops new technical elements of the GHS, as appropriate, and makes proposals for work and policy decisions to its parent committee, the UN Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods & the GHS. Proposals include the provision of technical guidance to countries and organizations with regard to the further development of the GHS and its implementation. The UN SCEGHS also issues recommendations in the area of GHS capacity building, but does not have an executing function. UNITAR/ILO have been designated as a focal point for this purpose.

The UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme

The UNITAR/ILO Global GHS Capacity Building Programme operates within UNITAR's Training and Capacity Building Programmes in Chemicals and Waste Management. It has an executing function and supports national GHS implementation strategy development processes, regional workshops, and develops and pilots GHS training material. The Programme receives technical advice from a Programme Advisory Group (PAG) which includes representatives from several countries and organizations involved in GHS development and implementation. UNITAR/ILO provide regular updates of Programme activities to the UN SCEGHS.

The Global WSSD GHS Partnership

The Global GHS Partnership is a WSSD-endorsed framework which brings together countries and organizations committed to supporting specific GHS capacity building activities in developing and transition countries. It was initiated by UNITAR and ILO, in collaboration with the OECD. The Partnership pursues concrete objectives and targets for GHS capacity building activities at the global, regional and national levels and Partners work together to mobilize resources to reach these targets. Technical aspects of Partnership activities are reviewed by the PAG of the UNITAR/ILO GHS Capacity Building Programme. However, not all core Partnership activities are necessarily executed by UNITAR/ILO. Countries and organizations may execute core Partnership activities independently, as long as the activity contributes to one of the Partnership targets and is coordinated through the PAG. The secretariat function for the Partnership is provided by UNITAR, working together with ILO and OECD.



Annex 4: List of Acronyms

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAFU	Swiss Federal Office for Environment (FOEN)
CEFIC	European Chemical Industry Council
COPASQ	Commission for Chemical Safety (Brazil)
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CT	comprehensibility testing
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN)
EC	European Commission
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
ECOWAS	Economic Commission of West African States
GHS	Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
ICCA	International Council of Chemical Associations
IFCS	Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOMC	Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemicals Weapons
OSHA	US Occupational Safety and Health Administration
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
QSPTF	Quick Start Programme Trust Fund (under SAICM)
SCEGHS	Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS
SCHC	Society for Chemical Hazard Communication
SDS	safety data sheets
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established in 1965 as an autonomous body within the United Nations with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through appropriate training and research. UNITAR is governed by a Board of Trustees and is headed by an Executive Director. The Institute is supported by voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and other non-governmental sources.



The International Labour Organization is the UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. It was founded in 1919 and is the only surviving major creation of the Treaty of Versailles which brought the League of Nations into being and it became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946. The ILO formulates international labour standards, provides technical assistance and promotes the development of independent employers' and workers' organizations and provides training and advisory services to those organizations. Within the UN system, the ILO has a unique tripartite structure with workers and employers participating as equal partners with governments in the work of its governing organs.

ORGANISATION
FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT



The OECD is a unique forum where governments can pool ideas and expertise to tackle the economic, social and governance challenges of the 21st century globalised economy. It groups 30 market democracies producing 60% of the world's goods and services, but in this era of globalization the OECD does not and cannot work alone. It shares expertise and exchanges views with more than 70 countries worldwide, as well as a vast array of stakeholders and interest groups, on topics of mutual concern from measuring climate change to ensuring transparency and accountability of governments to their citizens.