

## **Working Group 2: Linking chemical safety to general development policies and ensuring sustainable financial resource mobilization**

**What are specific examples of how sound chemicals management can contribute to achieving national development priorities, such as providing clean drinking water, poverty alleviation etc.**

This question can be approached from the perspective of the types of issues that are of interest at political level in countries e.g.

- income generation
- increased investment
- decreased burden on the health budget
- protection of vulnerable groups
- maintenance of internal security

Examples of chemical safety activities include:

### *1. Food Safety Year in Thailand*

Campaign of public awareness raising, combined with testing of food in the marketplace for pesticide residues and other chemicals and follow-up testing in laboratories, with enforced withdrawal of products that fail to meet standards.

Benefits: improved food safety and therefore benefit to health of consumers, improved awareness of importance of minimising chemical residues in food, resulting in improved access to international markets for food products because these meet international standards.

### *2. Integrated Vector Management / Integrated Pest Management e.g. Djibouti and others*

Involves more rational use of pesticides and the use of alternatives to pesticides.

Benefits: lower quantities of pesticides in the environment, reduced human exposure to pesticides with benefits to health, and reduced pesticide residues in food products with benefits to health and economy.

### *3. Water and waste management e.g. Jordan, Albania*

Better water and waste management to improve the quality of drinking water and the availability of drinking water (problem in some parts of Albania where drinking water is used for crop irrigation, leading to shortages in the summer)

### *4. Using the instruments of the Basel Convention to regularise informal industries*

Example of applying better controls to the informal battery recycling industry, with reduction in amount of chemical contamination of land and a benefit to the health of workers by reducing exposure to lead. The livelihood of these workers is maintained.

### *5. Concept of Clean Technology*

Apply this concept to industrial activities and production of goods. This translates into improved standards of goods and better protection of human health and the environment.

**How important is an integrated approach towards implementation of international agreements for placing chemicals and waste management on the national development agenda.**

An integrated approach, meaning that there is coordination between different national/governmental bodies in the implementation of these agreements is seen as essential. This would aim to minimise duplication of effort and maximise return on work carried out. This should not, however, prevent individual countries from giving more attention to specific agreements if they have certain priorities that they need to address.

The establishment of a coordinating body that involves the different stakeholders e.g. a steering committee is one mechanism.

Donors are keen to see an integrated approach at national level. They are also keen to see integration at international level among the agencies concerned with implementation of chemicals and waste management agreements.

**What steps could be taken to mainstream chemical safety issues into sectoral development priorities? How could ministries of finance and planning be engaged into the national implementation process?**

Many donor organizations are directing their funding to activities that support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, thus chemical safety measures need to be framed in this context to interest these organizations.

While some activities will be supported by donors, ultimately for sustainable progress in chemical safety there has to be commitment at political level. The people with responsibility for implementation of international chemical safety agreements are usually technical experts, but political awareness and political skills are also important. Persuasive arguments must be developed to ensure political buy-in. One important feature of such arguments is demonstration of benefit: that investment in chemical safety will yield measurable 'profit' e.g. in terms of increased income from trade, tourism, improved health etc. Clearly defined and measurable indicators of success are therefore needed. Environmental impact studies, for example, require a cost-benefit analysis that takes into account economic factors as well as environmental factors in new industrial developments. Capacity Building for managers of chemical safety departments is important in the areas of chemical analysis and toxicology.

Systems of taxes can be used as a disincentive against poor chemicals management at industrial or consumer level, as well as providing the financial resources for remediation or recycling. For example, some countries impose a tax that is added to the price of electrical goods and covers the cost of their eventual recycling.

Some donors provide funds for development tied to the achievement of certain standards e.g. for clean technology. If these standards are not met then donated funds are converted to loans that must be repaid.

It is important to ensure that ministries of finance, planning and economic affairs are involved from the beginning when countries are coordinating convention activities to ensure that these activities are built into national and ministry budgets.

There needs to be a mechanism to share success stories, to provide a stimulus and encouragement for chemical safety activities in other countries.