WHO Expert Meeting on Risk Assessment Methodologies

Participants from 17 institutions and 13 countries gathered in Ottawa, Canada (9-11 July, 2018) for a WHO convened 2.5 day expert meeting on “WHO/IPCS Chemical Risk Assessment Methodology Development – Future Directions”. The purpose of the meeting was to review the range of risk assessment methodology guidance and tools currently available from WHO and provide recommendations for activities to update, complement and promote the guidance available in order to maximise uptake in chemical risk assessments globally and encourage best practices. The meeting discussed a draft overview of several key methodology documents (prepared in response to a suggestion from the 2017 Network Meeting held in Parma, Italy) and heard about several ongoing initiatives related to developments in areas of risk assessment methodology and evolutions in information sources. The experiences of several institutions in using WHO methodologies and applying tiered strategies were shared with participants. Using a World Café format, participants engaged in fruitful discussions on a range of topics, including Evolving Methods, Risk Characterization and Uncertainty, Exposure, Epidemiology, Fit-for-Purpose Risk Assessments and the Role of the WHO Network. The WHO Secretariat will follow up on the helpful suggestions from the meeting regarding potential new Network activities and future directions of the WHO and Network Participants in risk assessment methodology development. Organization of this meeting, which exemplifies the value of global collaboration in advancing chemical risk assessment technologies, was assisted by the Existing Substances Risk Assessment Program of Health Canada, a Network Participant.
Network Steering Group for Capacity Building Convened

A Steering Group has been convened by WHO to facilitate implementation of the Network Capacity Building Strategic Plan. A group of seven Network Participants who coordinate capacity building activities through their institutions has been identified and has started to meet by teleconference. The Steering Group will provide advice to WHO on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, review progress with capacity building projects and activities, coordinate activities to promote consistency with the Strategic Plan and identify overarching issues and lessons learned. Details of capacity building activities will be shared with Network Participants as they are developed.