DISCUSSION PAPER

Capacity Building Assistance for Chemical Safety:
A Perspective of
Donor Institutions and Development Assistance Agencies

Prepared through the IFCS Forum Standing Committee

Introduction

1. There is abundant proof that economic and social development is invariably accompanied by a substantial use of a wide variety of man-made chemicals. Despite this, chemical safety issues have often been a low priority in development cooperation and are far from being systematically integrated in programmes and projects. Chemical safety is seen mainly as a specialized technical issue and is dealt with too much in an isolated manner. It rarely receives its due attention as an integral part of sustainable development strategies and projects.

2. It is necessary to demonstrate on governmental policy particularly in the area of development cooperation much better the value-added of chemical safety for health and environment protection and to make convincingly evident that safe handling and use of chemicals is an essential prerequisite for sustainable economic and social development.

Objective of the discussion paper

3. The aim of this discussion paper is to provide input to the SAICM discussion process by identifying feasible means to assist key stakeholders to integrate chemical safety issues into national sustainable development strategies and development cooperation.

Means of integrating chemical safety issues in development assistance

a) Policy context

4. Development assistance programmes are intended to support the implementation of sustainable development strategies focussing on poverty eradication as an overarching goal and covering on various sectors such as health, education, agriculture, rural development, promotion of economic growth, efficiency of government institutions, environmental sound management of natural resources and protection of the environment. Chemical safety is a cross-sectoral issue relevant to nearly all areas of development cooperation and has to be seen as such. Typically, donors do not consider chemical management issues as stand-alone issues, but take them into account as integral parts of development assistance programmes and projects, considering inter alia economical, ecological, cultural and sociological issues. Consequently, proposals for chemical safety projects must be logically connected to the national strategies for sustainable development of the recipient country, referring to Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Action, the Millennium Development Goals, and other relevant international instruments and declarations.

b) Mainstreaming chemical safety in sustainable development strategies

5. Chemical safety policies should be integrated into development cooperation activities and full advantage should be taken of all existing opportunities when developing a project proposal, taking into account the mandates and priorities of relevant institutions. This will help to ensure the success of the project by adequately addressing all aspects.
6. Development assistance approaches should recognise the shared obligation and contributions for the sound management of chemicals by producers, distributors, users, governments and, if appropriate, international organizations to proposed projects. This includes in-kind and budget contributions of all stakeholders to the work programmes, e.g. if the programme affects ongoing activities or already installed mechanisms/institutions.

7. Capacity building projects must ensure that they effectively reach the target stakeholders directly involved in handling and use of chemicals. When e.g. a train-the-trainers approach is chosen, the effective implementation of the programme on ground level must be the final target and has to be monitored and documented.

8. The value-added of chemicals management project components to the countries development process should be clearly described. The activities addressing chemical safety can then be mainstreamed more readily with ongoing development assistance programmes and projects. Most chemical-related projects would then be addressed under the development assistance priorities, and would not have to be channelled to donors separately.

9. If a programme or project is already initiated in a related sector, the chemical safety issues should be integrated in this programme/project rather than being developed and implemented separately.

   Examples:

   9 i. A systematic evaluation of development assistance programmes and projects will help to identify elements with chemicals management components and possible connections to chemical safety issues, e.g. technical assistance for hospital infrastructure should address hospital waste minimisation and environmentally sound disposal of the remaining waste, to avoid inter alia uncontrolled burning resulting in high dioxin/furan and mercury emissions.

   9 ii. The chemical life cycle analysis can be a complementary approach to identify other relevant intervention areas, e.g. if chemicals are imported or produced in one place and are used elsewhere, the ongoing and planned programmes/projects in the transport sector should consider transport and storage of dangerous goods, too.

   9 iii. Synergies between implementation of different multilateral environmental agreements should be systematically identified and documented in project proposals, e.g. strengthening import/export control of chemicals should not focus on PIC chemicals only, but on all chemicals and toxic waste to support the build-up of a comprehensive border control and registration scheme for all toxic substances.

c) Role of stakeholders

10. It is the role of the technical experts when proposing and drafting a project with chemical safety components to describe the value-added of chemical safety measures to the overall development goals in addition to the effects of the project interventions on the technical level. They should also seek out the input of other stakeholders, e.g. affected communities and the private sector, when developing project proposals.

11. Opportunities should be sought by technical experts to raise the awareness of senior decision-makers, both from the executive and the legislative sides, with regards chemical safety and its essential role in sustainable development.

12. Policy makers should recognize that the selection of appropriate chemical management measures is invariably connected to the country's economic, social and cultural situation. Decisions on chemicals management issues have to reflect the situation in the different sectors. Consequently, governmental authorities should ensure national coordination to reach consistent chemical safety strategies and targets in the related sectors, e.g. health, labour, environment, agriculture, trade, economic and industrial development. This will enhance synergy effects of chemical safety projects and is a prerequisite to avoid duplication and/or even contradictory development assistance approaches in the different sectors.
d) Promoting coordination

13. Work in the area of capacity building should be systematically undertaken and begin with and be based on the stocktaking of existing infrastructure and capacity building activities covering all relevant aspects of chemicals management, i.e. by developing or up-dating of a National Profile according to the procedure developed by UNITAR/IOMC while applying a multi-stakeholder participatory approach.

14. Information exchange and coordination of development assistance programmes at the recipient country level should be carried out systematically, among international organizations, MEA secretariats and donors. An information exchange tool such as INFOCAP should be used systematically by all stakeholders involved.

15. The on-going, planned and completed work programmes on chemicals related issues should be made available and cross-checked by the recipient countries and the different donors and institutions before new programmes start to avoid overlapping and duplication.

e) Development of indicators

16. Indicators should be developed that both

   i. provide information on the effects of chemical safety interventions linked to sustainable development goals, and that

   ii. allow effect monitoring, i.e. tracking and reporting on the progress towards achieving results on the ground and ultimately the sustainable development goals.

17. SAICM PrepCom2 should initiate and structure the process of working on the indicators. The outcome should be considered integral part of the SAICM.

f) Use of indicators and effect monitoring

18. Effect monitoring with clear indicators should be integral part of all project proposals. Lessons learned on the implementation of successful projects, and also failures, should be documented, made available, and widely distributed, e.g. via INFOCAP.

19. Progress in capacity building for chemical safety should be assessed using measurable indicators. Documentation of the achievements and progress as measured by indicators, impact monitoring and review of implementation should be a prerequisite for identifying priorities for further activities and launching new programmes.

Selected Background Literature:

(http://www.gtz.de/chs/englisch/03akt_02pe.htm)

BMZ (2002): Environment, Poverty and Sustainable Development. 11. Chemical Safety
(http://www.bmz.de/en/topics/Handlungsfelder/umwelt/umwelt20.pdf)


(http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/wehab_papers.html)

(http://www.worldbank.org/pops)