

2 April 2020 – In order to minimize the huge health impacts of chemicals, WHO developed a "Global road map for enhancing health sector engagement in the strategic approach to international chemicals management" towards the 2020 goal and beyond.

One of the actions in the chemicals road map mandates the Secretariat to establish a global chemicals and health network, with links to existing subregional, regional and international networks, to facilitate health sector implementation of the road map. The "Strategic approach to chemicals management is a policy framework to guide efforts to achieve the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation goal that by 2020, chemicals will be produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment. As the leading international authority on health issues, including the human-health aspects of the sound management of chemicals, WHO plays an important role in SAICM and the implementation of SAICM as well as the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

In collaboration with ministries of health, CEHA conducted workshops in Jordan, Egypt, and Tunisia in February 2020 to develop plans of action to implement the chemicals road map.

The main objectives of the workshops were to:

- provide norms, guidance and tools to address management of chemicals of major public health concern; -
- identify areas for health sector leadership and collaboration with other sectors; -
- undertake gap analyses, develop action plans to feed into national chemicals planning processes; -
- draft a national plan to implement chemical road map to minimize the adverse impacts of chemicals and waste by 2020. -

After presenting the WHO chemicals road map action and reviewing the health impacts of exposure to chemicals, groups discussed health sector priorities in chemicals management, Sustainable Development Goals related to chemical management, and the Global Chemicals and Health Network. They explained their roles and expertise in chemical management, standards and regulations and discussed gaps and challenges in relation to effective management of chemicals. Representatives then highlighted chemicals of concern in each sector and plans to enhance chemical management at national level.

The workshops concluded with development of a list of priority chemicals of concern in each county and national plans of action to implement the "Global road map for enhancing health sector engagement in the strategic approach to international chemicals management".

The 2-day workshops consisted of technical presentations, panel discussions and working groups facilitated by WHO staff and national experts. Workshops were attended by representatives of various ministries, such as the ministries of health, environment, industry, trade, agriculture, and others.

Related link

[WHO Chemicals Road Map and Workbook](#)

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