

8 November 2020 – Health risk assessment, management, and communication are critical parts of the decision-making process for chemical management regulatory programs and environmental regulations. The human health risk assessment toolkit was developed by the World Health Organization to help decision-makers to take informed scientific actions about chemicals by assessing the magnitude of potential risks to human health associated with exposure to the chemicals. The toolkit provides decision-makers with many reliable sources of information and useful data regarding potential hazards and risks associated with certain chemicals which is necessary in the assessment to effectively protect human health and the environment.

To strengthen the implementation of the chemical risk assessment approach in countries of the Region, capacities and capabilities need to be built during the coming years. As a start, this introductory training was part of a series of training activities that are planned to help Member States in using available WHO tools. Technical staff from WHO's Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action, in collaboration with the National Drug and Poison Information Centre of Jordan, provided participants with the basic principles for conducting a chemical risk assessment in order to minimize the impact of chemicals on human health.

The main purpose of this introductory training is to assist policy-makers to formulate "healthier" decisions and thus maximize population health gain and, where possible, reduce health inequalities. The training consisted of technical presentations, panel discussions and demonstration of a case study facilitated by WHO staff and national expert.

The objectives of the virtual introductory training were to:

- provide countries of the Region with guidance to identify, acquire and use the information needed to assess chemical hazards, exposures, and the corresponding health risks in their given health risk assessment contexts at local and/or national levels;
- provide an overview for advanced training on the WHO Human Health Risk Assessment "Electronic Distance Learning Tool (eDLT) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management of Chemicals" which will be sponsored by the WHO Regional Centre on Environmental Health Action;
- provide countries of the Region with international resources from which they can obtain information and methods essential for conducting the human health risk assessment;
- motivate focal points to engage the chemical risk assessment approach in their policies and discuss the possibilities of conducting a chemical risk assessment for one of the chemicals of concern in each country of the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

The training was attended by 25 participants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates from different sectors, including ministries of health and the environment, regional poison centres, in addition to WHO staff from country offices.

Related link

[WHO human health risk assessment toolkit: chemical hazards](#)

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