



**World Health
Organization**

Strategic Plan for
Enhancing Chemical
Risk Assessment
Capacity in Network
Participants

Strategic Plan: 2018-2020
DECEMBER 2017

Background

The Strategic Plan: 2018-2020 is aimed at increasing chemical risk assessment capacity in WHO Network Participants and thereby strengthen environmental health decision-making. The Strategic Plan operationalizes capacity building related actions of the Road map to enhance health sector engagement in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management towards the 2020 goal and beyond (Chemicals Road Map). In particular, it includes actions to strengthen national institutional capacities to address health threats from chemicals and on filling gaps in knowledge and methodologies for risk assessment.

The Strategic Plan builds on the overall Network objectives provided in Box A. By implementing the Strategic Plan, the Network will have completed distinct projects to strengthen capacities in the field of chemical risk assessment in Network Participants over the next 3 years thereby making a contribution to the implementation of the Chemicals Road Map. Special attention is given to the capacity needs of Participants located in developing countries. However, the Plan is aimed at both Participants based in developing and developed countries alike, especially when they (i) have risk assessment training programs in place; (ii) can make available equipment and laboratory capacity to other institutions; (iii) are engaged in modelling exposure and risk of interest to other institutions; (iv) participate in activities to identify emerging risks; and/or (v) would like to contribute to or participate in trainings, webinars and other events.

A draft of this Strategic Plan was reviewed at the 2nd Meeting of the WHO Chemical Risk Assessment Network, 20-22 June 2017, Parma, Italy, and revised to reflect input received.

Box A

Network Objectives in the field of chemical risk assessment:

- Provide a forum for scientific and technical exchange
- Facilitate and contribute to capacity building
- Promote best practices and the harmonization of methodologies
- Assist in the identification of research needs and promote the application of new science in risk assessment practice
- Assist in the identification of emerging risks to human health from chemicals
- Share information about work programmes to avoid duplication of effort
- Upon request, assist WHO in the development of training and other materials in support of the above

STRATEGIC AREAS

Capacity needs in Network

Institutions. Assess capacity needs in Network Institutions. Identify institutions interested in contributing to capacity building activities, especially in developing countries.

Promote best chemical risk assessment practice

through various means of regular communication for information sharing.

Develop human resources.

Maintain a Community of Trainers (CoT) for risk assessment.

Promote established training material and case studies. Coordinate among trainers and member institutions that require training. Provide support and conduct training, both in-person and on-line. Increase Network membership from developing countries to strengthen capacities on a wider scale.

Identify technical resources.

Provide and promote procedures for measuring and modelling exposure and dose for use in risk assessment. Provide information on qualified laboratories.

Identify priorities for future training.

Identify new and emerging risks and identify training needs that arise from those. Adapt training reflecting the latest developments in methodologies.

Network Implementation Activities

(i) Assess capacities needs in Network Institutions

- Conduct a survey identifying (i) chemical risk assessment challenges in countries; (ii) information and data needs; (iii) needs related to risk assessment methodologies; and (iv) training and other capacity needs of Network Institutions.
- Identify Network institutions that are interested in making contributions to capacity building in developing countries, e.g. those who have training programs in place or can make available equipment and laboratory capacity to other institutions.

(ii) Promote best chemical risk assessment practice

- Promote regular communication among institutions for information exchange through different modes of communication, including teleconferences and webinars, face-to-face meetings, and the Network newsletter and e-mail distribution list, with special attention to information needs in developing countries. More broadly for the Network's activities in general, a collaborative workspace or even a social media type of platform for the Network is needed.
- Create a WHO web portal that provides access to (i) up-to-date information on in-person training courses (RiskTrain database); (ii) links to on-line training courses supported by WHO (e.g. eDLT by the CRI); and (iii) links to important web based chemical risk assessment tools provided by WHO and other IOMC Participating Organizations, e.g. WHO Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit and IOMC Toolbox.
- Continue to ensure developing country institution participation in Network technical meetings and other events to ensure that the final product is relevant to developing countries.

(iii) Develop human resources

- Establish a Community of Trainers (CoT) for human health risk assessment, i.e. provide a forum for trainers to review and share training materials and establish a mechanism where institutions that require training can identify, contact and collaborate with trainers.
- Support and/or conduct regional and in-country risk assessment training with a focus on developing countries with the aim to strengthen risk assessment capacities in the health sector.
- Deliver webinar training courses and maintain recordings of prior webinars based on topics identified by Network members. Ensure that at least every third webinar is addressing a topic identified a priority for developing countries.

- Increase Network membership from developing countries and encourage participation in Network activities to strengthen capacities on a wider scale.

(iv) Identify technical resources

- Maintain a platform for sharing important procedures and protocols widely accepted for gathering and evaluating exposure and other risk-related information for use in low resourced settings, e.g. to assess exposures and risks to lead, mercury, pesticides, industrial chemicals in specific settings (e.g. ASGM, extractive industry, abandoned industrial and waste sites).
- Establish a mechanism to provide advice on minimum laboratory requirements, mobile laboratories for emergency response, and equipment needs for the monitoring of chemicals.
- Maintain (regional) directory(ies) of qualified laboratories that have the capacities and expertise to provide support when needed, e.g. labs that accept samples for analyses, especially during chemical emergency situations. This activity also links to the core capacity required under the International Health Regulations (2005).
- Create a directory of widely accepted exposure and risk assessment models and related training, e.g. models mentioned in the WHO Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit or other WHO documents. Describe models in terms of scope, data needs, technical requirements and applicability.

(v) Identify priorities for future training

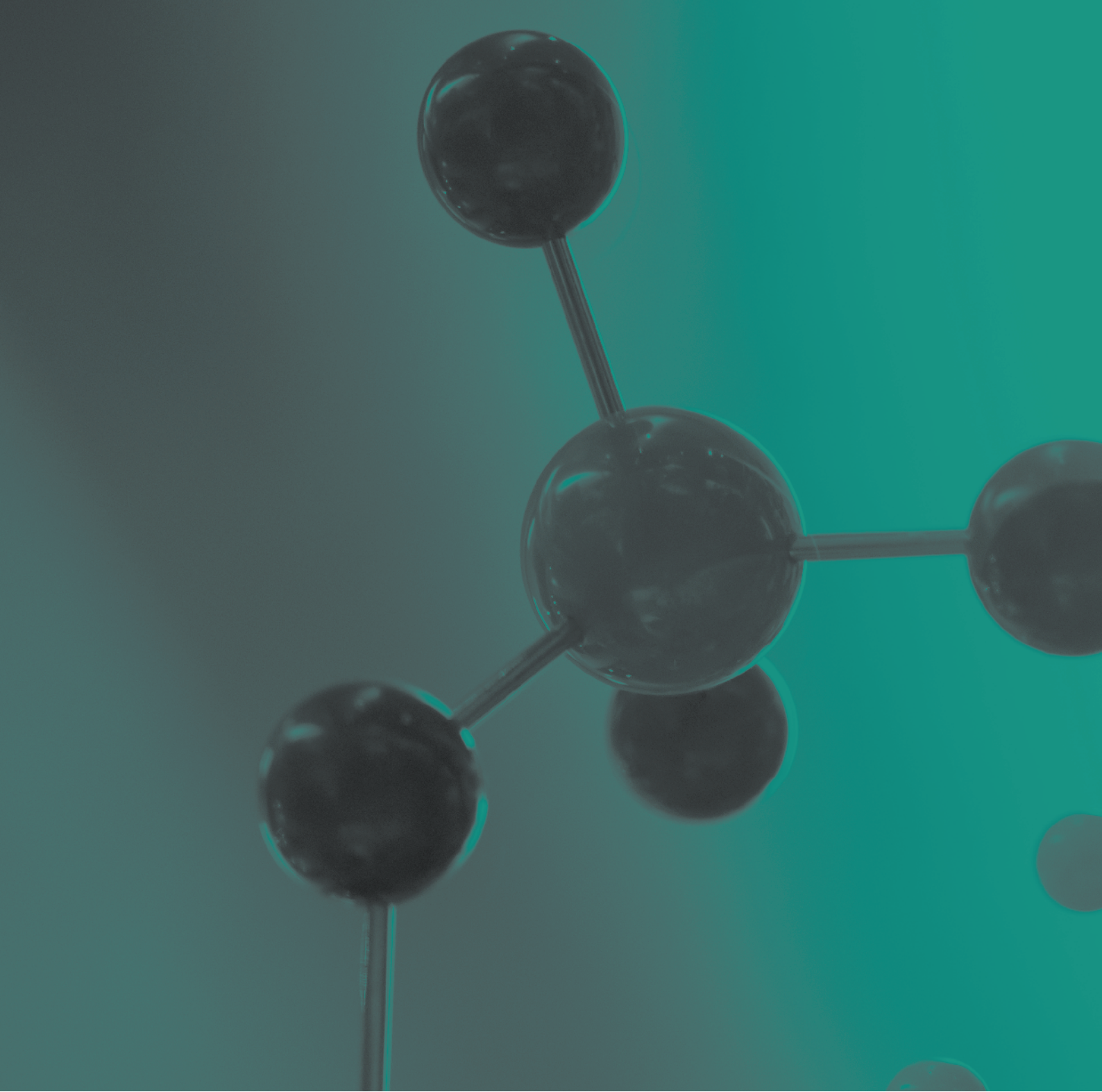
- A Network workshop on identifying emerging risks to health from chemicals is planned. Include on the workshop agenda a discussion on training needs.
- Establish a mechanism to adapt training taking into account recent developments to revise, update and develop new chemical risk assessment methodologies supported by WHO.

Implementation

The Strategic Plan provides the framework for developing projects. Network Participants will be invited to take forward proposed actions and to develop and implement detailed project proposals. Project progress will be regularly monitored by the Network Coordinating Group.

Timelines

The strategy is meant to be implemented over a time period of approximately 3 years from 2018 to 2020. It will be reviewed and renewed by the next full Network meeting in either 2019 or 2020.



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