

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING FOR SOUND MANAGEMENT OF PESTICIDES

REPORT OF A WORKSHOP

25–29 January 2010

Nairobi, Kenya

Public Health and Environment Intercountry Support Team,
Eastern and Southern Africa WHO Regional Office for Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe

&

WHO Pesticide Evaluation Scheme
World Health Organization Geneva, Switzerland



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1. INTRODUCTION

The WHO Pesticide Evaluation Scheme (WHOPES) and the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) jointly organized a workshop on capacity strengthening for sound management of pesticides held at the Laico Regency Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, on 25–29 January 2010. The workshop was part of activities undertaken by the WHOPES Project on reducing health risks through sound management of pesticides, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Of the 12 countries participating in the project, 6 were represented at the workshop (Cambodia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sudan, Thailand and United Republic of Tanzania). The meeting was also represented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNEP Chemicals and CropLife International as well as WHO consultants and the Secretariat from WHO headquarters, regional offices and country offices (as listed in Annex I).

Dr Birkinsh Ameneshewa, Vector Control Operations Officer (AFRO) and Dr Morteza Zaim, Team Leader, Vector Ecology and Management (WHO/HQ Geneva) welcomed the participants and thanked the WHO Country Office in Kenya for facilitating the Workshop and making logistic arrangements. They reiterated the WHO strategy to promote a multisectoral and multi-stakeholder approach to sound management of pesticides and thanked the participation of FAO, UNEP Chemicals and CropLife International in the workshop. The workshop was the continuation of the needs assessment carried out in the participating countries in order to further identify gaps and challenges, opportunities and actions for sound management of public health pesticides. WHO wished to work with the participating countries in developing national proposals and mobilizing resources to address the priority areas and actions identified.

Mr John Kariuki, Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation also welcomed the participants on behalf of the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Kenya. He referred to the needs assessment carried out in Kenya as part of the Project and the appropriate timing of the Workshop, and highlighted the need to develop clear policies and actions to improve pesticide management in Kenya.

Dr Alex Mpazanje, Acting WHO Representative (WR) to Kenya, welcomed the participants on behalf of the WR (Dr David Okello). Referring to the need for judicious use of pesticides and reduction of the burden of vector-borne diseases to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Kenya, he requested the Workshop to suggest practical solutions and actions adapted to the health and development settings. He wished the participants a successful meeting and declared the workshop open.

Mr Harold van der Valk, WHO consultant, was appointed as the workshop's facilitator.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The general objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of Member States in sound management of public health pesticides within a broader context of pesticide management. The specific objectives were:

1. To identify strategies and key actions needed to further streamline and harmonize registration of public health pesticides and to promote information exchange and work-sharing among the registration authorities;

2. To identify key actions to be undertaken for sound management of public health pesticides during their life-cycle, including implementing the principles of integrated vector management and monitoring and evaluation of vector control interventions;
3. To identify actions required to prevent trade in substandard and counterfeit public health pesticides in the market.

3. PROCEEDINGS

The workshop was held in plenary and working group sessions (see Agenda, Annex II) and focused on the following four areas.

3.1 PESTICIDE REGISTRATION

3.1.1 Presentations and plenary discussions

Mr Kevin Helps (FAO Senior Officer, Pesticide Management Group) presented the scope and objectives of the Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides¹ and briefly described the role of governments, industry and other stakeholders in implementing its articles.

Participants were asked how many were aware of or had read the Code of Conduct: very few were aware of the Code or had read its contents. The current code was published in 2002 following a lengthy consultation process among international organizations, civil society and the pesticide industry. The Code of Conduct is a framework for the sound management of all pesticides.

The various articles of the Code and the concept of the pesticide life-cycle were introduced and the need highlighted to define the role of each stakeholder at various stages in the life-cycle along and to promote cooperation among stakeholders at national and international levels.

Guidelines had been published and other tools produced for sound management of pesticides; FAO provided training activities on sound management of pesticides. There was need for a more long-term programme for capacity building at country and regional levels. A distance learning postgraduate diploma and masters degree courses on pesticide management were being developed in collaboration with the University of Cape Town (UCT); a forum was available – via a secure web chat room (UCT Vula site) – for exchange of information on pesticide issues.

Dr Zaim presented the work of WHOPES and briefly described its mandate and the process and procedures for testing and evaluating public health pesticides under the Scheme. The objectives of WHOPES were two-fold: (1) to facilitate the search for alternative pesticides and application methods that are safe and cost-effective; and (2) to develop and promote policies, strategies and guidelines for the selective and judicious application of pesticides for public health use, and to assist and monitor their implementation by Member States. The vision, strategies and priority activities of the Scheme were presented and participants were informed of the availability of guidance documents to support sound management of pesticides by Member States and other

¹ The International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (revised version) was adopted by the 123rd Session of the FAO Council in November 2002 and is available on the FAO web site at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4544E/y4544e00.htm>.

stakeholders.¹ The meeting was informed about the scope of the WHOPES recommendations on the use of public health pesticides; and of the FAO/WHO joint programme on sound management of pesticides, which was established in March 2007 to ensure complementary, harmonized and coordinated response and guidance to responsible bodies at the national level and to all stakeholders on sound management of pesticides.

Mr van der Valk presented the principles, organization and process for registering pesticides with national registration authorities, emphasizing the key principles promoted by guidelines due to be published by FAO/WHO for the registration of pesticides. Participants were reminded of the responsibilities of governments and industry in registering pesticides, as outlined in the Code of Conduct and briefly summarized below.

Governments should:

- establish a legal system for the registration of pesticides;
- create the technical and administrative infrastructure necessary to manage applications received for registration;
- maintain a dialogue with applicants on all matters relating to registration of pesticide products;
- grant or refuse registration in a timely and transparent manner;
- set up systems that allow for appropriate checks and balances to be made in decision-making, including appeal procedures;
- conduct risk evaluations and make risk management decisions;
- establish and maintain a system for monitoring the use of pesticides under actual conditions (“post-registration surveillance”);

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