

# ► Environmental Sustainability through Chemical Management (ESCM) Project

Reducing the uses and releases of Chemicals on  
Concern, including Persistent Organic Pollutants, in  
the Textile Sector.

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## ► Let's start with a reality check

**More than 1 billion workers are exposed to chemicals and hazardous substances.**

**1 million of these workers lose their lives each year due to exposure to hazardous chemicals.**

**40 per cent of the global labour force are at risk because of environmental degradation.**

## ▶ structure of the project

### United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- ▶ Funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).
- ▶ Regional countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, **Pakistan** and Vietnam.

### Execution of the project.

- ▶ Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centre for Southeast Asia (BCRC-SEA & SCRC Indonesia).
- ▶ Natural Resource Defence Council, Washington, DC, USA.
- ▶ **The International Labour Organization: one component in Pakistan as a pilot.**

## ▶ Project Objectives

- ▶ Implement a comprehensive Risk Assessment based on ILO Code of Practice and ILO Chemical Convention 1990 (No.170) to cover entire chemical lifecycle.
- ▶ Enhance the knowledge and capacity of Textile Mills to identify Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) deficits in their chemical management practices.
- ▶ Awareness raising and training of workers on sound chemical management practices.
- ▶ Create capacity and mechanism in Textile Mills for workers' health monitoring.
- ▶ Initiate institutional level interventions with provincial department to upgrade compliance standards.
- ▶ Create consensus among national stakeholders for possible ratification of ILO Chemical Convention 1990 (No.170).

## ▶ Lessons Learned from the implementation

- ▶ Textile Mills have no understanding of chemicals of concern within their chemical inventories.
- ▶ Risk Assessment is only done for chemical stores and on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- ▶ **Workers have no knowledge of possible health implications from chemicals.**
- ▶ Lack of understanding of occupational diseases and preventive measures at Mill level.
- ▶ **Incomplete and inadequate Chemical Safety Data Sheets and missing information in the garb of “confidentiality” and “trade secrets” by the manufacturers and suppliers.**
- ▶ No due diligence mechanism for suppliers by Textile Mills or SOPs on chemical transportation.
- ▶ Limited scope of compliance under labour inspection.
- ▶ Emerging concerns over heat stress at work and **standardize chemicals classification.**

# ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) and Recommendation, 1990 (No. 177)

**The main ILO instruments dealing with chemicals: Ratified by 24 member states.**

Adopted in 1990 and among the first international instruments dealing with all major chemical hazards in a comprehensive manner.

- Targeted and specific instrument.
- Provides the basis for the sound management of **all types of chemicals**.
- Everlasting components for **new/emerging chemicals**
- Convention No.170 served as the **basis for the negotiation of the Rotterdam. Convention**, which was adopted in 1998.
- Convention No.170 has also been a **basis for the development of GHS**.
- Complimented by the ILO **Code of Practice** on the Safety and use of chemicals at work.

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) – Main Provisions

### Part I. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

**Article 1:** This Convention applies to **all branches of economic activity** in which chemicals are used.

**Article 2:** the term use of chemicals at work means **any work activity** which may expose a worker to a chemical, including:

- (i) the production of chemicals;
- (ii) the handling of chemicals;
- (iii) the storage of chemicals;
- (iv) the transport of chemicals;
- (v) the disposal and treatment of waste chemicals;
- (vi) the release of chemicals resulting from work activities;
- (vii) the maintenance, repair and cleaning of equipment and containers for chemicals;

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) – Main Provisions

### Part III. Classification and Related Measures

- **ARTICLE 6: Classification systems** for chemicals according to the type and degree of their intrinsic health and physical hazards (**Article 6,1**)
- **ARTICLE 7: Labelling and marking** of all chemicals, in a way easily understandable to workers, providing essential information regarding their classification, the hazards they present and safety precautions to be observed (**Article 7**)
- **ARTICLE 8: Chemical Safety and Data Sheets** - Provision of **safety data sheets** for workers on all hazardous chemicals used in the workplace (**Article 8**)
- **ARTICLE 9: Responsibility of suppliers** - Suppliers should ensure that chemicals have been **classified**, marked to **indicate their identity**, **labelled** (for hazardous chemicals) and have **chemical safety data sheets** (for hazardous chemicals) (**Article 9**)

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) – Main Provisions (continued)

### Part IV. Responsibilities of Employers

- Employers shall **ensure that chemicals are labelled or marked and that chemical safety data sheets are provided** as required **(Article 10)**
- When chemicals are transferred into other containers or equipment, the **contents should be indicated** in a manner which will make their identity, hazards and any applicable safety precautions known to workers **(Article 11)**
- Employers shall ensure that workers are **not exposed to chemicals to an extent exceeding exposure limits (Article 12)**
- **Assess, monitor and record the exposure** of workers to hazardous chemicals **(Article 12)**

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) – Main Provisions (continued)

### Part IV. Responsibilities of Employers (continued)

- Employers shall make an **assessment of risks** arising from the use of chemicals at work, and should **take appropriate measures to protect workers against such risks** (Article 13)
- Chemicals should be **handled or disposed of in a manner which eliminates or minimizes risk** to safety and health and to the environment (Article 14)
- Employers should **inform workers of the hazards associated with chemicals**, provide **information about safety data sheets** and **train workers** on procedures to be followed (Article 15)
- Employers should **co-operate closely with workers** or their representatives (Article 16)

### Part V. Duties of Workers

- Workers should **co-operate closely with employers** and comply with procedures and practices (Article 17)
- Workers should take all reasonable steps to **eliminate or minimize risk to themselves or others** (Article 17)

## ► Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170) – Main Provisions (continued)

### Part VI. Rights of Workers and their Representatives

- Workers shall have the **right to remove themselves from danger resulting from the use of chemicals** when they have reasonable justification to believe there is an imminent and serious risk to their safety or health, and they shall be **protected from undue consequences (Article 18)**
- Workers have the right to information on the **identity of chemicals used at work, their properties, chemical safety data sheets, education and training (Article 18, 3)**

### Part VII. Responsibility of Exporting States

- Exporting states should **communicate any uses of hazardous chemicals that are prohibited** for reasons of safety and health at work to any importing country **(Article 19)**

# ► Concluding Remark