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Midterm evaluation of the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management – Phase IV: Towards achieving the SDGs

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Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

This report is a product of the Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of UNITAR, and the findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed therein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the partner agencies of the IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management. The evaluation was conducted by Dr. Boru Douthwaite. The report is issued without formal copy editing.

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Foreword

Phase IV of the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management project aims to improve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste in countries worldwide, thereby contributing to the achievement and implementation of nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), multilateral environmental agreements and other international frameworks. This phase of the project focuses on enhancing the IOMC Toolbox's utilization and strengthening collaboration and networking.

The project is funded by the European Union, runs from January 2023 to December 2025 and is implemented by seven IOMC participating organizations with the World Health Organisation acting as IOMC's administering organisation.

The phase's Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) assessed the project's relevance and effectiveness from January 2023 to September 2025. It followed a participatory and mixed methods approach, including analysis of the theory of change, carrying out a strategic foresight workshop, in depth interviews, an online survey, desk review and analysis of website analytics. The evaluation encountered several limitations, including the remote character and summer timing of the exercise, budget, survey response rate and data availability.

The evaluation found Phase IV to demonstrate a strong conceptual foundation with clear alignment to global priorities such as SDG 12.4, the 2023 Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), and EU objectives; however, the phase's effectiveness was undermined by administrative challenges, particularly the mismatch of the joint programme modality for sustained technical cooperation among seven distinct organizations. While progress was made in developing management schemes and engaging users, the evaluation found other outcomes to lag, especially those reliant on prior work e.g. translations. The evaluation also found the GFC to offer a strategic opportunity to integrate the IOMC Toolbox into global chemicals governance, though its content requires reframing. Despite broad participation across 19 countries, the evaluation found institutional changes to remain limited, with successes appearing anecdotal and timing-dependent. Efforts toward gender equality and human rights are evident but fragmented due to resource constraints and lack of a comprehensive strategy.

The evaluation issued a set of five recommendations of which three were partially accepted and two rejected. The evaluation was managed by the UNITAR Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME) Unit and was undertaken by Boru Douthwaite. The PPME Unit is grateful to the evaluator, the Project Management Group and partners, as well as other project stakeholders for providing important input into this evaluation.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AO	Administering Organization
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GFC	Global Framework on Chemicals
GHS	Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOMC	Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
JP	Joint Programme
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MAD	Mutual Acceptance of Data
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD- DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PMG	Project Management Group
POs	Participating Organizations
PPME	Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
PRTR	Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

This Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of Phase IV of the IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management assessed the project's relevance and effectiveness from January 2023 to September 2025. The project, funded by the European Union with €2,500,001 and implemented by seven IOMC participating organizations (POs) led by WHO, aims to strengthen chemical management in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Methodology and limitations

The evaluation followed a participatory and mixed methods approach, including analysis of the theory of change (ToC), carrying out a foresight workshop with PO's focal points, in depth interviews, an online survey, desk review and analysis of website analytics. The evaluation encountered geographic, time, budget, summer timing, low survey response rate and data availability limitations.

Key Findings and Conclusions

Strong Conceptual Foundation Undermined by Administrative Problems

Phase IV demonstrates strong alignment with global processes and priorities, particularly SDG 12.4's environmentally sound chemicals management objectives, the 2023 Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), and EU priorities. However, the project faces a serious administrative issue with funding delays exceeding nine months for the first tranche due to setbacks in signing of Joint Partnership MOUs and over nine additional months delay resulting from problems with financial report consolidation. WHO has notified POs that it would be stepping aside as the Administering Organization (AO) after Phase IV. The joint programme modality used by the Phase IV proved mismatched for sustained technical cooperation among seven organizations with distinct procedures.

Mixed Performance Across Outcomes

Results show large variations: reasonable progress has been made on management schemes development (73 per cent of targets) and user engagement reaching 10,816 active users from 48 per cent developing countries despite the small number of promotional events organized during Phase IV, but shortfalls exist in tool development (23 per cent of targets), translations (7 per cent completion), and training delivery (21 per cent of participant target). Shortfalls can be expected on outputs that depend on previous work, for example translations.

Global Framework on Chemicals Presents an Important Opportunity

The GFC was established during Phase IV implementation creating an unprecedented opportunity to transform the IOMC Toolbox from a standalone capacity building initiative into a part of an integral global chemicals governance infrastructure. The GFC's 28 targets with 2030 deadlines provide implementation pathways and accountability mechanisms that the project may wish to align itself with in the remainder of Phase IV, in anticipation of Phase V. If so, existing content requires remapping and reframing in GFC terminology. The PMG has had the foresight to request POs to begin the mapping process.

Limited Institutional Change Despite Broad Reach

While the project achieved verified participation across 19 countries with 229 confirmed participants in IOMC Toolbox events, evidence of meaningful outcomes remains largely anecdotal. The few documented successes, such as Vietnam's policy influence, appear dependent on exceptional timing rather than systematic effectiveness. Gender equality and human rights integration show partial progress but remains fragmented without the resources for a comprehensive strategy.

Recommendations

Immediate Action Required (Next 2 Months)

1. **Secure No-Cost Extension Through Emergency Provisions:** The administrative agent must urgently submit the extension request that the EC may accept without awaiting the consolidated financial report, invoking exceptional circumstances provisions if necessary to ensure a no-cost extension.

High Priority - Structural Reforms (Next 6-12 Months)

2. **Address Administrative Bottlenecks for Phase IV:** Ensure processes are more streamlined and address administrative bottlenecks. The current structure has created rather than solved administrative complexity, requiring fundamental rethinking of the structure before any future phase. A practical suggestion is for POs to ensure reports align with donor expenditure and reporting requirements prior to submission and for the AO to vet PO financial reports more closely for compliance with donor requirements before submitting them to WHO Finance.
3. **Achieve Strategic Realignment with Global Framework on Chemicals:** Should the PMG wish to go beyond mapping Toolbox content onto GFC targets in Phase IV then the project should consider creating explicit entry points that position the IOMC Toolbox as essential infrastructure for GFC Programme One on national legislation and institutional capacity building.

Medium Priority - Operational Improvements (Next 12-18 Months)

4. **Improve User Experience:** Redesign platform functionality to address shallow engagement patterns through simplified navigation, contextualized content presentation, and interactive support mechanisms, possibly exploring the potential of conversational interfaces using AI chatbots.

5. **Carry Out One or Two Targeted Low-Cost Interventions that Establish Gender Awareness as a Quality Improvement Rather than an Add-On:** While Phase IV shows improvement over Phase III, current efforts remain fragmented, unsystematic, and insufficient to meet contemporary standards for inclusive development programming. Given time and resources available in the second half of Phase IV of the project what it can do is to take one or two examples of where there is active exclusion to understand the barriers and how they could be overcome. The project could also explore if and where gender-blind language creates problems in two or three of the most used management toolkits and make targeted revisions as a pilot for doing this more widely.

Lessons Learned

1. **Training alone is insufficient to achieve better chemical management:** Better chemical management depends on organizational prioritization, resource availability, and ongoing support beyond single sessions. Tools need to go hand in hand with strengthened institutions, adequate financial resources and improved enforcement capacity. Many of these are outside the control of the project.
2. **Multi-agency coordination as a double-edged sword:** Multi-agency coordination to deal with sectoral gaps and overlaps, while theoretically sound and a rationale for the project, can create problems due to administrative complexity, e.g., 10-month funding delays and extended nine+ month consolidation delays significantly undermine overall project execution, timelines, and outcomes.
3. **Timing Trumps Tools:** Strategic timing - aligning support with emergent opportunity for policy change - can produce more impact than when there is no policy window. The Vietnam case illustrated this: OECD conducted training precisely when the country was revising chemical management legislation, leading to

policy influence. However, this success appeared exceptional rather than systematic

- 4. Embedding Over Standalone:** Carrying out Toolbox activities within project, country and global processes is more likely to contribute to behaviour change because what is learned is more likely to be revisited and used when carried out in ongoing processes.

The evaluation reveals a project with sound technical content and clear relevance to global needs, but with fundamental structural problems that threaten effectiveness and sustainability. The GFC presents a critical opportunity for strategic repositioning, but success requires immediate administrative reforms and long-term architectural redesign.

Mid-term evaluation of the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management - Phase IV: Towards achieving the SDGs



The IOMC Toolbox for decision making Phase IV



Phase IV of the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management project aims to **improve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste** in countries worldwide.

- Phase IV focuses on:**
- Enhancing IOMC Toolbox utilization.
 - Strengthening collaboration and networking.



Funded by European Union



Implementation timeframe: January 2023 - December 2025

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)

Purpose

Assessed the project's relevance and effectiveness, examine the implementation of recommendations from the Phase III final evaluation, and provide actionable recommendations for improving project implementation during the remaining period.

Scope

Light evaluation

Implementation timeframe: January 2023 - September 2025

Methods and tools



Participatory, mixed-methods



Key informant interviews



Analysis of the Theory of Change



Online survey



Foresight workshop



Document review, including website analytics

Key findings

Strong Conceptual Foundation Undermined by Administrative Problems

- Strong alignment with global frameworks and priorities, EU priorities.
- Administrative delays.



Mixed performance across objectives

- Progress on management schemes development and user engagement, but shortfalls exist in the remainder.
- Shortfalls on outputs that depend on previous work.



Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) presents an important opportunity

- Opportunity to transform the IOMC Toolbox.
- Project Management Group has already started the mapping process.



Limited institutional change despite broad reach

- Large project reach (participants and countries in capacity building).
- Gender equality and human rights integration shows partial progress but remains fragmented without the resources for a comprehensive strategy.



Recommendations

1. Secure No-Cost Extension Through Emergency Provisions.
2. Address Administrative Bottlenecks for Phase IV: Ensure processes are more streamlined and address administrative bottlenecks.
3. Achieve Strategic Realignment with Global Framework on Chemicals: Should the PMG wish to go beyond mapping IOMC Toolbox content onto GFC targets in Phase IV then the project should consider creating explicit entry points that position the IOMC Toolbox as essential infrastructure for GFC.
4. Improve user experience: Redesign platform functionality to address low engagement patterns through simplified navigation, contextualized content presentation, and interactive support mechanisms.
5. Carry out one or two targeted low cost interventions that establish gender awareness as a quality improvement rather than an add-on.

Lessons learned

1. Training alone is insufficient to achieve better chemical management.
2. Multi-agency coordination as a double-edged sword. Multi-agency coordination to deal with sectoral gaps and overlaps, while theoretically sound and a rationale for the project, can create problems due to administrative complexity.
3. Timing Trumps Tools: Strategic timing - aligning support with emergent opportunity for policy change – can produce more impact than when there is no policy window.
4. Embedding over standalone: Carrying out IOMC Toolbox activities within project, country and global processes is more likely to contribute to behaviour change because what is learned is more likely to be revisited and used when carried out in ongoing processes.



Introduction

1. This Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) report presents the findings of an independent assessment of Phase IV of the Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management project,¹ titled "Towards Achieving the SDGs." The evaluation was conducted by UNITAR's Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PPME) in accordance with UNITAR's Evaluation Policy and the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation.
2. Phase IV is funded by the European Union (EU) with a total budget of € 2,500,001 and spans from January 2023 to December 2025. The project is managed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in partnership with six other IOMC Participating Organizations (POs): the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
3. This MTE covers the period from the project's inception on January 1, 2023 to quarter 3 of 2025. The evaluation is designed as a "light evaluation" that will be complemented by a comprehensive final evaluation. The primary purpose is to assess the project's relevance and effectiveness, examine the implementation of recommendations from the Phase III final evaluation, and provide actionable recommendations for improving project implementation during the remaining period.
4. The evaluation employs OECD-DAC criteria while incorporating gender, disability, human rights, and environmental considerations throughout the assessment process. It follows a participatory approach engaging a range of stakeholders including the Project Management Group (PMG), IOMC POs, project users in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and the EU as the donor.
5. The primary users of this evaluation include the PMG and other IOMC organizations who will utilize the findings to adjust and improve project implementation in the remaining period and inform the design of subsequent phases. Secondary users include project beneficiaries in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as well as the EC.

¹ The terms "project" and "action" are used interchangeably in this report.

Project Description, Objectives and Development Context

6. Work on the IOMC Toolbox began in 2010 with the EU funding of the project's Phase I. The project is designed to assist countries and sub-regions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition worldwide in identifying the most relevant, efficient, and appropriate national actions to respond to chemicals management problems.

Project Evolution Through Previous Phases

7. The project has evolved significantly through its previous phases. Phase I focused on developing a proof-of-concept version of the IOMC Toolbox to enable countries to identify practical and cost-effective chemicals management options using resources developed by IOMC POs. In Phase II, the IOMC Toolbox was pilot-tested, further developed, and its functionalities improved, with existing management schemes tested and revised and four new schemes added. The IOMC Toolbox was promoted to over 3,000 policy makers worldwide, focusing on developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
8. Phase III continued to improve functionalities and broaden the scope and application of the IOMC Toolbox. The platform was redesigned for faster access and easier navigation, and training activities commenced in countries and regions to strengthen human resources and enable implementation of available tools. Phase III demonstrated the evolution toward practical capacity building and real-world application.

Phase IV Scope and Innovation

9. Phase IV builds upon these foundations with the aim of further promoting sound management of chemicals through several key innovations:
 - **Enhanced IOMC Toolbox Content and Accessibility:** The project focuses on updating and adding management schemes and technical content, thereby strengthening relevance and broadening scope for application. This includes developing new management schemes on control of illegal trade of pesticides, Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD), and national waste management strategies.
 - **Multilingual Expansion:** A significant emphasis is placed on translating flagship tools from English into other UN languages, thereby increasing application and implementation in non-English speaking countries. This addresses an important barrier to global utilization of available guidance.
 - **Comprehensive Capacity Building:** The project creates web-based, virtual, and face-to-face training opportunities to strengthen human resources in countries and build competencies required for implementing identified guidance. This includes developing authoritative, comprehensive, and stand-alone web-based training courses.

- **Gender and Human Rights Integration:** Phase IV places enhanced focus on integrating gender considerations and human rights aspects throughout all activities, ensuring that tools and training address gender issues and protection of vulnerable groups and populations.

Target Beneficiaries and Geographic Focus

10. The project targets multiple levels of beneficiaries. Primary beneficiaries include policy and decision makers in environmental, health, and safety domains, as well as technical professionals with roles in assessment and management of chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Final beneficiaries encompass those who use and manage chemicals (including operators and workers), consumers exposed to chemicals and wastes via food, water, and product use, and society at large through reduced exposure to hazardous chemicals via environmental improvements.

Multi-Sectoral Approach

11. The project is designed to serve multiple sectors involved in chemical assessment and management, including environment, labour, health, agriculture, and development. It supports a multi-sectoral approach that strengthens coordination and collaboration among involved sectors, recognizing that effective chemicals management requires integrated responses across government departments and stakeholder groups.

Partnership Structure

12. The implementation involves seven of the nine IOMC POs, each bringing specialized expertise. WHO serves as the overall coordinator and administering organization (AO) and focuses on public health. FAO leads on pesticide-related activities, ILO focuses on occupational safety and health, UNEP addresses environmental data systems, UNIDO concentrates on green chemistry and industrial applications, UNITAR provides training and capacity building expertise and focuses on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), and OECD maintains the technical platform and develops industrial chemicals guidance.

Objectives

Overall Objective

13. The overarching objective of Phase IV is to improve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste in countries worldwide, thereby contributing to the achievement and implementation of nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), multilateral environmental agreements, and other international frameworks. The project aims to double the number of new countries using the IOMC Toolbox and its content to draft and adopt policies for the sound management of chemicals, from 30 countries (2022 baseline) to 60 countries by the end of 2025.

Expected Outcomes

14. The project focusses on two specific expected outcomes:

Outcome 1: Enhanced IOMC Toolbox Utilization. The IOMC Toolbox and its content are increasingly used by countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to establish and improve chemicals management capacities and infrastructure, including control and enforcement, as well as access to data and information. Key indicators include:

- IOMC Toolbox visits, downloads of documents and other statistics
- Number of countries who during the Action period identified guidelines and tools in the IOMC Toolbox AND are in the process of or plan to implement them in the near future
- Number of countries who during the Action period identified tools in the IOMC Toolbox and fully implemented them

Outcome 2: Strengthened Collaboration and Networking. Increased national and international collaboration and networking within and between countries and IOMC POs to enhance the sound management of chemicals in countries. Key indicators include:

- Number of countries during the Action period that are engaged in international collaborations to advance the implementation of the sound management of chemicals

Strategic Results Areas

15. To achieve these outcomes, the project is organized around producing six outputs:

1. **Updated IOMC Toolbox:** Existing management schemes and tools are reviewed and revised when needed, including improvements to integrate human rights and gender equality aspects and protection of vulnerable populations.
2. **Broadened IOMC Toolbox:** New or expanded chemical management schemes and related tools are added, increasing scope and applicability to address emerging challenges and country needs.
3. **Improved Guidance and Tools:** New guidance and tools are developed by IOMC POs upon request by countries, especially developing countries, to close gaps where guidance is missing or outdated.
4. **Language Accessibility:** Versions of guidance and tools are made available in UN languages other than English, dramatically expanding accessibility for non-English speaking countries.
5. **Web-based Training Courses:** Authoritative, comprehensive, and stand-alone web-based training courses are developed for target audiences in developing countries to build capacities toward implementing IOMC guidance and using IOMC tools.
6. **Training and Promotional Events:** Global, regional, and country-targeted virtual and face-to-face training and promotional events are organized to build capacities and increase coordination, collaboration, and networking.

Development Context

Global Chemicals Industry Growth and Challenges

16. The IOMC Toolbox Phase IV addresses the significant challenge posed by rapid growth in chemical production and use, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Over the past decade, economic growth in these regions has driven substantial expansion of chemical industries, requiring governments to expand and strengthen their regulatory capacities to address all aspects of hazardous chemical management and related health and environmental effects.
17. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition face interconnected challenges in chemical management, including limited human and financial resources for implementing comprehensive chemical management systems, difficulty identifying appropriate authoritative guidance for specific national circumstances, and restricted access to international guidance materials that are predominantly available only in English. These countries also struggle with weak frameworks for multi-sectoral coordination across environment, health, agriculture, and industry sectors, alongside insufficient capacity for risk assessment, monitoring, and enforcement.

Alignment with Global Development Frameworks

18. The project aims to support multiple international commitments and frameworks. It intends to make contributions to SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) while providing cross-cutting support for nearly all other SDGs through improved chemical safety. The initiative specifically advances SDG 5 (Gender Equality) through enhanced gender integration across all activities.
19. The project also plans to strengthen implementation of key international agreements including the multilateral environmental agreements (Rotterdam, Stockholm, Basel, and Minamata Conventions), the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) and the International Health Regulations.² This comprehensive alignment ensures that project activities contribute systematically to global policy coherence in chemical management.

Capacity Building Context

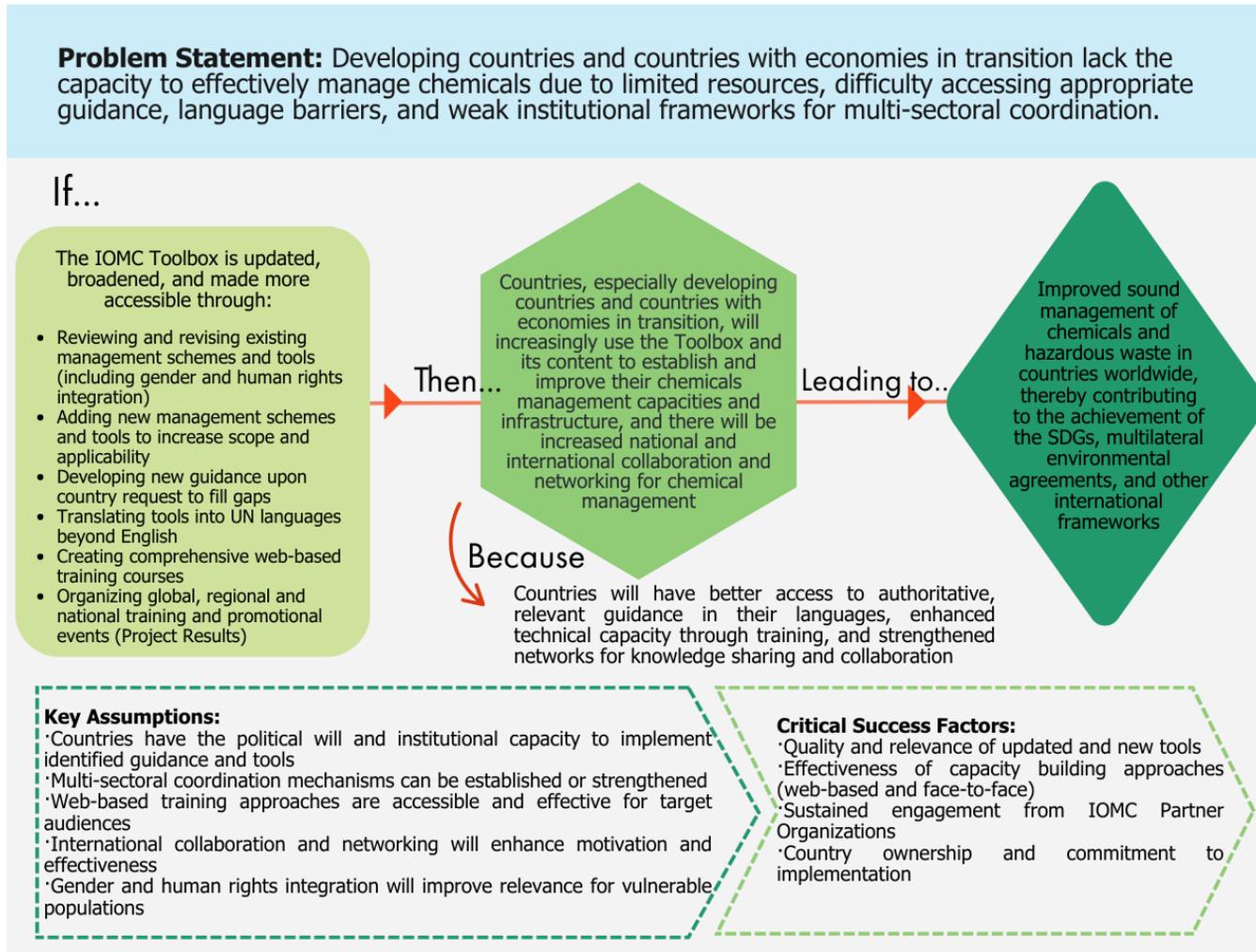
20. Existing capacity building programmes have traditionally been based on face-to-face training involving international resource persons and trainers. The global health pandemic period showed that people worldwide have become significantly more familiar with using web-based platforms and virtual meetings for their work and training, creating opportunities to develop comprehensive and robust web-based training courses and platforms to strengthen human capacities for sound chemical management.

² WHO adopted the revised International Health Regulations (<https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/249532/9789241509589-eng.pdf>) which provides a unique public health framework in the form of obligations and recommendations that enable countries to better prevent, prepare for and respond to public health events and emergencies of potential international concern, including chemical events.

Theory of Change / Project Design Logic

21. The project document does not provide a theory of change (ToC), rather the project's causal logic is captured in an "indicative logframe matrix" in the project document annex. The evaluator used both documents to retrospectively develop the project's ToC which is described in Figure 1 below. The ToC is used later in the report to assess the validity of the project's causal logic.

Figure 1 - Project theory of change derived from the project document



Methodology and limitations

Overall Methodological Framework

22. The MTE employs a mixed-methods evaluation approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. This methodological framework is built on a participatory foundation, actively engaging stakeholders throughout the entire evaluation process to ensure comprehensive coverage and meaningful insights.
23. As mentioned above, the ToR for this evaluation indicated that it should be a 'light' evaluation to be complemented by the final evaluation. Accordingly, the MTE focuses on two of the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria - relevance and effectiveness – to focus at mid-point on whether the project is addressing the right issues and progressing towards achieving its intended outcomes.
24. The methodology is guided by a detailed evaluation matrix that addresses the relevance and effectiveness criteria, see Annex E.

Developing and Analyzing the Project's ToC

25. The evaluation team developed the project's ToC from the project document, as described in the previous section. The team tested the validity of the key causal assumptions that underpin the ToC. This is important because if the ToC's key assumptions are not valid then this risks the relevance and effectiveness of the project as a whole.

PMG Participation

26. The evaluation incorporates a two-phase engagement strategy with the PMG that goes beyond traditional stakeholder consultation. The first meeting with the PMG serves dual purposes: sharing the results of an initial After Action Review carried out by the evaluator based on key informant interviews (KIIs) to examine what has worked well and what challenges have emerged, combined with strategic foresight exercises that help identify emerging trends and future considerations.
27. The second PMG meeting focuses on presenting preliminary findings, creating an opportunity for validation, clarification, and collaborative interpretation of results. This approach ensures that the evaluation beneficiaries have several opportunities to engage with the evaluation findings and can contribute their institutional knowledge to enhance the accuracy and utility of the evaluation conclusions.

Primary Data Collection Methods

28. The evaluation employs a multi-pronged data collection strategy designed to capture diverse perspectives and experiences. The process begins with *KIIs* with PO focal points, which serve the triple purpose of gathering insights; requesting help in obtaining contact details for participants in various POs' events; and obtaining suggestions for other key people to interview.

29. *Document review* forms an important foundation, involving comprehensive analysis of project documents, reports, and background materials (see Annex D). This desk research extends to examining Phase III evaluation recommendations and their implementation status, providing crucial context for understanding the project's evolution and responsiveness to previous feedback.
30. The methodology *includes systematic stakeholder analysis and mapping of key informants* to ensure representative coverage across different stakeholder categories and geographic regions. *Website analytics*, participation statistics, and *financial data* analysis provide quantitative insights into project reach and resource utilization patterns.
31. An *online survey* targets participants in project-supported capacity development events, offering a mechanism to gather standardized feedback across a broad respondent base. This survey is designed to capture both satisfaction levels and substantive feedback on project effectiveness and relevance. The survey shares many of the same questions with two other surveys carried out for the MTE and final evaluations of Phase III.

Evaluation Question Structure

32. The evaluation methodology is organized around 14 evaluation questions distributed across relevance and effectiveness criteria. The four relevance questions examine: alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; reach to intended users in developing countries and countries with economies in transition; appropriateness of updated content and materials; and integration of gender equality and human rights considerations compared to Phase III.
33. The ten effectiveness questions cover: progress toward planned outcomes and outputs; identification of unintended consequences; assessment of broadened reach and use; contribution to improved national chemicals management capacities; collaboration effectiveness among countries and IOMC partners; human rights and gender mainstreaming effectiveness; environmental sustainability integration; partnership modality effectiveness; implementation of Phase III recommendations; and identification of good practices and needed corrective actions.
34. Each question is linked to appropriate data sources and collection methods, ensuring that the evaluation can provide evidence-based responses to each inquiry.

Quality Assurance

35. The methodology incorporates robust quality assurance mechanisms designed to ensure credibility and reliability of findings. Triangulation across multiple data sources serves as the primary validation strategy, with each major finding generally supported by evidence from at least two different data collection methods or sources. Two debriefing sessions during data collection provide opportunities for real-time quality control and methodological adjustment if needed. Interview notes are shared with all interviewees to check the accuracy.
36. Ethical considerations receive careful attention, with confidentiality and anonymity protections for all informants, informed consent procedures for interviews and surveys,

and full compliance with UNEG ethical guidelines. These measures ensure that the evaluation respects participant rights while gathering authentic and honest feedback.

Use of AI Platforms

37. The evaluation's use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is guided by UNITAR's guidance on ethical principles for using AI in evaluation. This includes specifying the AI platforms used and how they were chosen while complying with ethical and methodological principles. Interviews were recorded with interviewer's permission and transcripts generated using Otter.ai, chosen because according to the Otter.ai chatbot:

- Transcripts are always private and accessible only to the user and people they have chosen to share with. The user has complete control over who can access their transcripts or recordings.
- Otter.ai requires explicit consent from customers before its employees or support team can access transcripts or audio recordings for troubleshooting. Audio recordings are never manually reviewed by humans without your explicit consent.
- Otter anonymizes data to train its models.

38. Claude Sonnet 4 was chosen to carry out analysis of evaluation data because it has, according to Claude itself, been trained on evaluation literature and as a result can discuss concepts like OECD-DAC criteria, logical frameworks, ToC, mixed-methods approaches and foresight, to mention a few. Claude can understand evaluation terminology and can help structure evaluation questions or analyse evaluation documents. It is good at understanding and responding to nuanced instructions and linked sets of questions. The evaluation team found these claims to be true.

39. Human oversight is central. The evaluation team ensured that all AI-generated findings are verified to prevent "AI hallucination" through systematic triangulation with human analysis and multiple data sources. When assessing whether the IOMC Toolbox is "relevant", human evaluators must weigh political contexts, cultural factors, and institutional constraints that AI cannot fully comprehend. The UNITAR guidelines specifically mention that technical decisions based on statistical inferences cannot replace the practical wisdom required for addressing global challenges.

40. Interviewees are anonymized using participant codes, e.g., Respondent 1, before interview notes are analysed to answer the evaluation questions. This is to meet the UNITAR guidance about not sharing personal, professional or confidential information with AI platforms.

Rating Scale

41. A six-point Likert-like scale was used to provide overall ratings for each of the evaluation criteria. The rating scale is described below. Ratings were assigned and justified by the evaluator based on the data collected. These ratings are presented in the Findings section, under each corresponding criterion.

42. The rating system is based on the scale developed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and ranges from highly satisfactory to highly

unsatisfactory. The definition of each point-scale is described below:

- **Highly satisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity (project, programme, etc.) achieved or surpassed all main targets, objectives, expectations, results (or impacts) and could be considered as a model within its project typology.
- **Satisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity achieved almost all (indicatively, over 80-95 per cent) of the main targets, objectives, expectations, results (or impacts).
- **Moderately satisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity achieved the majority (indicatively, 60 to 80 per cent) of the targets, objectives, expectations, results or impacts, though with notable gaps in some areas.
- **Moderately unsatisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity did not achieve its main targets, (indicatively, less than 60 per cent) objectives, expectations, results or impacts.
- **Unsatisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity achieved only a minority of its targets, objectives, expectations, results or impacts.
- **Highly unsatisfactory:** Under the concerned criterion, the activity (project, programme, etc.) achieved almost none of its targets, objectives, expectations, results or impacts.

Limitations

43. The IOMC Toolbox Project Phase IV Mid-Term Evaluation faces several methodological limitations with corresponding mitigation strategies:

- **Geographic constraints** represent the primary limitation, as no in-person field visits were planned. This restricts the evaluation team's ability to observe project implementation firsthand and may limit contextual understanding. The evaluation relied on virtual meeting platforms to achieve broader stakeholder reach as compensation.
- **Language barriers** were expected to pose a more significant challenge than actually encountered. Most of the interviews were with PO staff, all of whom were fluent in English. Most of the documentation was in English. The online survey was translated into French and Spanish.
- **Time and budget constraints** from the limited evaluation period prevent comprehensive coverage of all project aspects. The evaluation addressed this by prioritizing the most critical evaluation questions.
- **Summer** timing creates availability challenges as stakeholders may be on holiday during the key data collection period. Early interview initiation in June and coordination with PMG members about holiday periods helped mitigate this issue.
- Based on previous experience, a **low survey response rate** (<10 per cent) was predicted. To mitigate this, four reminders were sent and language was adjusted in

the email invitation. Nevertheless, findings may neither be representative of all events nor of all countries.

- **Data availability** prevented the evaluation team from fully verifying the number of participants referred to in the narrative report. Lists of participants were missing and only 229 participants out of the reported 595 participants could be identified by the evaluation team. Moreover, contact details were even more limited and only partially made available which resulted in the survey only being sent to those for which email addresses or phone numbers were provided.

Analysis Carried Out to Underpin the Findings

44. The evaluation team carried out analysis of four key elements to help answer the evaluation questions in the Findings section. The four elements are presented in four boxes:

1. Analysis of the project's ToC
2. The GFC.
3. The project's administrative timeline.
4. Reasons for administrative issues.

Box 1 - Analysis of gaps in the project's theory of change

The project's ToC is shown in Figure 1.

The main causal assumption in ToC that maybe flawed is that IF the IOMC Toolbox is updated, broadened and made more accessible THEN this will lead to improved chemical management in the countries that use the Toolbox. Multiple respondents indicate this connection is weak. One respondent said "we have no control" over whether participants implement what they learn because there are many factors outside the hands of the project such as prioritization and resource availability. Another respondent noted the "one-off training problem" where participants need ongoing support rather than single sessions.

A casual assumption that is partly flawed is that bringing together organizations covering different chemical management sectors will lead to better handling of the gaps and overlaps between them. While the logic remains valid in theory, in practice multi-agency coordination has become the project's primary vulnerability, with 10-month funding delays, 9+ month financial consolidation delays.

Box 2 - What the GFC means to the IOMC Toolbox project

Based on the MTE interviews, the GFC presents a strong argument for Phase V of the project. Success depends on transforming the project from a standalone capacity building initiative into a part of an integral component of global chemicals governance, using the GFC as a framework and justification for necessary structural reforms.

Strategic Positioning and Timing

The GFC, established in 2023 to replace SAICM, creates an unprecedented opportunity for the IOMC Toolbox to become embedded within global chemicals governance infrastructure. The IOMC Toolbox contains schemes, tools, toolkits and data collection methods that fits the GFC needs but which are not yet framed in GFC language. This is because the IOMC Toolbox predates the 2023 GFC framework.³

Phase V could address this by creating GFC-specific entry points around the framework's five strategic objectives and 28 targets, building on the mapping undertaken by the PMG.

Meetings in June 2025 in Uruguay demonstrated growing policy recognition, with IOMC and the IOMC Toolbox "mentioned frequently as implementation tools for the GFC."

One respondent said that the IOMC Toolbox is being repositioned as a central component of the GFC Programme One focused on national legislation and institutional capacity building. Programme 1 will use the existing guidance and tools from the IOMC Toolbox to build more comprehensive guidance for strengthening national chemicals legislation, identifying gaps, and promoting sustainable chemicals management, with the aim of informing and supporting countries in developing their own legislative frameworks and institutional capacities.

On-going Engagement

The PMG has been urging POs to take up the opportunities offered by the GFC. The PMG requested POs in April 2024 to "map" the 28 GFC targets to see where the IOMC Toolbox can help each PO implement GFC (PMG Meeting 18). In October 2024 the PMG requested that "all POs consider how to promote countries to use the IOMC Toolbox as part of their proposals to the GFC Fund."⁴ Despite this, the IOMC Toolbox was not referenced in the 105 proposals submitted by applicants to the GFC's first call, possibly because of length restrictions on the application form. The opportunity is not lost though: the four successful projects are due to submit their final proposals in January 2025. One is supported by UNITAR and two by FAO. There is still time for these two POs to suggest that the project proposals include the use of the IOMC Toolbox to help achieve project and GFC targets.

[Box 3 - IOMC Toolbox Phase 4: Administrative Timeline](#)

2023: Phase 4 Launch & Initial Delays

December 2022

- EU-partner agreement signed
- Phase 4 designed to be administratively simpler, learning lessons from Phase 3. See Box 4.

February 2023

- **13th PMG Meeting (Feb 21):**
 - WHO explain that the Phase 4 Contribution Agreement requires all partners to include "wet ink" signatures by courier, in sequence. The request for the final signature went to UNITAR in November
 - POs also have to agree and sign a Joint Programme MoU to replace the UN2UN agreements used in Phase 3. The MoU includes a standard UN template plus standard amendments for EC agreements.

June 2023

- **14th PMG Meeting (June 5):** Joint Programme MoU for UN agencies and WHO-OECD agreement MoU in process of being signed off by WHO management

³ <https://www.unep.org/global-framework-chemicals>

⁴ PMG Meeting 21

- First tranche of funds to follow "soon after" MoU signatures

October 2023

- **15th PMG Meeting (Oct 19):**
 - **MILESTONE:** Joint Programme MoU and WHO-OECD agreement MoU signed by all parties
 - **MILESTONE:** First tranche of funds distributed to POs on **October 19, 2023**
 - First interim report due to EC within 60 days after year end (by **February 28, 2024**), necessary for POs to request second tranche payments.
 - The financial part of the first interim reports cannot be finalized until 70 per cent of first tranche payment has been spent, meaning an extension is required.

November 2023

- **16th PMG Meeting (Nov 30):**
 - Hard copies of the Contribution Agreement with EC sent to final partner (UNITAR) for signature

2024: Platform Functionality, Reporting Extensions & Amendment Discussions

February 2024

- **17th PMG Meeting (Feb 1):**
 - Hard copies of signed Phase 4 agreement received by EC
 - **MILESTONE:** EC agreed to extend first interim reporting period from 12 months to **18 months** (to end of June 2024). This was made necessary by the 9-month delay in funding, leaving just 3 months to report on.
 - Requirement confirmed: must spend 70 per cent of 1st tranche before requesting 2nd tranche
- **Platform functionality issues limited upload/update capability**

April 2024

- **18th PMG Meeting (Apr 11):**
 - **Status:** Approximately 50 per cent of funds budgeted up until June 30, 2024, meaning the reporting period needed further extension. Agreement made to request until September 2024
 - IT platform crisis identified: Backend not operating, preventing content updates. The platform built in 2019 had become obsolete and vulnerable to security threats

April 2024 - Special Meeting

- **18b Special PMG Meeting (Apr 29):**
 - Urgent need for IT platform upgrade costing €150K (\$165K)
 - Discussion of funding options through budget reallocations and IOMC Trust Fund

July 2024

- **19th PMG Meeting (July 2) - In-person at WHO Geneva:**
 - **First Interim Report due August 31, 2024** (extended deadline)
 - **Amendment Decision:** PMG agrees to request Amendment for:
 - No-cost extension until December 2026 to account for project delays
 - Reallocation of up to \$105K for IT platform update
 - \$60K to be advanced by IOMC Trust Fund

August 2024

- **20th PMG Meeting (Aug 19):**
 - **Reporting Status:** PMG expenditures ~50 per cent by June 30, estimated \$170K remaining to reach 70 per cent
 - **Pending:** EC response to request for extending first reporting period until 70 per cent threshold reached.

- **Action Required:** IOCC Chair requesting \$60K from IOMC Trust Fund on "no objection basis" by August 30, 2024 to solve the IT platform crisis. In the end \$50K was transferred.

September 2024

- **20b Special PMG Meeting (Sep 11):** Focus on collaborative capacity building activities
 - **Capacity Building Achievement:** 18 workshops across all regions training 500 participants from 60 countries during Jan 2023-Sept 2024
- The project reaches the 70 per cent expenditure target

October 2024

- **21st PMG Meeting:**
 - WHO had consolidated the narrative report for the interim period
 - EC agreed an extension of first reporting period until September 2024
 - Partners were given a hard deadline of **November 30, 2024** to submit their certified financial reports
 - The final consolidated report was due to EC in **January 2025**
 - IT platform funding was finalized with specific partner contributions
- UNIDO submit their financial report 25 October, FAO about 2 weeks later

January 2025 (22nd PMG Meeting):

- One PO was late in submitting their financial report which the PMG Meeting blamed for the administrative agent not starting to consolidate and certify the financial report due to the EC in January 2025
- The deadline reset to **February 2025**

March 2025 (23 PMG Meeting):

Planned but no meeting arranged

August / September 2025:

- No PMG Meeting has been held since January 2025
- WHO project and financial staff met to unblock the budget consolidation bottleneck in August.
- As of September, WHO finance staff are fully occupied in response to a financial crisis that is taking priority over all other work. No date has given for submitting the project financial report.
- The extension request has not been sent either because it depends on unblocking the second tranche payments.

Narrative summary based on the timeline

Project Overview and Initial Delays

The EU-partner agreement signed in December 2022. WHO distributed draft MOUs February 21 2023, but final versions were not circulated until June 29, 2023—a four-month delay. There was then a five-month delay as POs returned their signed MOUs. FAO returned theirs on 12 July while UNIDO took until 12 September. Fund disbursement occurred in October 2023. This necessitated extending the first interim reporting period from 12 to 18 months, approved by the EC in December 2023.

Technical Crisis

A technical crisis emerged in February 2024 when the IOMC Toolbox platform became vulnerable to security threats. Platform redevelopment required €165,000 not allocated in the Phase 4 budget. Partners contributed \$105,000 through budget reallocation, with the remaining \$50,000 requiring an IOMC Trust Fund advance. This funding was secured by October 2024. The upgrade affected the online functionality of the IOMC Toolbox with its revamped backend only going live in June 2025, with a soft relaunch of the upgrade to be held in September 2025. Usage statistics were lost in the upgrade which makes monitoring the performance of the online platform overtime difficult.

Some Programmatic Success

Despite administrative challenges, the project demonstrated progress towards its planned outputs. In September 2024, PMG Meeting reported that with less than a year of funding, partners conducted 18 workshops across all regions between January 2023 and September 2024, training 500 participants. The MTE could only confirm 229 participants, despite many attempts to be provided with the data used in writing the first narrative report.

Financial Consolidation Bottleneck

As of September 12, 2025, the consolidated project financial report covering the first tranche payment remains unsubmitted to the EU. This report requires WHO finance officers to consolidate financial reports from all POs to confirm expenditures and co-financing contributions. This has been pending since the beginning of the year, a delay of nine months, and was still pending as of October 2025. The consolidation delay has prevented second tranche disbursements being made, creating operational difficulties including cash flow problems for implementing organizations.

Box 4 - Reasons for administrative issues that have faced Phase IV of the project

WHO served as administrative agent in Phase III and continues to do so in Phase IV. The Phase III MTE identified administrative and bureaucratic issues that were hampering the project and recommended that the Phase III final evaluation focus on the issue. The Phase III final evaluation found three main concerns that continue in Phase IV:

- Some of the POs can only start work when money has been transferred to their bank accounts making them sensitive to payment delays. Others allow expenditure once funds have been committed. This cannot be changed at project level.
- The EC will only provide the next tranche of funding when 70 per cent of the previous tranche has been spent on average across all POs. This means that delays suffered by individual POs can delay the work of others.
- Agencies have differences in how they account for co-financing, and deal with a Euro - Dollar exchange rate that was fixed at start of the project, both of which can make project financial reporting difficult.

The Phase III FE also found that lessons relevant to Phase IV had been noted including:

- To include finance people in the contract negotiation.
- To keep the budget submitted to the EC very simple, including in it just the main line items against which the POs need to report.
- Ensure that POs sign on time (although it is acknowledged that this is not necessarily happening).
- To providing training on financial reporting is key and can smoothen the process.

WHO heeded the recommendation to simplify the budget sent to EC to four or five top line items. WHO also introduced what they thought would be a simpler reporting structure. They established Joint Programme MOUs for UN agencies POs, replacing the UN2UN agreements used in Phase III. The MoUs took time for each of the seven POs to complete. The new structure required seven individual verified financial reports where before only four were needed. As a result, Phase IV became more complex to report for, not less. Other respondents said that some POs needed a lot of guidance to produce financial reports that could be consolidated into the final financial report to send to the EC. It did not seem to help that the final report structure was simple. In hindsight, more care could have been taken in checking the draft consolidated financial reports before submitting them to the WHO finance team.

Other problems faced in the financial reporting process included predicting when POs would collectively spend 70 per cent of the first tranche and issues with reporting in dollars or euros. Each PO had to resubmit its financial reports at least once. This took WHO finance “masses of time” at a time when WHO was going through a major internal reorganization on top of dealing with funding cuts since the change in the US administration in quarter 1 of 2025. The pressure that the IOMC, including the IOMC Toolbox Project, put on WHO has contributed to the decision by WHO not to continue to host the IOMC Secretariat after Phase IV, and not to be the administrative agent for a fifth phase of the project, should one go ahead.

Findings

45. This section presents the main findings from addressing the MTE’s questions on relevance and effectiveness. The judgment criteria and analysis to arrive at these findings are described in the evaluation matrix (Annex E) and the methodology section above.

Relevance

Rating: **Satisfactory**

The project design is fundamentally sound and appropriately targeting the right users and issues. Evidence at midpoint suggests the approach is reaching intended beneficiaries and addressing real gaps. The relatively limited documented outcomes at this stage are understandable given timing and should not substantially diminish relevance ratings.

EQ1. Is the project reaching its intended individual and institutional users and are its related project objectives and activities relevant to the beneficiaries’, global and country needs and priorities?

EQ1.1. To what extent is Phase IV effectively aligned with the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 12 and target 12.4, the 2023 Global Framework on Chemicals and European Union (EU) priorities?

[Finding 1 on alignment](#)

Phase IV shows strong conceptual alignment with the 2030 Agenda (particularly SDG 12.4) and at least five other SDGs, the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), and EU priorities. The IOMC Toolbox contains comprehensive tools needed to achieve the GFC's 28 targets by 2030. However, structural misalignment exists because the IOMC Toolbox predates the 2023 GFC framework. To capitalize on GFC opportunity the project could create "GFC-specific entry points" that align the IOMC Toolbox content with new framework language, targets, and indicators.

Strong alignment with multiple SDGs including SDG 12 and Target 12.4

46. Multiple respondents confirmed alignment with [target 12.4's focus](#) on achieving "the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their

release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.”⁵ Examples of what respondents said include:

- The EU Commission see the overarching objective of the project as assisting countries in achieving SDG targets related to chemicals and waste management.
 - A key informant from one of the POs stated the Phase IV is "effectively aligned with SDG 12 and target 12.4 because we are trying to create a more inclusive and sustainable industrial practices through chemical leasing and green chemistry."
 - Better chemical management through pesticide registration in agriculture serves both environmental protection and food security goals showing that the project goals align with SDG 2 on Zero Hunger.
47. The final evaluation of the Phase III found the project was relevant to at least four other SDGs, including SDG 3 on good health and wellbeing, SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities and SDG 15 on life on land.
48. The IOMC Toolbox addresses the complete chemical lifecycle through eight management schemes covering registration, risk assessment, enforcement, and waste management, directly supporting target 12.4's comprehensive approach to achieving the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle.

Integration with the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC)

49. The GFC, adopted in September 2023 at the fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), is a comprehensive plan with five strategic objectives and 28 targets⁶ to guide countries and stakeholders in jointly addressing the lifecycle of chemicals, including products and waste.
50. At the biannual IOMC (Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee) meeting in March 2024, IOCC requested via PMG that POs “map”, 28 GFC targets to see specifically where the IOMC Toolbox can help each PO implement the GFC, especially, “Target A2 – By 2030, intergovernmental stakeholders develop guidelines to support the needs of interested Governments and relevant stakeholders to implement effective chemicals and waste management strategies, building on, among other things, updates of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals toolbox for decision-making in chemicals management.”⁷
51. Box 2 explores the opportunities that the GFC offers the project in more detail.

Alignment with EU Priorities

52. The EU's continued multi-phase funding of the project, and interest in funding a fifth phase, is strong evidence that the EU thinks the project is well aligned with its values.

⁵ <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/chemicals-and-waste>

⁶ <https://www.chemicalsframework.org/page/strategic-objectives-and-targets>

⁷ PMG Meeting 18 in April 2024

53. The Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals ([REACH](#))⁸ is the main EU law to protect human health and the environment from the risks that can be posed by chemicals. The IOMC Toolbox project is clearly aligned because it can help with compliance with the EU law and its intent. The IOMC Toolbox emerged from EU recognition that imposing European chemical legislation frameworks has not been effective. Instead, the IOMC Toolbox provides "flexible building blocks" that countries can adapt, aligning with EU values of multilateralism and partnership-based development cooperation.

EQ1.2. Is Phase IV reaching its intended users particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition including those non-English speaking? What are hindering factors?

[Finding 2 on reach](#)

While Phase IV demonstrates reach in terms of numbers of beneficiaries and geographic spread, the effectiveness of this reach is significantly compromised. The project achieves broad coverage but struggles with depth of engagement and sustained impact due to systemic funding, technical, and coordination barriers that prevent consistent, quality service delivery to developing countries that most need these resources.

Rate and Quality of Engagement

54. According to the project first interim narrative report, during January 2023-September 2024 (i.e., 21 out of 36 months), capacity building activities "geographically spanned all regions and trained over 500 participants (~41 per cent female) **in-person**." The expected rate according to the log frame (see Table 2) is 2,400 participants in 36 months which works out as 1,400 participants in 21 months, which is significantly more than 500, indicating expected training events have been delayed.

55. It is difficult to know which of the 500 participants attended the events physically or remotely. It is important to make the distinction as the former are generally longer, more intensive and better suited to countries with relatively weak chemical management systems.

56. The evaluation team received no contact details for events in 2025 by any of the POs. The evaluation team found it harder to collect participant information than in the Phase III project MTE and FE when data was supplied centrally by the PMG.

Target Demographics

57. The first narrative report says: "Collectively, the capacity building events during the current reporting period (January 2023 to September 2024) reached participants from at least 26 new countries not previously involved in IOMC Toolbox capacity building activities ..." However, this could not be confirmed by the MTE. The detailed event list in Annex 1 of the report only shows 19 specific countries where activities took place during the reporting period. These are: Morocco, Jordan, Tanzania, Bangladesh,

⁸ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/chemicals/reach-regulation_en

Malaysia, South Africa, Serbia, Colombia, Philippines, Fiji, Senegal, Panama, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Benin, Cameroon, Tunisia, Chad, and Paraguay. Some of these countries, e.g. Colombia, were reached in previous phases.

58. The First Interim Report states these were countries reached by events "either fully, partly, or not funded by the IOMC Toolbox Phase 4 project." This suggests some of the "new countries" may have been reached through other funding sources, not necessarily IOMC Phase IV activities. For example, UNITAR received funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection for IOMC-related activities to support the GFC implementation, referring to shared costs with the IOMC.
59. The 229 participants identified by the evaluation team (see below) came from 10 events held in nine countries of which all but one (Panama) came from lower and upper middle-income country, according to the World Bank classification. Eight of them (80 per cent) were face-to-face and 2 (20 per cent) were hybrid. From the 19 countries identified, nine were "new" countries first reached during the period 1 January 2023 to 24 September 2024, reporting period (Uzbekistan, Paraguay, Armenia, Senegal, Panama, Benin, Cameroon, Tunisia, and Chad).⁹

Language Support

60. The project addresses non-English speakers through translation efforts. For example, FAO updated the Pesticide Registration Toolkit Russian training materials for the Pesticide Registration Toolkit training in Uzbekistan (First Interim Report, p. 10) and the OECD Best Practice Guide on Identifying Illegal Pesticides was translated into Spanish" (First Interim Report, p. 10). Capacity building events were conducted in English, French and Spanish. Nearly all survey respondents who participated in capacity building activities indicated that English was not their primary working language demonstrating translations are much needed.

EQ1.3. How relevant are the updated IOMC Toolbox content, new management schemes, and translated materials to user needs? Do the users find the tools appropriate to their national contexts?

[Finding 3 on implementation gap](#)

The IOMC Toolbox aligns with SDGs, particularly 12.4, with extensive updates including new management schemes and translations. However, the project's ToC fails to address institutional and political implementation barriers between training and actual sound management. Multiple usability problems exist: hundreds of tools across eight schemes create complexity, platform technical problems required €165,000 to fix, and usage statistics were lost during the backend upgrade.

61. As reported under EQ1.1 the project is effectively aligned with at least five SDGs, in particular with SDG target 12.4. The interim report details extensive updates to increase outreach and relevance, including new management schemes on illegal pesticide trade, waste management strategies, and MAD, organisation of capacity development

⁹ Based on the country where training activities were implemented during Phase III.

activities, plus translations into French, Spanish, and other languages.

62. In contrast, the project ToC assumption is that: trained senior policy-makers will voluntarily promote the Toolbox; their promotion will influence institutional decisions; and, this influence will persist over time. The project document does not describe mechanisms for why individuals would promote or how promotion converts to institutional adoption. Equally, it does not adequately address the institutional, financial, and political barriers that prevent this transition. The project may be addressing symptoms (lack of knowledge/tools) rather than root causes (weak institutions, inadequate resources, poor coordination mechanisms). Countries keep requesting what the project offers because they have not developed the internal systems to stop needing external support.

63. Multiple respondents confirmed usability problems. These related to:

- The several hundred tools across eight management schemes makes the IOMC Toolbox complicated for users
- The realization in February 2023 that the IOMC Toolbox online platform had become obsolete and required €165,000 to remedy. Fixing the issue caused problems with the platform's upload and update capacity. The Platform functionality issues resulting in limited upload and update capability between Feb-Oct 2024. The new "backend" went live in June 2025 with a soft relaunch planned for September 2025.
- Some of the IOMC Toolbox online usage statistics were lost in the upgrade which made monitoring usage for Phase IV difficult.

Evidence of Contextual Appropriateness and the Potential for AI

[Finding 4 on contextual appropriateness and sustained adoption](#)

There is limited evidence of contextual appropriateness despite survey respondents finding workshops relevant. Only isolated successes like Vietnam's policy influence and Caribbean GHS training were identified. Countries with stronger capacity benefited more from virtual workshops versus weaker countries needing in-person support. Respondents showed mixed views on AI integration - some seeing it as transformative for country-specific and contextual guidance, others sceptical about AI's ability to provide specialized technical guidance or distinguish official from industry materials. AI could serve as a virtual advisor using vetted IOMC materials for comprehensive, contextual guidance.

64. While most survey respondents from capacity building activities were introduced to the IOMC Toolbox in national and regional workshops (8 out of 13¹⁰ did not know about the IOMC Toolbox before the workshops), only a few examples of successful contextual application were identified by the MTE. In Vietnam, OECD conducted a workshop just as the country was revising its chemical management legislation leading to policy influence, but this appears exceptional rather than typical. Another key informant also noted successful Caribbean GHS training where agricultural focus was expanded to

¹⁰ Two survey respondents skipped this question and did not provide any answer.

comprehensive chemical management, but again this represents isolated success rather than systematic appropriateness.

65. A key informant noted that countries with relatively strong chemical management capacity, e.g., some countries in Latin America, received more benefit from virtual online workshops than those with less capacity who benefited more from longer in person workshops. Whether face to face or virtual, 14 out of 15 survey respondents considered that workshop content to be relevant to their national context or their professional needs.
66. Respondents showed mixed enthusiasm for the idea of AI chatbot integration to improve IOMC Toolbox functionality, in particular in providing better country-specific and contextual guidance. One respondent saw AI integration as a potential "game changer" and suggesting users could make country-specific prompts like "I am Country X, what can the IOMC Toolbox recommend?" A second respondent agreed, saying that AI would be "perfect" for knowledge searching. A third respondent noted that "if we really use AI, we don't need a toolbox" since users could ask generative AI directly. Two respondents were more sceptical. One thought that AI was not able to provide the specialized, context specific technical guidance that chemical management requires. Another was concerned about AI reliability, with a similar concern that AI cannot distinguish between official intergovernmental organization guidance and industry-produced materials.
67. One option could be to deploy a virtual chemical management advisor that has "read" all vetted IOMC Toolbox materials to help ensure reliability. Users describe their situation and challenges in natural language. AI would then provide comprehensive guidance drawing from the entire IOMC knowledge base. The advisor function would have the capacity to generate reports, implementation timelines, and estimate resource requirements. Other vetted materials, such as GFC content, could be included in what the virtual advisor "reads."

EQ1.4. To what extent has Phase IV improved integration of gender equality and human rights compared to Phase III?

[Finding 5 on integration of gender and human rights](#)

Phase IV shows partial progress in gender equality and human rights integration compared to Phase III's virtual absence of these considerations. While all POs now acknowledge gender mainstreaming's relevance and some collect sex-disaggregated data or include gender-sensitive content, implementation remains fragmented and unsystematic. Despite increased awareness and expressed commitment, the project lacks a comprehensive strategy or monitoring framework. Systemic challenges persist, including women's exclusion from pesticide training despite their agricultural roles, indicating the gap between intention and effective implementation.

68. There is evidence of partial progress in integrating gender equality and human rights from Phase III to Phase IV of the IOMC Toolbox project. While Phase III lacked a clear strategic or operational focus on these issues, Phase IV has seen a growing awareness and commitment among POs and the donor to address them. However, this progress is largely limited to awareness and intention, with only incremental and uneven improvements in implementation across the project.

69. In Phase III, previous evaluations highlighted that gender and human rights considerations were virtually absent. The Mid-Term Evaluation explicitly recommended that the PMG develop a gender empowerment strategy aligned with global chemicals and waste policy frameworks, such as the SAICM Beyond 2020 process. Despite this recommendation, the final Phase III report found little movement on that front and issued another recommendation in that regard.
70. By contrast, in Phase IV, all interviewed POs acknowledged the relevance of gender mainstreaming, and some have taken steps to improve representation and content. For example, UNITAR is collecting sex-disaggregated data to monitor participation, and UNIDO reported the inclusion of gender-sensitive content (e.g., recognizing the disproportionate roles of women in CSR and ethics departments). However, these practices remain fragmented and are not embedded within a comprehensive strategy or results framework.
71. Moreover, systemic challenges such as exclusion of women in pesticide training (despite their active role in chemical handling in agriculture), and a lack of mechanisms to ensure inclusion of vulnerable populations, point to persisting gaps. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the effectiveness of gender and rights integration also remain weak or non-existent.

72. The following table summarizes the comparative progress made.

Table 1 - Progress in Gender Equality and Human Rights Integration – Phase III vs. Phase IV

Dimension	Phase III	Phase IV (Current)
Strategic commitment	Absent or minimal	Expressed commitment across PMG and donor
Gender-disaggregated data	Not collected	Logframe target disaggregated. Data collected by some POs; used for reporting
Gender-sensitive content	Not addressed	Some integration (e.g., health impacts on women, CSR roles in industry)
Inclusion of vulnerable groups	No evidence of inclusion	Still limited; no structured inclusion
Monitoring and evaluation	No framework in place	Still missing systematic M&E on gender/human rights and lack of integration in post-training evaluation
Implementation strategy	No strategy for gender/human rights	Emerging intention, but not yet coordinated

73. Phase IV reflects a step forward from Phase III in terms of awareness and partial actions to address gender equality and human rights. However, integration remains uneven, unsystematic, and insufficient to meet the standards of a fully gender-responsive and rights-based approach. Efforts are still largely dependent on individual agencies rather than being driven by a shared, strategic framework across the PMG. The 2020 recommendation for a structured gender mainstreaming strategy remains only partially implemented.

Effectiveness

Rating: **Moderately satisfactory**

At midpoint, the project demonstrates progress on outcomes under its direct control, with reasonable trajectories for catching up on delayed outputs once funding flows resume. The mixed performance reflects the disruption caused by exceptional administrative bottlenecks rather than fundamental design or implementation failures. With second tranche funds released and remaining time available, the project appears positioned to achieve satisfactory overall results.

EQ2. To what extent is the project on track in achieving the expected results and objectives?

EQ2.1. To what extent are planned outcomes and outputs on track? What are enabling/hindering factors?

Finding 6 on overall progress reached so far in Phase IV.

The IOMC Toolbox project shows mixed performance. Strengths include reasonable progress developing new management schemes, user engagement across regions, and 16 countries using IOMC Toolbox content for legislation revisions. However, the project failed to track which countries plan to implement tools or have done so successfully, and fell short of training targets (achieving only 15 per cent of planned events and 21 per cent of planned beneficiaries), and suffered from platform outage and funding delays.

Two critical delays undermined effectiveness. The first tranche payment was delayed nine months due to requirements for individual PO signing of Joint Partnership MOUs. The second tranche remains delayed over nine months because WHO could not yet consolidate financial reports from implementing partners, creating cash flow problems. External challenges such as platform failures requiring emergency funding affected delivery, while areas under direct partner control showed better progress. The monitoring framework's heavy reliance on the MTE survey with historically low response rate creates substantial uncertainty about actual country-level results.

74. The analysis considers both the project's ToC and administrative timeline for Phase IV respectively.

75. The project logframe in Table 2 demonstrates that the project has achieved mixed performance as a consequence of accumulating delays in agreement signature and submission of reports. The strengths are:

- Reasonable progress in developing and adding new schemes to the IOMC Toolbox (output level)
- User engagement metrics show some activity spread over different regions and countries (outcome level)
- Country examples indicating that 16 countries have used IOMC Toolbox content to prepare for revising or drafting legislation revisions (impact level)

76. The weaknesses are:

- The project failed to monitor which countries:
 - Found useful tools in the IOMC Toolbox and plan to implement them
 - Have already fully implemented IOMC Toolbox tools

- Are working with other countries on chemical management projects
 - Training targets: The project fell short of its goals for number of training events and participants
 - Technical and administrative problems: Platform crashes and funding delays affected multiple project activities
77. The project's logframe reveals mixed performance shaped by different controlling factors. External challenges such as platform maintenance requiring emergency funding and administrative delays in funding disbursement have significantly undermined delivery capacity. In contrast, areas under direct partner control, such as developing new management schemes, show stronger progress.
78. The monitoring framework presents weaknesses. Heavy reliance on the MTE survey is problematic given historically low response rates, while the interim report provides no updates on outcome-level indicators. This leaves substantial uncertainty about whether the project achieves its intended country-level results.
79. Project performance has been severely hampered by delays in receiving tranche payment. The first delay of nine months was caused by the time it took for individual POs to sign their respective Joint Partnership MOUs. The delay necessitated extending the first interim reporting period from 12 to 18 months.
80. The second delay of 9+ months is being caused by difficulties in the administrative agent having problems in submitting the consolidated project financial report covering the first tranche reporting period. This report requires WHO finance officers to consolidate financial reports from all implementing partners to confirm expenditures and co-financing contributions. This has been pending since the beginning of the year, a delay of nine months and increasing. The consolidation delay has prevented second tranche disbursements being made, creating operational difficulties including cash flow problems for implementing organizations.

Table 2 - Level of achievement of project outcome and output targets and key issues

Intervention logic	Indicators	Baseline (2022)	2025 Targets	Actual (as per interim report)	MTE assessment and level if achievement	Sources and means of verification	Observations
Impact							
Improved global chemicals and hazardous waste management, contributing to and international environmental agreements	# of new countries using the Toolbox and its content to draft and adopt policies for the sound management of chemicals.	30	60 (2025)	Reached 26 out of which 19 are new The MTE was not able to confirm these numbers	Reached 19 out of which 10 are new Some indications towards policy development for 16 countries: 1. Peru – national GHS Implementation strategy 2. Armenia – roadmap for implementation of GHS 3. Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago – regional and individual assessments 4. Vietnam – revised legislation following OECD workshop	MTE survey, MTE interviews/email consultations	Will be assessed by the final evaluation at the end of phase IV.
Outcomes							
Toolbox increasingly used by developing countries to establish and	# of Toolbox visits, downloads of documents and other statistics	TBD	TBD	NA	Up until 30 June 2025 10,816 active users 9,928 new users	Google analytics statistics	A change in Google Analytics (GA4) platform led to loss of

improve chemicals management capacities, infrastructure, and enforcement					1,268 returning users The 98,883 users generated 13,258 sessions. ¹¹ Six out of 15 survey respondents confirmed using the IOMC Toolbox after the workshops.	Survey participants from capacity development activities to	usage statistics from January to May 2023, including Google Consent Mode v2 . Additionally, the launch of the new IOMC Toolbox in June 2025 led to change in statistics for this period.
	# of countries who identified guidelines and tools in the Toolbox AND are in the process of or plan to implement them in the near future	0	25	NA	12% level of achievement MTE survey: Jordan, Senegal, Colombia.	MTE survey	Absence of tracking tool
	# of countries who during the Action period identified tools in the Toolbox and fully implemented them	0	5	NA	20% level of achievement MTE survey: Serbia	MTE survey	Some progress indicators toward ambitious target
Enhanced national and international collaboration between countries and IOMC POs for sound chemicals management	# of countries during the Action period that are engaged in international collaborations to advance the implementation of	0	75	NA	4% level of achievement MTE survey: Serbia (Ministry of Health, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia and Bosnia and	MTE survey	The indicator does not define international collaborations and there may hence be more countries

¹¹ Pages on which users spend most time: industrial and consumer chemicals management scheme, chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response, identifying hazard classes, data collection, methodologies for assessing risks and impacts

	the sound management of chemicals				Herzegovina), Senegal (no examples), Bangladesh (no examples). ¹²		
Outputs							
Updated toolbox	# of new tools added to Toolbox	ND	100	At least 40	Level of achievement: 40%	First interim report and IOMC Toolbox website.	Reduced functionality of the toolbox between February 2024 to June 2025 limiting the ability to upload or update content.
Broadened toolbox	# of new schemes developed and added to Toolbox	8	11	8 published 3 new management schemes under development but not yet published	Level of achievement: 73%	IOMC Toolbox website, first interim report	Reasonable progress with continuing work
Improved guidance and tools for the management of chemicals	# of new tools developed as part of the Action and added to Toolbox	20	30	1 developed and uploaded 6 under development 3 planned	Level of achievement: 23%	IOMC Toolbox website, first interim report	Behind schedule but pipeline suggests catch-up potential
Language versions of guidance and tools	# of language versions developed as part of the Action and added to the Toolbox	8	28	2 updated 15 planned	Level of achievement: 7%	IOMC Toolbox website, first interim report	Sequential dependency - requires English completion first
Web-based training courses in developing countries to build capacities to	# of web-based training courses developed	0	5	2 completed 1 update planned 15 new courses planned	Level of achievement for completed courses: 40%	IOMC Toolbox website, first interim report	Shortfall on completed courses but planned exceed target

¹² Survey respondents from the regional workshop in Senegal also confirmed the workshop provided them with the opportunity to exchange knowledge and make connections with other workshop participants.

implement IOMC guidance and tools.							
Virtual and face-to-face training and promotional events to build capacities and increased coordination to implement IOMC guidance, tools and the IOMC toolbox.	# of training events organized	100	140	18	21 events Level of achievement: 15%	Update from POs	Includes events organized with other funding sources (e.g. BRS)
	# of participants participated attended training course by gender	6,000	2,400, 50% female participants	Reported participants: 519, 198 female and 286 male	Number of participants received through list of participants: 229 Gender information not available Gender information is only available for 102 participants. For these the balance is 68% female and 32% male. Level of achievement: 21%	LOP received from POs	Strong performance on delivery and engagement Gender balance promising

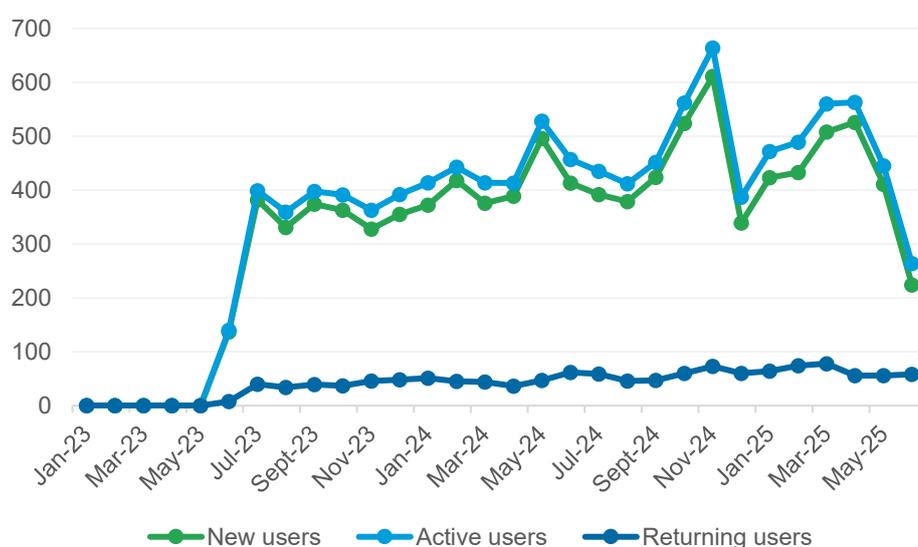
Achievement of project outcomes: IOMC Toolbox usage and reach

Finding 7 on IOMC Toolbox usage and country-level impact

The IOMC Toolbox accumulated 10,816 active users between June 2023- June 2025, with 12 per cent returning¹³ users. User engagement improved from 324 monthly active users in 2023 to over 420 in 2024-2025. Forty-eight per cent of users came from developing countries as targeted. Most traffic originated from Google Search (43 per cent) and PO websites (13 per cent), with some accessing through AI tools. Popular pages included management schemes and training-related content on pesticide registration, GHS, and green chemistry.

81. Between June 2023 and June 2025, the IOMC Toolbox accumulated 10,816 active users, of which 12 per cent were returning users (50 returning users per month, on average), as shown in Figure 2 below. Despite the loss of statistics due to technical issues, there is a clear trend on improved user engagement in 2024 (428 active users per month) and 2025 (421 active users per month) compared to 2023 (324 active users per month).¹⁴

Figure 2 - IOMC Toolbox user engagement, June 2023-June 2025



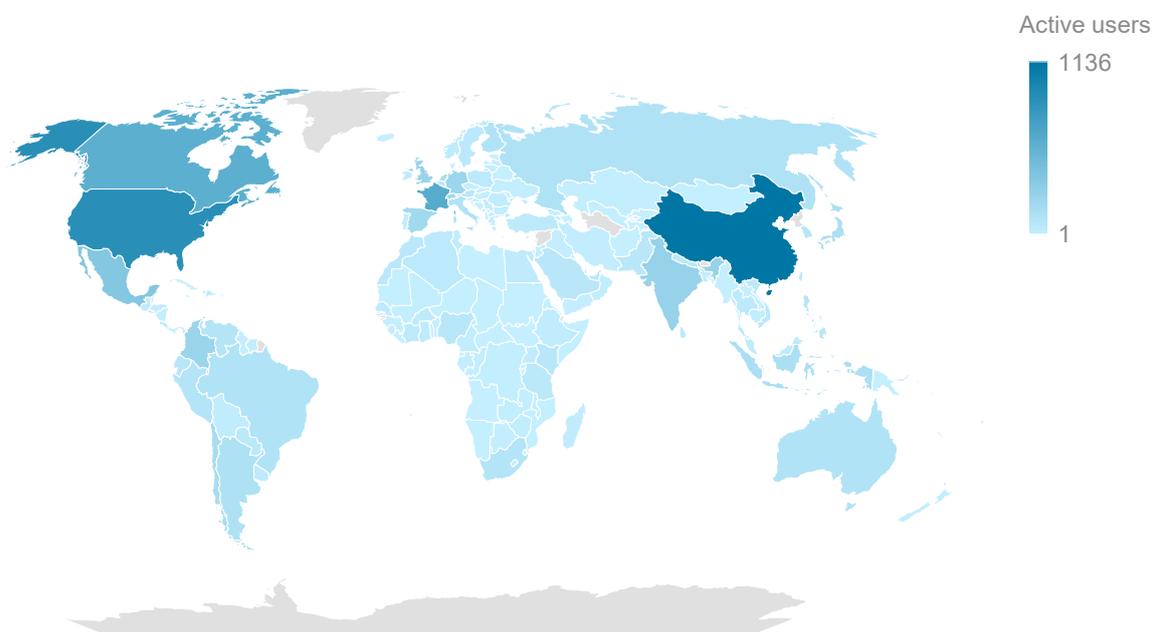
82. Forty-three per cent of sessions were started from Google Search, while 13 per cent accessed through the POs websites. The remainder accessed through other websites, including large language models and other AI tools (Chat GPT, Claude.ai, Perplexity.ai, Copilot, amongst others).

83. Similarly, 48 per cent of users were based in developing countries and economies in transition, as targeted by the project. Most of these users came from China, Mexico, India, and Colombia, as can be seen in figure 3 below.

¹³ Returning users do not consider users accessing the website from different browsers.

¹⁴ In Phase III from January 2018 to December 2022, the Toolbox received 18,993 visitors (4,748 annually) with 13 per cent of them being returning visitors. Phase IV received 10,816 users in 2 years (June 2023-June 2025), corresponding to 5,408 annually, with 12 per cent returning users.

Figure 3 - IOMC Toolbox users by country



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Powered by Bing

84. As per website design, the pages with the highest number of views, besides the home and search pages (landing pages), are the management schemes pages (industrial chemicals management scheme; chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response; Best available techniques; National management schemes for PRTRs; and Classification and labelling system scheme, respectively) related to the training topics (pesticide registration toolkit, chemicals management, GHS, green chemistry toolkit, and occupational safety and health management scheme).

EQ2.2. Are there unintended outcomes?

Finding 8 on unintended outcomes of Phase IV

Severe funding delays and staff departures created major unintended consequences, including a one-year no-cost extension request, disruption of project timelines, and significant knowledge loss due to turnover of key personnel. While some mitigation was achieved through onboarding new staff and reallocating resources, the overall impact has been reduced momentum and increased administrative complexity.

85. The IOMC Toolbox Phase IV project experienced severe funding delays that created a cascade of unintended consequences. The first tranche distribution took nine months leaving partners without funding for most of the project's first year. This delay stemmed from complex multi-agency agreement processes, where each of seven organizations needed to negotiate and sign memorandums of understanding.

86. The request for a no-cost extension the project by one year, and potentially longer,

means that staff hired to complete the work as originally planned also require an extension of a year or more, for which funding does not exist. Some personnel have taken a break in their contract to wait for the second tranche payment to be made so that they can be paid. These are unexpected outcomes that have affected ILO and UNITAR in particular.

87. The IOMC Toolbox project suffered significant knowledge and continuity loss through key personnel departures in Phase III, most significantly from the administrative agent (WHO).

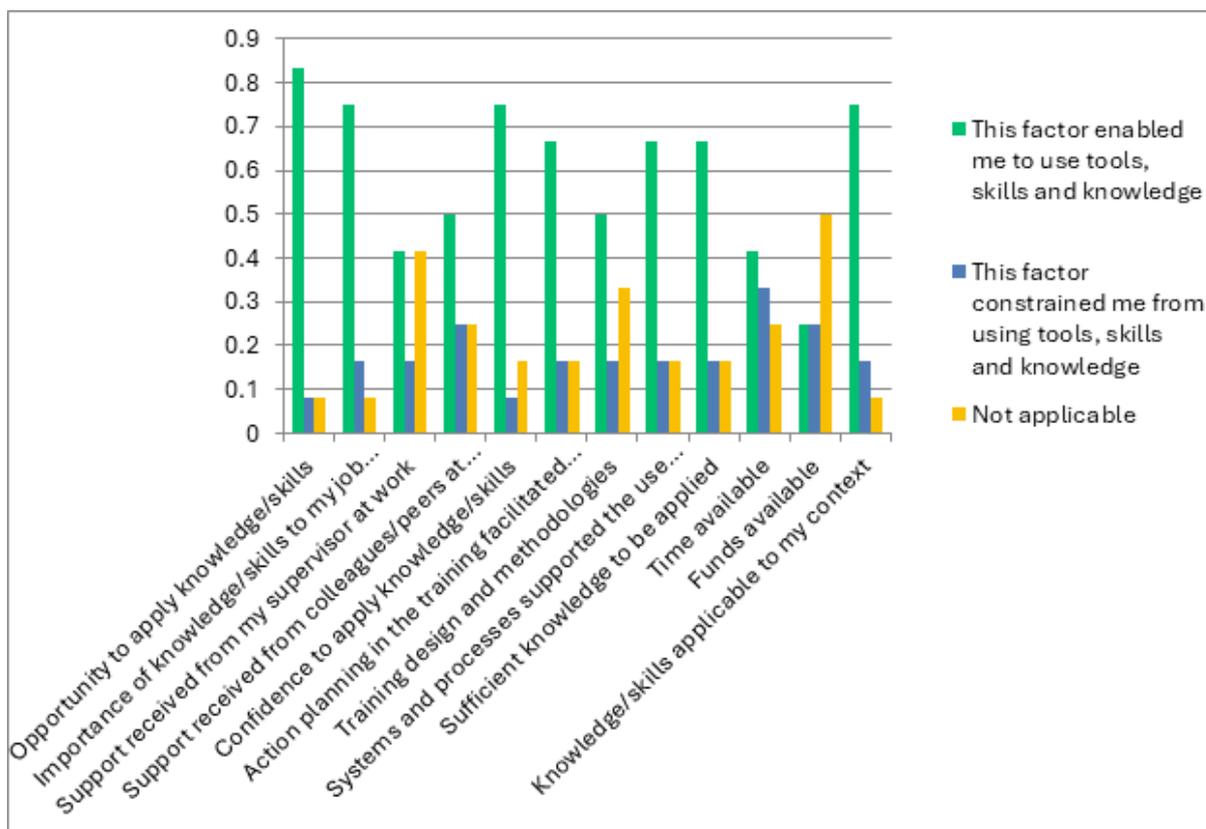
EQ2.3 To what extent have the updated IOMC Toolbox and capacity building broadened reach and use?

[Finding 9 on broadened reach and use](#)

The updated IOMC Toolbox and related capacity-building activities have broadened reach but only partially deepened use. Participants have reported being constrained by funding gaps, time limitations, weak supervisor support, and training design issues, limiting translation into sustained institutional change.

88. This question is also addressed under EQ2.1: To what extent are planned outcomes and outputs on track? This is because the project's outcomes and outputs were planned to broaden reach and use.
89. According to the survey responses (see figure 4), the updated IOMC Toolbox and capacity-building activities have enabled all survey respondents to apply and integrate knowledge from the training into their work. The most frequently mentioned enablers included supportive institutional systems, opportunities to apply learning, the relevance of knowledge and skills to their context, and high levels of confidence in using the IOMC Toolbox.
90. Nevertheless, some hindering factors remain, particularly inaccessibility of funds, limited time, inconsistent supervisor support, and, in a few cases, limitations in training design and methodologies. These constraints reduce the extent to which individual learning can be fully translated into institutional and systemic improvements in chemicals management.

Figure 4 - Enabling and hindering factors



EQ2.4. To what extent has the project contributed to improving countries' chemicals management capacities and infrastructure?

Finding 10 on contribution to national capacities

The project has made a modest but meaningful contribution to strengthening national chemicals management. While reach is broad, engaging 229 validated participants from 19 countries, the depth of institutional change remains limited. The project contributes more to building knowledge, skills and confidence than to achieving measurable improvements to chemical management at the national level.

91. The project's main contribution to capacity building includes 229 verified participants from 19 countries, with 10 of these countries participating in IOMC Toolbox activities for the first time. The geographic targeting was appropriate: one least developed country and 12 lower-to-upper middle-income countries participated, aligning with the project's focus on nations with the greatest capacity-building needs. Training reached multiple sectors, with government officials comprising the largest group (133 participants), followed by private sector representatives (72, primarily from Colombia), academia (11), NGOs (6), and other sectors (2).
92. The project has a notable success in Vietnam when OECD conducted training just as Vietnam was revising its chemical management legislation, providing international good practices at the optimal moment. The government went on to adopt the new legislation. However, such synchronicity is uncommon. Other examples on influence on preparing

for new legislation include Armenia where a roadmap for implementation of GHS was developed.

93. Considering results from the survey, the project has made a positive contribution to strengthening national chemicals management capacities, primarily by enhancing participants' capacities (all survey respondents agreed that the training increased their knowledge and skills), confidence and ability to apply IOMC Toolbox knowledge in their institutional contexts. Key enablers included supportive institutional systems, opportunities to apply learning, and context-relevant knowledge and skills. Reported applications range from "internal dissemination of learning to colleagues", to more tangible outputs such as the "design of a pesticide registration form", improvements in "chemical management practices", and changes in "reagent waste disposal."

EQ2.5. To what extent are countries and IOMC partners increasingly collaborating? What strengthens collaboration?

[Finding 11 relating to country and PO collaboration](#)

Evidence shows POs collaborating through frequent coordination (10 PMG meetings in two years) and successful partnerships such as WHO-UNITAR's Uzbekistan, FAO-UNITAR's Caribbean GHS training and OECD-UNITAR's accession country work. However, barriers persist: unequal commitment, funding delays limiting collaborative activities, competing mandates creating tensions, and time constraints. Effective collaboration is strengthened by embedding IOMC Toolbox activities within longer-term programmes rather than standalone events. PMG meetings stopped at the beginning of 2025, suggesting a weakening in collaboration, possibly because the project ran out of released funding.

94. There is some evidence that the POs are collaborating more as a result of the project. According to the PMG meeting minutes, OECD developed and shared a capacity building tracker for POs that was used to help write the first interim report. The project has held 10 PMG meetings in two years, which one respondent said was an unusually frequent coordination pattern in the UN system. An example of collaborative success is: the jointly organized WHO-UNITAR workshop in Uzbekistan which went beyond inviting speakers from different agencies but was held in a collaborative spirit. Another example concerns FAO's agricultural GHS (Globally Harmonized System) training in the Caribbean region. During or after this training, the participating countries expressed interest in broader chemical management beyond just agricultural chemicals. Recognizing the limitations of their agricultural focus, FAO proactively brought UNITAR into the collaboration to provide comprehensive GHS training that covered general chemical management, not just agricultural applications.
95. Yet another collaboration example is the OECD-UNITAR partnership in accession countries where OECD identifies needs while UNITAR handles delivery. According to one respondent, collaboration is "particularly effective" because it leverages each organization's comparative advantages - OECD's policy knowledge and country relationships, paired with UNITAR's training delivery capabilities.
96. A fourth example was the PMG working collaboratively to find emergency funding to fix the problem of the IOMC Toolbox platform becoming obsolete and a security risk. The

PMG demonstrated effective crisis management. Partners quickly convened special meetings, developed a collaborative funding strategy combining budget reallocations (\$105,000) with IOMC Trust Fund advances (\$50,000), and secured formal approvals within six months.

97. However, significant barriers persist. Not all agencies show equal commitment to collaborating. Also, the serious delays in release of tranche payments have meant that POs have not had the budget to fund collaborative work. Workshop time limitations of 2-3 days is often only sufficient to cover the training requirements of the lead PO. A respondent questioned whether agencies view the IOMC Toolbox "as an opportunity for exchange or as competition," noting competing priorities among busy UN staff. UN agencies often compete for the same donor funding, creating tensions when collaborating agencies have overlapping mandates, as is the case with the POs on GHS for example. When agencies have overlapping mandates in chemical management, sharing expertise through the IOMC Toolbox could mean losing competitive advantage in proposal writing or enabling other agencies to deliver services they could have provided directly.
98. One respondent observed that "isolated training activities don't have impact." The online survey provides some evidence that this is happening – a high percentage (85 per cent) of respondents said that their training had taken place as embedded in ongoing work.
99. Survey responses provide some indications of emerging collaboration with countries after the training. Of 15 respondents, 5 reported no change, 7 did not answer, and 5 indicated some level of collaboration. Two provided concrete examples: one mentioned increased institutional participation in Colombia (while noting further capacity is needed), and another referred to cooperation in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina involving the Ministry of Health and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

EQ2.6. To what extent have human rights and gender mainstreaming efforts been effective so far?

[Finding 12 relating to effectiveness of human rights and gender mainstreaming](#)

While awareness of gender equality and human rights has increased, efforts remain largely procedural and lack strategic depth. There is no unified operational framework to ensure meaningful, measurable, and rights-based integration across all aspects of the project. Effectiveness remains limited, and barriers to inclusive participation persist.

100. Human rights and gender mainstreaming efforts within the IOMC Toolbox Phase IV project have shown initial progress but remain limited in both depth and systematic integration. While gender considerations are acknowledged across agencies, most efforts focus on tracking participation (e.g., sex-disaggregated data), and there is limited evidence of transformative, rights-based approaches being embedded in project design, implementation, or monitoring.
101. Some key findings on effectiveness collected from the interviews and Phase IV midterm survey include:
- **Awareness and commitment:** The POs and the donor demonstrate high levels of awareness and an expressed commitment to gender equality and human rights.

However, this has not been translated consistently into practice across all implementing partners.

- **Partial integration in capacity development:** UNIDO indicated that while some training content now includes gender-relevant elements, such as examples related to women’s roles in CSR or exposure to harmful chemicals. This is not standard across workshops or tools. Additionally, the midterm survey responses show that 8 out of 15 participants felt that workshops reflected gender considerations. While this indicates some positive reception, nearly half were neutral or disagreed, suggesting inconsistency in delivery.
- **Persisting access gaps:** FAO also highlighted that in contexts such as agriculture, women often handle pesticides but are frequently excluded from training opportunities, indicating that workshop participation strategies do not fully address existing gender inequalities.
- **Weak monitoring and accountability:** While UNITAR collects sex-disaggregated data, there is no system-wide monitoring or indicators to assess the outcomes or effectiveness of gender and human rights efforts across the IOMC Toolbox project.
- **No structured inclusion of marginalized groups:** Beyond gender, there is no mechanism to promote the inclusion of other vulnerable populations, such as low-income communities, indigenous peoples, or persons with disabilities, amongst others.

102. In the online survey, one third of respondents were neutral or disagreed with the statement that the workshop they attended reflected gender considerations.

EQ2.7. To what extent has environmental sustainability been integrated?

[Finding 13 on integration of environmental sustainability:](#)

Environmental sustainability is well integrated conceptually and technically into the IOMC Toolbox, aligning with MEAs, SDG 12, and national frameworks. It is visible in training, tools (e.g., GHS, PRTR, green chemistry), and participant learning. However, to enhance effectiveness, future efforts should prioritize tracking environmental outcomes, targeting under-reached sectors, and strengthening post-training follow-up to encourage sustainable behavior change.

103. Environmental sustainability is integrated into the IOMC Toolbox Phase IV project, both conceptually and technically. The project aligns with the objectives of multilateral environmental agreements and contributes directly to global policy goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), as mentioned above under relevance.
104. Interview findings across POs confirm that sustainability considerations have been consistently embedded into both training content and technical tools:
- UNITAR highlighted the relevance of instruments like the GHS and PRTR, which contribute to pollution reduction, transparency, and environmental accountability.

These instruments also align with national efforts toward OECD accession and the 2030 Agenda.

- UNEP and OECD reinforced the IOMC Toolbox's role in promoting waste management, reducing accident risks, and addressing illegal chemical trade, all of which support long-term sustainability.
 - UNIDO emphasized the IOMC Toolbox's alignment with SDG Target 12.4, pointing to updates made to the green chemistry toolkit (developed with Yale University) as an example of promoting sustainable alternatives. UNIDO also noted plans to integrate IOMC Toolbox content into university and vocational training curricula, enhancing long-term environmental outcomes and institutional capacity.
105. Perceptions among participants further support these findings. In the MTE survey, 12 out of 15 respondents indicated that workshops addressed environmental sustainability aspects of chemicals management. Open responses described applied learning in areas such as waste disposal, precautionary handling of chemicals, and risk reduction, demonstrating that sustainability themes were both visible and actionable.
106. Despite these strengths, some limitations remain:
- UNITAR and WHO suggested that there is limited tracking of environmental outcomes. While the content is strong, the project currently lacks mechanisms to assess whether promoted practices have resulted in measurable environmental improvements at national or sub-national levels.
 - Awareness and uptake in certain sectors, particularly agriculture and informal chemical use, remain low. These sectors suggested by FAO and ILO are often under-regulated and were noted as insufficiently engaged in project activities.

EQ2.8. How effective are partnership modalities, including PMG collaboration and reporting?

[Finding 14 on effectiveness of partnership modalities](#)

Partnerships are functional but weakened. Frequent PMG meetings and shared tools support coordination, but discussions focus heavily on administrative issues. Severe funding delays have strained trust and created reputational risks with the donor, reducing the effectiveness of collaboration.

107. The project's main collaborative modality is the PMG meetings. The project held 10 of these in 2023-2025 which was described as "unusually frequent coordination pattern in the UN system." OECD developed a capacity building tracker shared among partners for reporting purposes, indicating some functional coordination tools. However, a respondent noted that "many of the meetings are spent...discussing the administrative aspects of this project" rather than "technical collaboration."
108. Partnerships between the POs has been severely threatened by long delays in release of tranche funding that are creating a reputational risk for the administrative agent with the EU, its main donor. The project's administrative issues related to

reporting are described in Box 3 that presents a timeline and Box 4 which explains how and why the issues arrived.

EQ2.9. To what extent have Phase III recommendations been implemented?

[Finding 14 on implementation of Phase III Recommendations](#)

The Phase III Final Evaluation issued ten recommendations: six accepted, three partially accepted and one rejected. Implementation shows mixed progress - three are under implementation including joint workshops (WHO-UNITAR in Cambodia) and gender mainstreaming, four remain planned, and two are unplanned. Notably, the accepted recommendation to "allow for staff time and budget to deal with administrative and bureaucratic impediments" was not implemented by September 2025. Dedicating adequate administrative resources might have prevented the nine-month signature delay and the nine-month financial consolidation crisis both of which have paralyzed Phase IV operations and blocked second tranche payments.

109. The final evaluation of the IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management – Phase III issued ten recommendations of which six were accepted, three partially accepted and one rejected. Out of the accepted and partially accepted recommendations, three are under implementation, four are planned and two are yet to be planned as of 2024.

Table 3 - Project response to Phase III FE recommendations

Recommendation	Acceptance status	Implementation status in 2024	Updates from the midterm evaluation of Phase IV
Improve the way that the Phase IV of the project deals with GEEW by developing and using an explicit GEEW strategy for the project that builds upon the work of Women and Gender @ SAICM. Also, a GEEW entry-point for the Toolbox should be developed in Phase IV.	Partially accepted	Under implementation	Training shows mixed gender participation (some events reached 63-66 per cent female and the average for the available data is 68 per cent female and 32 per cent male participants). Logframe targets are gender-disaggregated and some content includes gender elements, but no evidence of gender entry-point or GEEW strategy.
Reflect on the ongoing validity of the Phase III project ToC at the Phase IV MTE, by filling out a third column added to Table 4.	Accepted	Planned	The analysis of phase IV ToC validity is included as part of this report.
Review and adjust the baseline and percentage increase per year for targets in the project logical framework to ensure they are set at a realistic level.	Accepted	Planned	Some indicators do not have targets as per the logframe.
Improve project capacity development in Phase IV by developing and using a capacity development strategy that includes the Kirkpatrick framework and individual, organisational, and enabling environment dimensions of capacity development, as well as guidelines for when to hold in-person meetings and when cheaper virtual meetings will suffice. Build national	Partially accepted	Planned	No systematic Kirkpatrick framework application across events. UNIDO used Level 1 (reaction) and Level 2 (learning) assessments for Colombia Green Chemistry training. No evidence of trainer development or national networks. Common evaluation questionnaire proposed in February 2024

networks of Toolbox trainers of trainers. Build on UNITAR's experience with capacity development.			PMG meeting but no evidence of implementation.
Informed by this strategy, Phase IV of the project should do a better job of following up on how Toolbox users and workshop and webinar participants are using project outputs. Success cases should be developed for communication purposes. The success cases should show how the Toolbox has contributed to specific outcome trajectories relating to better chemical management at country level.	Accepted	Under implementation	No evidence was found about the administration of follow-up surveys after workshops (beyond assessing participant reaction and learning by some POs). No evidence about the write-up of success cases in the narrative reports of events or the consolidated narrative reports or the IOMC Toolbox site were found.
Allow for staff time and budget to deal with the administrative and bureaucratic impediments identified in Phase III that happen when running a multi-partner project, and which cannot be changed at project level.	Accepted	not yet planned	No additional staff time. Administrative and bureaucratic hurdles persist.
Phase IV of the project should set a better example of showing its POs working together to establish inter- and intra-sectoral partnerships, networks and collaborative mechanisms to share information, experiences, and lessons learned. This could include organizing capacity building workshops jointly, i.e. in a ToT format, where other organisations are not simply invited but co-organizers.	Under implementation		Joint workshops included Uzbekistan (WHO-UNITAR), Cambodia (WHO-UNITAR – yet not fully implemented). Other collaborations include South Africa (FAO-UNITAR), Senegal (BRS, ILO, WHO, UNITAR), and Panama (BRS, ILO, FAO). A dedicated PMG meeting in September 2024 focused on collaborative capacity building. OECD created a capacity building tracker and the IOMC SharePoint site facilitates partner information sharing.
Embed the project more deeply in national chemical management processes by contributing to carefully selected ones, such as building a cross-sectoral and integrated approach to ensure the sound management of chemicals. In this context, identify and support a network of 'Toolbox' champions to increase the number of project beneficiaries at national level.	Partially accepted	Not planned yet	No evidence.
Phase IV of the project should explore building complementarity between the Toolbox and SAICM's Knowledge portal to sustain the Toolbox after external funding finishes.	Rejected	Not applicable	SAICM has been overtaken by events through the GFC
Phase IV should endeavour to make the Toolbox relevant to a broader audience, and find ways of making it useful on an on-going basis so users return to the site. Phase IV should set itself the target of increasing visits to the web site by an order of magnitude to make it more likely to sustain funding to keep it going.	Accepted	Planned	IT platform updates required prevented from focusing on further increasing the audience.

EQ2.10. What good practices should continue? What corrective actions are needed?

[Finding 6 relating to good practices and corrective actions](#)

Effective practices include strategic timing (Vietnam's policy alignment), demand-driven approaches, and leveraging distinct agency comparative advantages through partnerships. Joint events prove more effective than standalone workshops. However, corrections are needed including dropping the Joint Programme (JP) modality in any future phase and actually implementing the Phase III FE recommendation to put more resources into project administration including leveraging greater and earlier involvement of financial or non-financial staff that can spot and request to fix submission errors quickly.

110. Good Practices to Continue

- The Vietnam success illustrates the power of strategic timing – aligning IOMC Toolbox activities with actual policy development windows when countries can immediately apply guidance. Demand-driven approaches where countries request specific assistance rather than receiving generic training should continue. Partnership models work best when agencies leverage distinct comparative advantages rather than duplicating efforts, with technical agencies providing policy expertise while training-focused organizations handle delivery and capacity building. This complementary approach should be replicated where clear specialized roles exist.
- Organize more events jointly, instead of simply combining speaker lists. Successful collaborative workshops demonstrate true partnership that goes beyond coordination to integrated programme design and delivery.
- More Toolbox events should be organized jointly. The insight that "isolated training activities do not have impact" should guide all future capacity building. Embedding IOMC Toolbox activities within longer-term country programmes spanning 2-3 years with continuous follow-up produces measurably better results than standalone workshops. The frequent PMG meetings facilitate valuable information sharing and relationship building among partners, despite consuming time with administrative issues. This coordination should continue but focus more on technical collaboration.

Corrective Actions Needed

111. The current JP modality represents a mismatch - designed for rapid disaster response rather than sustained technical cooperation among seven partners. WHO has explicitly stated they will not coordinate another phase because the administrative burden exceeds organizational capacity.
112. The financial reporting system requires complete restructuring. Every partner has needed multiple report resubmissions due to basic errors like currency conversion mistakes, while the 70 per cent collective spending threshold creates unnecessary

bottlenecks where individual agency delays paralyze the entire project.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1: Strong Conceptual Foundation Undermined by Administrative Problems

113. Phase IV demonstrates strong alignment with global frameworks, particularly SDG 12.4's environmentally sound chemicals management objectives, the 2023 GFC, and EU priorities. The project faces a serious administrative issue with funding delays exceeding nine months for the first tranche due to setbacks in signing of Joint Partnership MOUs and over nine additional months delay for financial report consolidation. WHO has notified POs that it would be stepping aside as the Administering Organization (AO) after phase IV. The joint programme modality used by the Phase IV proved fundamentally mismatched for sustained technical cooperation among seven organizations with distinct procedures.

Conclusion 2: The Global Framework on Chemicals Presents an Important Opportunity

114. The 2023 adoption of the GFC creates an unprecedented opportunity to transform the IOMC Toolbox from a standalone capacity building initiative into a part of an integral global chemicals governance infrastructure. The GFC's 28 targets with 2030 deadlines provide clear implementation pathways and built-in accountability mechanisms that the project may wish to align itself with in the remainder of Phase IV, in anticipation of Phase V.

115. The IOMC Toolbox contains comprehensive resources that the GFC needs for implementation, but these are not yet framed in GFC language because the IOMC Toolbox predates the 2023 framework. Evidence from Uruguay meetings in June 2025 showed growing policy recognition, with IOMC and the IOMC Toolbox "mentioned frequently as implementation tools for the GFC." However, strategic repositioning as a central component of GFC Programme One requires immediate action to reframe existing content within GFC terminology and establish clear connections between IOMC Toolbox resources and specific GFC targets.

116. This alignment could transform the IOMC Toolbox from a tool repository seeking users into an implementation support system with guaranteed demand driven by international commitments. The GFC transition coincides with WHO's withdrawal from coordination after Phase IV, creating space to redesign project structure around GFC requirements, should there be a fifth phase of the project. Success depends on positioning the project as essential GFC infrastructure rather than a parallel initiative - representing perhaps the most significant strategic opportunity in the project's 15-year history.

Conclusion 3: Administrative Problems Threatens Project Viability and Reputation

117. The project faces administrative problems threatening both current implementation and future sustainability. Funding delays exceeded nine months for the first tranche distribution, forcing a request for a one-year no-cost extension to December 2026 and fundamentally altering project timelines.
118. The financial reporting system has proven challenging, with WHO's finance team spending "masses of time" on consolidation efforts while every PO required multiple report resubmissions due to currency conversion errors, different approaches to co-financing and the problematic 70 per cent collective spending threshold. As of the evaluation date, the consolidated financial report remained unsubmitted to the EU after nine months of delays, preventing second tranche disbursements and creating severe cash flow problems.
119. WHO has explicitly stated they will not coordinate another phase due to administrative burden. The joint programme modality, designed for rapid disaster response coordination, proved fundamentally mismatched for sustained technical cooperation among seven partners with distinct organizational cultures and reporting requirements.

Conclusion 4: Mixed Progress Across Outcomes

120. The project exhibits large performance variations across different output categories. Areas under direct partner control show stronger performance, while those requiring complex coordination lag significantly behind targets.
 - **Strong Achievement Areas:** Reasonable progress on new management schemes development (73 per cent of targets), encouraging user engagement trends with 10,816 active users, and successful geographic expansion reaching 26 new countries with 48 per cent of users coming from target developing countries.
 - **Shortfall Areas:** Tool development achieved only 23 per cent of targets, translation progress severely behind at 7 per cent completion, and training delivery reached only 21 per cent of participant targets. Shortfalls can be expected on outputs that depend on previous work, for example translations.

4. Concerning User Engagement Patterns Despite Expanding Reach

121. While user numbers demonstrate encouraging growth trends, only 12 per cent of users are returning users.¹⁵

This low engagement occurs despite users actively seeking IOMC content, with 43 per cent of sessions originating from Google searches. The evaluation identified multiple usability

¹⁵ In Phase III, 13 per cent were returning users. Returning users do not consider users accessing the website from different browsers.

problems including platform complexity that overwhelms users and technical barriers that prevent access when needed.

5. Limited Institutional Change Despite Broad Participation

122. Despite impressive participation statistics spanning many countries and multiple sectors, evidence of meaningful outcomes remains limited and largely anecdotal. The few documented success stories appear more dependent on exceptional circumstances, strategic timing, and intensive human support rather than systematic IOMC Toolbox effectiveness.
123. The Vietnam case represents the project's most compelling success, where OECD conducted training precisely as the country was revising its chemical management legislation. However, this success required perfect timing alignment that cannot be systematically replicated across diverse country contexts.
124. The evaluation found no systematic tracking mechanisms to assess whether promoted practices result in measurable institutional improvements at national levels. This absence makes it impossible to distinguish between training that builds individual awareness versus interventions that drive institutional transformation.

Recommendations

Immediate Action Required (Next 2 Months)

Recommendation 1: Secure No-Cost Extension Through Emergency Provisions

The **AO** should continue to work for the approval of the project's first consolidated financial report by the donor, and the corresponding release of second tranche funds, **before** 15 November 2025. At the same time, or before, the administrative agent should immediately submit the extension request that the EC may accept without first approving the consolidated first financial report. If this fails, the project should invoke the provision for suspending the agreement in exceptional circumstances that is an emergency option preferable to early project closure. As a one-year extension to 2026 will likely be insufficient due to ongoing delays, the request should seek a longer extension period, accepting the trade-off of delaying potential Phase V funding to ensure Phase IV completion.

High Priority - Structural Reforms (Next 6-12 Months)

Recommendation 2: Address administrative bottlenecks for Phase IV.

The current JP modality has proven mismatched for sustained technical cooperation among seven organizations with distinct financial procedures and reporting requirements.

Phase IV must ensure processes are more streamlined and address administrative

bottlenecks. The current structure has created rather than solved administrative complexity, requiring fundamental restructuring before any future phase. This could include enhancing quality assurance of the reporting submissions by the AO or replace the JP approach with a simpler alternative. A practical suggestion is for POs to ensure reports align with donor expenditure and reporting requirements prior to submission and for the AO to vet PO financial reports more closely for compliance with donor requirements before submitting them to WHO Finance.

Recommendation 3: Achieve Strategic Realignment with Global Framework on Chemicals

The 2023 adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals presents the most significant strategic opportunity in the project's 15-year history, but capitalizing on this opportunity requires immediate and comprehensive content realignment. Should the PMG wish to go beyond mapping Toolbox content onto GFC targets in Phase IV then the project should consider creating explicit entry points that position the IOMC Toolbox as essential infrastructure for GFC Programme One on national legislation and institutional capacity building.

The realignment could also consider how AI can be used as a natural language interface to help access material even if it not framed by GFC terminology or pathways.

Medium Priority - Operational Improvements (Next 12-18 Months)

Recommendation 4: Improve User Experience

The evaluation's finding that only 12 per cent of the website users are returning users, indicates that users are mostly interested in single use. This occurs despite users actively seeking IOMC content, suggesting content complexity and poor user experience design rather than lack of interest.

Addressing these shortcomings requires comprehensive platform redesign focused on user journey optimization, including simplified navigation structures, contextualized content presentation, and interactive support mechanisms. The project must move beyond mechanical translation to develop contextual adaptation guidelines that address specific national legal frameworks, institutional capacities, and resource constraints. User support systems should include help desk functionality, peer-to-peer learning networks, and regular user feedback mechanisms that drive continuous improvement. The potential of AI Chatbots to provide a conversational interface could possibly be explored, even if it is to dismiss it. Implementation must also include systematic usability testing with representative user groups and performance monitoring that tracks engagement depth rather than just visitor numbers.

Recommendation 5: Carry Out One or Two Targeted Low-Cost Interventions that Establish Gender Awareness as a Quality Improvement Rather than an Add-On

While Phase IV shows improvement over Phase III, current efforts remain fragmented,

unsystematic, and insufficient to meet contemporary standards for inclusive development programming. The finding that one third of survey respondents were neutral or disagreed that workshops reflected gender considerations indicates significant implementation gaps.

Realistically, the project does not have the time or resources to develop a fully comprehensive gender equity and human rights strategy before the end of Phase IV. What it can do is to take one or two examples of where there is active exclusion to understand the barriers and how they could be overcome. The project could also explore if and where gender-blind language creates problems in two or three of the most used management schemes and toolkits (e.g., pesticide guidance that does not mention pregnancy), and make targeted revisions.

Lessons learned

1. Training alone is insufficient to achieve better chemical management:

Better chemical management depends on organizational prioritization, resource availability, and ongoing support beyond single sessions. Tools need to go hand in hand with strengthened institutions, adequate financial resources and improved enforcement capacity. Many of these are outside the control of the project.

2. Multi-agency coordination as a double-edged sword:

Multi-agency coordination to deal with sectoral gaps and overlaps, while theoretically sound, creates practical vulnerabilities such as funding delays due to administrative complexity: 10-month funding delays and extended 9+ month consolidation delays significantly undermine overall project execution, timelines, and outcomes.

3. Timing Trumps Tools:

Strategic timing - aligning support with actual policy windows –can produce more impact than when there is no policy window. The Vietnam case illustrated this: OECD conducted training precisely when the country was revising chemical management legislation, leading to policy influence. However, this success appeared exceptional rather than systematic.

4. Embedding Over Standalone:

Carrying out project activities within ongoing project, country and global processes is more likely to contribute to behaviour change because what is learned is more likely to be revisited and used.

Annexes

A. Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

Mid-Term Evaluation of the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management – Phase IV: Towards achieving the SDGs

Background

1. Funded by the European Union (EU), with overall management by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management project (the “project”) was designed to assist countries and (sub) regions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition worldwide with identifying the most relevant, efficient and appropriate national actions to respond to chemicals management problems. The intended impact is to strengthen the sound management of chemicals in many developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

2. The project has completed three phases already. Phase I focused on the development of a proof-of-concept version of the Toolbox itself. During Phase II the Toolbox was pilot-tested, further developed and its functionalities were improved. At the end of Phase II, the Toolbox was promoted to over 3,000 policy makers worldwide but focusing on developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Phase III continued to improve functionalities and broaden the scope and application of the Toolbox, expanded the awareness of the Toolbox and strengthened the capacity of countries to implement the Toolbox. The aim of Phase IV (towards achieving the SDGs), which takes place from January 2023 until December 2025 (an extension will be requested until December 2026) and has a budget of 2,500,001 EUR, is to further promote the sound management of chemicals with a focus on developing countries and countries with economies in transition through strengthening the relevance and broadening the scope of the Toolbox’s application, improving the integration of human rights and gender equality aspects in the Toolbox, building competencies for its implementation, increasing its application in non-English speaking countries, and creating international platforms for collaboration.

3. For the development and implementation of the Toolbox, the IOMC brought together nine intergovernmental organizations actively involved in chemical safety - WHO, FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, the World Bank and OECD – from which seven organizations implement the project’s technical work. As such the IOMC aims to strengthen international cooperation in the field of chemicals management.

4. The overall objective of the Phase IV is to improve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste in countries worldwide, thereby contributing to the achievement and implementation of nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), multi-lateral environmental and other international agreements and frameworks. It also aims to ensure that the IOMC Toolbox and its content is increasingly used at national level to improve chemicals and waste management capacities and infrastructure, including control and enforcement, as well as access to data and information and to foster a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach to chemicals and waste management, as well as increased collaboration and networking between countries and IOMC Partner Organizations towards achieving the sound management of chemicals and the implementation of related SDGs.

5. The project’s two expected outcomes are:

- Toolbox and its content increasingly used by countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to establish and improve chemicals management capacities and infrastructure, including control and enforcement, as well as access to data and information.

○ Increased national and international collaboration and networking within and between countries and IOMC Partner Organizations to enhance the sound management of chemicals in countries.

6. To achieve these, the project plans the following results from activities.

a. Updated Toolbox, i.e. existing management schemes and tools reviewed and revised when needed, including to improve the integration of human rights and gender equality aspects and the protection of vulnerable populations.

b. Broadened Toolbox, i.e. new or broadened chemical management schemes and related tools added, thereby increasing scope and applicability.

c. Improved guidance and tools for the management of chemicals, i.e. new guidance and tools developed by IOMC Partner Organizations upon request by countries, especially developing countries, thereby closing the gap where guidance is missing or outdated.

d. Language versions of guidance and tools available in UN languages other than English.

e. Authoritative, comprehensive and stand-alone web-based training courses aimed at target audiences in developing countries for building capacities towards the implementation of IOMC guidance and the use of IOMC tools, including fostering collaboration and networking.

f. Global, regional and country targeted virtual and face-to-face training and promotional events for building capacities and increasing coordination, collaboration and networking towards the implementation of IOMC guidance and the use of IOMC tools and the IOMC Toolbox.

7. The project's intervention logic is presented in Annex A.

8. The **United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)** is a principal training arm of the United Nations (UN), with the aim to increase the effectiveness of the UN in achieving its major objectives through training and research. UNITAR's programming covers several thematic areas and activities aimed at supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; including chemicals and waste management. The project document stipulates that UNITAR carries out this independent evaluation in close collaboration with other Project Management Group (PMG) members and by sharing the terms of references of the exercise with the donor.

Purpose of the evaluation

9. Phase IV of the project calls for an independent mid-term (and later a final) evaluation. The Mid-Term Evaluation will take account of the initial results of the project and will assess its **relevance** and **effectiveness**, identify enabling and hindering factors and issue recommendations for improving the project's implementation during the remaining period. The final evaluation, which will take place towards the end of the project, will assess the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, likelihood of impact and likelihood of sustainability, and identify lessons from its implementation with a view to contributing to learning and informed decision making.

10. While the evaluation uses OECD-DAC criteria, gender, disability and human rights, and environmental considerations will also be taken into account. The evaluation's purpose is to serve learning and accountability purposes, and to be as forward-looking as possible to inform decisions on the design and planning of possible future phases and focus areas of this or similar projects.

11. The primary users of this evaluation include the PMG and other IOMC organizations who can utilise the evaluation's findings and recommendations to adjust and improve project implementation in the remaining period, and inform the design and implementation of subsequent phases and similar future projects, if any. They also include the project users, i.e. countries and individuals who participated in training activities and plan to or are using the Toolbox; and the project donor, the European Commission.

Scope of the evaluation

12. The Mid-Term Evaluation will cover the period from the start of Phase IV of the project, 1 January 2023 until the start of the evaluation in Quarter 3 2025. The evaluation will cover both project outputs and progress towards the expected outcomes, as indicated in the project logical framework (see Annex A). Progress of actions will be assessed against the Indicative Action Plan (see Annex B). The Mid-Term Evaluation is designed as a light evaluation and will be complemented by the final evaluation.

Evaluation criteria

13. The evaluation will assess project relevance and effectiveness, the implementation of the recommendations issued from the Phase III final evaluation and address partnership modalities.

- **Relevance:** *Is the project reaching its intended individual and institutional users and are its related project objectives and activities relevant to the beneficiaries', global and country needs and priorities?*
- **Effectiveness:** *To what extent is the project on track in achieving the expected results and objectives?*

Principal evaluation questions

While the questions below are suggested to guide the Mid-Term Evaluation, the final questions selected/identified will be confirmed by the evaluator following the initial document review and engagement with the PMG with a view to ensuring that the evaluation is as useful as possible with regard to the project's implementation until closure, future orientation or other similar undertakings. The evaluation questions should ultimately aim at identifying what worked and what did not, and subsequently help provide insight into potential corrective actions that relevant stakeholders could take during the remaining period of project implementation to ensure the achievement of expected outcomes.

The evaluation questions related to gender equality and the empowerment of women dimensions are marked with "GEEW". Questions related to environmental sustainability in evaluation are marked with "ENVSUSE". Disability and human rights considerations should also be considered throughout the evaluation.

Relevance

- Is the project reaching its intended users (policy makers and decision-makers as well as technical professionals particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition as primary beneficiaries and those who use and manage chemicals as final beneficiaries)? If not, what are the hindering factors and what could be done differently?*
- How relevant are the objectives, content and the design of the Toolbox (and enhanced functionality), Toolkits and trainings to the identified needs and priorities of the users? To what extent do the activities and outputs contribute to the planned outcomes?*
- To what extent is the project aligned with the development community's efforts to helping Member States implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly goal 12, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), the European Union strategic objectives and other major multilateral environmental and other international agreements?*
- To what extent has the project been relevant for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and meeting the needs of other groups made vulnerable? (GEEW)*

Effectiveness

- a. *To what extent are the planned outcomes and outputs of the project on track? What are the enabling and hindering factors that have affected the delivery of results and the progress to achieving the expected outcomes so far or are likely to do so in the future?*
- b. *Are there any unintended (positive and negative) outcomes that can be identified at this point? How can the project capitalize on the positive and mitigate the negative ones?*
- c. *To what extent have the updated and broadened Toolbox, updated and new guidelines, translated guidance and tools, and the online and face-to-face capacity building efforts contributed to broadening the reach and use of the Toolbox amongst the intended users? What are the enabling and hindering factors that affect their use of the Toolbox?*
- d. *To what extent has the project contributed to countries establishing and improving chemicals management capacities and infrastructure, including control and enforcement and access to data and information?*
- e. *To what extent are countries and IOMC Partner Organizations increasingly collaborating and networking to enhance the sound management of chemicals in countries? What is needed to strengthen these collaborations?*
- f. *To what extent are a human rights-based approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy incorporated in the design and roll-out of the toolbox and the toolkits? (GEEW)*
- g. *To what extent has environmental sustainability been integrated into the design and implementation of the project? (ENVSUSE)*
- h. *How effective are current partnership modalities, including collaboration mechanisms of the PMG, monitoring of the project's progress, reporting, etc.?*
- i. *To what extent have recommendations from Phase III's final evaluation been taken into account in project design and implementation?*
- j. *What good practices can be identified at this point that should be continued? What corrective actions should be taken during the remaining period of the project that could help ensure the delivery of results and achievement of expected outcomes?*

Evaluation Approach and Methods

14. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the [UNITAR Evaluation Policy](#), [the operational guidelines for independent evaluations](#) and the [United Nations Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), and the [UN Evaluation Group \(UNEG\) Ethical Guidelines](#). The evaluation will be carried out by an international consultant (the "evaluator") or a team of consultants under the supervision of the UNITAR Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PPME). PPME shall support the evaluation team in gathering background documentation and other data collection processes.

15. It is recommended to look at the different dimensions of capacity development, including:

- **Individual dimension:** This relates to the people involved in terms of knowledge, skill levels, competencies, attitudes, behaviours and values that can be addressed through facilitation, training and competency development.
- **Organizational/Community dimension:** This relates to organizations and networks of organizations. The change in learning that occurs at individual level affects, from a results chain perspective, the changes at organizational level.
- **Enabling environment dimension:** This refers to the broader context in which individuals and organizations work, including the political commitment and vision; policy, legal and economic frameworks and institutional set-up in the country; national public sector budget allocations and processes; governance and power structures; incentives and social norms; power structures and dynamics.

Table 1 - Capacity areas within the three dimensions

Individual	Skills levels (technical and managerial skills) Competencies	Essential knowledge, Cognitive skills, Interpersonal skills, Self-control, Attitude towards behaviour, Self-confidence,
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	Awareness and motivation	Professional identity, Norms, Values, Intentions, Emotions, Environmental barriers and enablers with specific focus on gender and disability inclusion (among others)
Organizations	Mandates Horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms Motivation and incentive systems Strategic leadership Inter/intra institutional linkages Programme management Multi-stakeholder processes	Organizational priorities Gender and disability inclusion Processes, systems and procedures Human and financial resources Knowledge and information sharing Infrastructure Environmental sustainability Institutional support
Enabling environment	Policy and legal framework Political commitment and accountability framework Governance	Economic framework and national public budget allocations and power Legal, policy and political environment

16. To maximize utilization of the evaluation, the evaluation shall follow a participatory approach and engage a range of project stakeholders in the process, including the PMG, other partners, if relevant, the project users (policy and decision makers and technical professionals at the national and regional level benefiting from the project, technical professionals) the donor, and other relevant stakeholders.

17. The evaluator should follow mixed-methods approach in responding to the principal evaluation questions and present the findings qualitatively or quantitatively as most appropriate. The evaluation could draw on a review of the log frame and the theory of change (reconstruct if needed).¹⁶ Suggested methods and data collection tools include:

Comprehensive desk review

The evaluator will compile, review and analyse background documents and secondary data/information related to the project, including a results framework indicator tracking review. A list of background documentation for the desk review is included in Annex D. A template for document review suggested by PPME, can be found [here](#).

Stakeholder analysis

The evaluator will identify and relate the different stakeholders involved in the project, using the most appropriate [approach](#). Key stakeholders include the various partners involved in development and implementation of the Toolbox, policy makers and professionals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

- The Project partners and particularly Project Management Group Members;
- The donor (European Commission: DG Environment);

¹⁶ The ToC reconstructed for phase III is presented in Annex C.

- Other partners such as the IOMC secretariat, the SAICM secretariat etc.;
- Beneficiaries/participants;
- trainers/facilitators;
- Host (national) government focal points including policy and decision makers in environmental, health and safety domains as well as technical professionals with a role in the assessment and management of chemicals;
- Toolbox users;
- Etc.

Survey(s)

With a view to maximizing feedback from the widest possible range of project stakeholders, the consultant will develop and deploy survey(s) following the comprehensive desk study to provide an initial set of findings and allow the evaluator to easily probe during the key informant interviews.

Key informant interviews

Based on stakeholder identification, the evaluator will identify and interview key informants. In preparation for the interviews with key informants, the consultant will define interview protocols to determine the questions and modalities with flexibility to adapt to the particularities of the different informants, either at the global, at the national or local level. Generic interview guidelines can be found [here](#).

Focus groups

Focus groups should be organized with selected project stakeholders at the local levels to complement/triangulate findings from other data collection tools.

After action review/Foresight Future Wheel/Field visit (online)

An online workshop is being conducted with the PMG members to reflect on what went well, what did not go so well and what can be improved going forward.

Gender, disability and human rights, and environmental sustainability

18. The evaluator should incorporate [human rights, gender, disability, and environmental sustainability](#) perspectives in the evaluation process and findings, particularly by involving women and other groups subject to discrimination. All key data collected shall be disaggregated by sex, UN country classification, disability status, and age grouping and be included in the evaluation report.

19. The guiding principles for the evaluation should respect transparency, engage stakeholders and beneficiaries; ensure confidentiality of data and anonymity of responses; and follow [ethical and professional standards](#), including PPME guidelines for the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Timeframe, work plan, deliverables and review

20. The proposed timeframe for the evaluation spans from June 2025 (recruitment of the evaluator) to October 2025 (publication of final evaluation report). An indicative work plan is provided in the table below.

21. The consultant shall submit an evaluation design/question matrix following the comprehensive desk study, stakeholder analysis and initial interviews with the project team. The evaluation design/question matrix should include a discussion on the evaluation objectives, methods and, if required, revisions to the suggested evaluation questions or data collection methods. The evaluation design/question matrix should indicate any foreseen difficulties or challenges/limitations in collecting data and confirm the final timeframe for the completion of the evaluation exercise, as well as a list of documents reviewed highlighting insights from every reviewed document.

22. Following data collection and analysis, the consultant shall submit a zero draft of the evaluation report to the evaluation manager and revise the draft based on comments made by the evaluation manager.

23. The draft evaluation report should follow the structure presented under Annex E. The report should state the purpose of the evaluation, and the methods used and include a discussion on the limitations to the evaluation. The report should present evidence-based and balanced findings, including strengths and weaknesses, consequent conclusions and recommendations, and lessons to be learned. The length of the report should be approximately 30 pages, excluding annexes.

24. Following the submission of the zero draft, a presentation of emerging findings with discussion of evaluation recommendations and a draft report will then be submitted to the PMG to review and comment on the draft report and provide any additional information using the form provided under Annex D by 6 October 2025. The evaluator is highly recommended to refer to the UNEG checklist of quality of recommendations (Annex E) when drafting recommendations to enhance their uses, by ensuring that recommendations are action-focused, include priority orders and specify who should implement them, among others. Within two weeks of receiving feedback, the evaluator shall submit the final evaluation report. The target date for this submission is 20 October 2025. Subsequently, PPME will finalize and issue the report. The report will be shared with all concerned stakeholders.

Indicative timeframe:

Activity	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025
Evaluator selected and recruited					
Initial data collection, including desk review, stakeholder analysis					
Evaluation design/question matrix					
Data collection and analysis, including survey(s), interviews and focus groups and after-action review					
Zero draft report submitted to UNITAR					
Draft evaluation report consulted with UNITAR evaluation manager and submitted to the Project Management Group					
Presentation of emerging findings, recommendations and lessons learned					
Project Management Group reviews draft evaluation report and shares comments and recommendations					
Evaluation report finalized and management response by Project Management Group					
Dissemination and publication					

Summary of evaluation deliverables and indicative schedule

Deliverable	From	To	Deadline*
Evaluation design/question matrix	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	16 June 2025
Comment on evaluation design/question matrix	Evaluation manager	Evaluator	20 June 2025
Zero draft report	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	8 September 2025
Comments on zero draft	Evaluation manager	Evaluator	15 September 2025
Draft report	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	22 September 2025
Presentation of emerging findings, recommendations and lessons learned	Evaluator/evaluation manager	Programme Management	TBD
Comments on draft report	Programme Management	Evaluation manager	6 October 2025
Final draft report	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	20 October 2025

*To be adjusted depending on the contract signature and to be agreed upon with the Evaluation Manager.

Communication/dissemination of results

25. The evaluation report shall be written in English. The final report will be shared with all partners, the European Commission and the WHO evaluation Office, and be posted on an online repository of evaluation reports open to the public in [UNITAR website](#) as well as the [UNEG website](#).

Evaluation management arrangements

26. The evaluator will be contracted by UNITAR and will report directly to the Director of the Strategic Planning and Performance Division and Manager of Planning, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation Unit (PPME) ('evaluation manager').

27. The evaluation manager reports directly to the Executive Director of UNITAR and is independent from all programming related management functions at UNITAR. According to UNITAR's Evaluation Policy, in due consultation with the Executive Director/programme management, PPME issues and discloses final evaluation reports without prior clearance from other UNITAR Management or functions. This builds the foundations of UNITAR's evaluation function's independence and ability to better support learning and accountability.

28. The evaluator should consult with the evaluation manager on any procedural or methodological matter requiring attention. The evaluator is responsible for planning any meetings, organizing online surveys and undertaking administrative arrangements for any travel that may be required (e.g., accommodation, visas, etc.). The travel arrangements, if any, will be in accordance with the UN rules and regulations for consultants.

Evaluator Ethics

29. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project's design or implementation or have a conflict of interest with project activities. The selected consultant shall sign and return a copy of the code of conduct under Annex F prior to initiating the assignment and comply with [UNEG Ethical Guidelines and the Guiding Ethical Principles for using AI in Evaluation, if it is the case](#).

Professional requirements

30. The lead evaluator should have the following qualifications and experience:

- MA degree or equivalent in evaluation, development studies, agriculture, environment studies or a related discipline. Training and/or experience in the area of chemical management would be a clear advantage.
- At least 7 years of professional experience conducting evaluation in the field of capacity building.
- Technical knowledge of the focal area including the evaluation of learning.
- Field work experience in developing countries.
- Excellent research and analytical skills, including experience in a variety of evaluation methods and approaches.
- Excellent writing skills.
- Strong communication and presentation skills.
- Cross-cultural awareness and flexibility.
- Availability to travel.
- Fluency in English. Other languages are an advantage.

Annexes:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| A. | Project logical framework |
| B. | List of contact points |
| C. | Structure of evaluation report |
| D. | List of training events |
| E. | List of documents and data to be reviewed |
| F. | Structure of evaluation report |
| G. | Audit trail |
| H. | Evaluator code of conduct |

Annex A: Project logical framework

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To improve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste in countries worldwide, thereby contributing to the achievement and implementation of nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), multi-lateral environmental and other international agreements and frameworks.	# of new countries using the Toolbox and its content to draft and adopt policies for the sound management of chemicals.	30 (2022)	60 (2025)	End-of-Action country survey and follow-up, including country case studies	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Toolbox and its content increasingly used by countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to establish and improve chemicals management capacities and infrastructure, including control and enforcement and access to data and information.	# of Toolbox visits, downloads of documents and other statistics # of countries who during the Action period identified guidelines and tools in the Toolbox AND are in the process of or plan to implement them in the near future # of countries who during the Action period identified tools in the Toolbox and fully implemented them.	TBD (2022) (depending on outcome of Phase III) 0 (2022) 0 (2022)	TBD (2025) 25 (2025) 5 (2025)	Web statistics (OECD at the time of reporting, i.e. at the end of each year) End-of-Action country survey End-of-Action country survey	<i>Changing of resources available in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to take the necessary Action</i>
Outcome 2	Increased national and international collaboration and networking within and between countries and IOMC Partner Organizations to enhance the sound management of chemicals in countries.	# of countries engaged in international collaborations during the Action to advance the implementation of the sound management of chemicals	0 (2022)	75 (2025)	End-of-Action country survey	<i>Sharing information and experiences through networks for coordination, and collaboration, which increases motivation, commitment, quality, efficiency</i>
						<i>and effectiveness of implementing IOMC tools.</i>
Output 1 (related to Outcome 1)	Updated Toolbox, i.e. existing management schemes and tools reviewed and revised when needed, including to improve the integration of human rights and gender equality aspects and the protection of vulnerable populations.	# of new tools added to Toolbox	Hundreds (2022)	+100 (2025)	Toolbox website	<i>Internet is available and Toolbox not corrupted by internet virus</i>
Output 2 (related to Outcome 1)	Broadened Toolbox, i.e. new chemical management schemes and related tools added, thereby increasing scope and applicability.	# of new schemes developed and added to Toolbox	8 (2022)	11 (2025)	Toolbox website	
Output 3 (related to Outcome 1)	Improved guidance and tools for the management of chemicals, i.e. new guidance and tools developed by IOMC Partner Organizations upon request by countries, especially developing countries, thereby closing the gap where guidance is missing or outdated.	# of new tools developed as part of the Action and added to Toolbox	20 (2022)	30 (2025)	Toolbox website	
Output 4 (related to Outcome 1)	Language versions of guidance and tools become available in UN languages other than English.	# of language versions developed as part of the Action and added to the Toolbox	8 (2022)	28 (2025)	Toolbox website	
Output 5 (related to Outcome 1)	Authoritative, comprehensive and stand-alone web-based training courses became available aimed at target audiences in developing countries for building capacities towards the implementation of IOMC guidance and the use of IOMC tools.	# of web-based training courses developed	0 (2022)	5 (2025)	Organizations' website, i.e. links from IOMC Toolbox to them	
Output 6 (related to Outcome 2)	Global, regional and country targeted virtual and face-to-face training and promotional events were held for building capacities, increase coordination, collaboration and networking towards the implementation of IOMC guidance and the use of IOMC tools and the IOMC Toolbox.	# of training events organized # of participants participated attended training course by gender	100 (2022) 6,000 (2022)	140 (2025) +2400 (2025) (1200 female; 1200 male)	Meeting reports Meeting reports	<i>Travel restrictions are lifted regarding face-to-face trainings</i>

Annex B: List of contact points

Participating Organizations (PO)

Focal points

Lesley Onyon, World Health Organization, onyonl@who.int

Virunya Bhat, World Health Organization, bhatv@who.int

Giulia Calcagnini (NSP), Food and Agriculture Organization, Giulia.Calcagnini@fao.org (only for financial and administrative part of the project)

Oxana Perminova (NSP), Food and Agriculture Organization, Oxana.Perminova@fao.org (principal focal point for FAO)

Halshka Graczyk, International Labour Organization, graczyk@ilo.org

Ludovic Bernaudat, United Nations Environment Programme, ludovic.bernaudat@unep.org

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Valerie Frison, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Valerie.FRISON@oecd.org

Sylvie Poret, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Sylvie.PORET@oecd.org

Other contacts:

Lacye Groening, International Labour Organization, groening@iloquest.org

Haosong, [United Nations Environment Programme,](#)

Milan Ivic, Food and Agriculture Organization, milan.ivic@fao.org

Emina Alic, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, e.alic@unido.org

Manal Azzi, International Labour Organization, azzi@ilo.org

Giulia Calcagnini, Food and Agriculture Organization, Giulia.Calcagnini@fao.org

Jose Demesa, United Nations Environment, jose.DEMESA@unep.org

Bob Diderich, Bob.DIDERICH@oecd.org

Baogen Gu, Food and Agriculture Organization, Baogen.Gu@fao.org

Krystle Innes, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, K.INNES@unido.org

Frithjof Laubinger, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Frithjof.LAUBINGER@oecd.org

Petra Schwager, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, p.schwager@unido.org

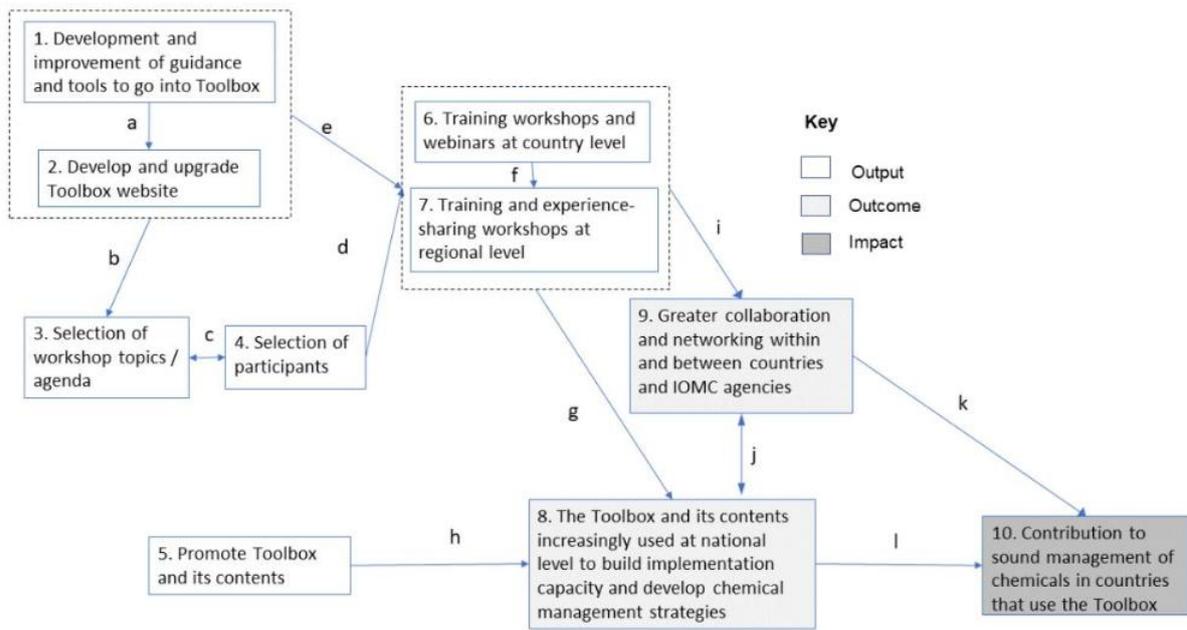
Susanne Styrski, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, S.STYRSKY@unido.org

Luis Humberto Umanzor Hernandez, United Nations Industrial Development Organization,
L.UMANZORHERNANDEZ@unido.org

Harry van der Wulp, Food and Agriculture Organization, harold.vdvalk@gmail.com

Country focal points for training events

Annex C: Project's phase III reconstructed Theory of Change



Annex D: List of training event

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
COMPLETED															
Eastern Mediterranean region	Morocco	FAO		FAO Pesticide registration toolkit			Feb-23	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers, regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	15	8	7
Eastern Mediterranean region	Jordan	FAO	Netherlands Enterprise Agency, Centre for Pesticide Suicide Prevention (CPSP) University of Edinburgh	FAO Pesticide registration toolkit			Feb-Mar 23	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers, regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	16	9	7
Africa	Tanzani	FAO	Swedish	FAO			Apr-23	Works	Nation	In	Policy	FAO	22	6	16

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
	a		Chemical Agency (KEMI)	Pesticide registration toolkit				hop	al	person	makers, regulators	Pesticide registration Toolkit Training			
South-East Asia	Bangladesh	FAO		FAO Pesticide registration toolkit	Dossier evaluation		Jul-23	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers, regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	11	5	6
South-East Asia	Malaysia	FAO	CPSP	FAO Pesticide registration toolkit			Jul-23	Workshop	Regional	In person	Policy makers, regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	22	11	11
Africa	South Africa	FAO/Kemi	UNITAR	Pesticides	GHS		Sep-23	Workshop	Regional	In person	Policy makers, regulators	Southern African Pesticide Regulators Forum (SAPReF) General Meeting and Technical Training	40	20	20
Europe	Serbia	UNITAR		Chemicals Management			Sep-23	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers	Serbia – Chemicals and Waste	9	6	3

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
												Management			
Latin America Caribbean	Colombia	UNIDO	Yale University	Green Chemistry toolkit			29 Oct-09 Nov 23	Workshop	National	In person	Companies in chemical sector (mainly MSMEs)	Green chemistry 2-day training course	105	32	68
South-East Asia	Philippines	UNIDO	University of the Philippines Los Baños College	Green Chemistry toolkit			13-14 November 23	Workshop	National	Hybrid	Policy makers, academia, private sector	SIKLO: Green Chemistry Towards Safe and Sustainable Future	100	45	55
Western Pacific	Fiji	FAO		FAO Pesticide registration toolkit	HHPs		Nov-23	Workshop	Regional	in-person	Regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	10	2	8
Western Pacific	Fiji	FAO		FAO Pesticide registration toolkit			Nov-23	Workshop	Regional	In person	Policy makers, regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	10	2	8
Africa	Senegal	BRS	ILO, WHO, UNITAR	Occupational Safety	ILO's Conventions, GHS,		Nov-23	Workshop	Sub-region	Hybrid	Policy makers,	ILO's Conventions, synergies			

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Web inar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
				and Health Management Scheme for Chemicals	Rotterdam Convention				al		regulators	with the GHS and Rotterdam, and presenting ILO publications and tools on chemicals management.			
Americas	Panama	BRS	ILO, FAO	Occupational Safety and Health Management Scheme for Chemicals	ILO's Conventions, GHS, Rotterdam Convention		Feb-24	Workshop	National	Hybrid		ILO's Conventions and Recommendations, synergies with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and synergies with the	30		

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
												Rotterdam Convention.			
Eastern Mediterranean region	Armenia	UNITAR		GHS			Apr-24	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers, private sector, NGOs	Developing roadmap on GHS	38	20	18
Central Asia	Uzbekistan	FAO	CPSP, Rotterdam Convention	FAO Pesticide registration toolkit	HHPs		May-24	Workshop	National	in-person	Regulators	FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training	18	4	14
Central Asia	Uzbekistan	UNITAR/WHO		GHS			Jun-24	Workshop	National	In person	technical experts from health and environment protection area, technical regulators	Training on GHS implementation in Uzbekistan	12	3	9

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
Africa	Tanzania	FAO	European Union (ACP MEAs 3)/KE MI/ CPS P/ Centre for Environment Justice and Development (CEJAD)	FAO Pesticide registration toolkit			Aug-24	Workshop	Regional	in-person	Regulators	EAC HHP Strategy and Pesticide Registration Toolkit workshop	36	6	30
Latin America Caribbean	Paraguay	FAO/Rotterdam Convention		FAO Pesticide registration toolkit	generic products		Aug-24	Workshop	National	in-person	Regulators	Kit de Herramientas para el Registro de Plaguicidas	25	19	6

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Web inar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
												de la FAO			
		ILO				ILO and UNITAR participated, discussion included Chemicals, OSH and the GHS	10 October 2024			Hybrid		Engagement Session on Chemical Management with Textile Mills in Pakistan	20		
		ILO				ILO presented the ILO Chemicals Convention No. 170 and the OSH Management Scheme	31 October 2024					Capacity Assessment Workshop for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste in Pakistan	Unknown		

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
						of the Toolbox									
		UNITAR				Yes	02 Dec 2024			Online		GHS Cambodia	11		
		ILO				ILO presented on chemical safety and referenced the IOMC toolbox	14 April 2025			Hybrid		"Reducing uses and releases of chemicals of concern, including POPs, in the textiles sector" Pakistan World of Work Stakeholders Consultation Workshop	30		
													519	198	286
PLANNING STAGES															
South-East Asia	Viet Nam	UNIDO	Ministry of Industry and Trade	Green Chemistry toolkit			2025	Workshop	National	In person	Policy makers		30		

Region	Country	Lead	Partners	Main Topic (Management Scheme, Toolkit)	Sub topic	Learning objectives	Date	Event Webinar, workshop	Radiation Global, regional, national	Type In person, hybrid, web-based	Target Beneficiaries Policy makers, academia, private sector	Title of the event	Number (or expected number) of participants	# female	# male
Latin America Caribbean	Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay	WHO HQ/PAHO	WHO PAHO	WHO (2021) Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit and Public Health Management of Chemicals	pesticides		Q1/Q2 2025	self learning virtual course	Regional	web-based (hybrid pending financial resources)	MoH professionals	Human health risk assessment: pesticides	30		
Latin America Caribbean	Costa Rica	FAO	Rotterdam Convention	FAO Pesticide registration toolkit	generic products, equivalence assessment		24-Nov	Workshop	Regional	in-person	Regulators		To be confirmed		

Annex E: List of documents/data to be reviewed

- Narrative and finance reports (in the absence of interim reporting requirements, internal reporting and monitoring data shall be provided, including self-evaluations, logframe updates etc.)
- Contribution Agreement
- Logical Framework and outcome areas
- Monitoring and self-evaluation data related to training events
- Project partner documentation (e.g. training reports, material, etc) if applicable
- Stakeholder contacts, including training participants, country focal points, etc.
- Project Description
- IOMC Toolbox website content: www.iomctoolbox.org
- Event Management System Data (for UNITAR)
- Relevant international frameworks
- Any other document deemed to be useful to the evaluation

Annex F: Structure of evaluation report¹⁷

- i. Title page
- ii. Foreword
- iii. Table of contents
- iv. List of Figures and list of tables
- v. Executive summary
- vi. Acronyms and abbreviations
1. Introduction
2. Project description, objectives and development context
3. Theory of change/project design logic
4. Methodology and limitations
5. Evaluation findings based on criteria/principal evaluation questions
6. Conclusions
7. Recommendations
8. Lessons Learned
9. Annexes
 - a. Terms of reference
 - b. Survey/questionnaires deployed
 - c. List of persons interviewed
 - d. List of documents reviewed
 - e. Summary of field visit/workshop
 - f. Evaluation question matrix
 - g. Evaluation consultant agreement form

¹⁷ A report template will be provided to the evaluation team by PPME.

Annex G: Evaluation Audit Trail Template

(To be completed by Project Management to show how the received comments on the draft report have (or have not) been incorporated into the evaluation report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the evaluation report.)

To the comments received on (date) from the evaluation of the “IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management – Phase IV: Towards achieving the SDGs” project

The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft evaluation report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column) and track change comment number (“#” column):

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft evaluation report	Evaluator response and actions taken

B. Survey or questionnaires deployed

Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

Introduction

Dear participant,

Thank you for agreeing to fill out this questionnaire regarding the IOMC Toolbox Project workshop that you attended. Your insights will help us evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the training that was offered as part of the Project, understand your possible usage of the Toolbox and guide improvements of the Toolbox for the remaining implementation period. We are collecting feedback from all the workshop participants, do not miss the opportunity to give your opinion about your learning experience!

All responses, including any personal information you provide, will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and organizational affiliation will not be attached to the results, your individual inputs will not be published, and the survey results will only be published in aggregate and not attributable form. Your input will only be used in combination with the responses of others participating in the survey.

The survey takes about 15 minutes. You can answer open questions in the language you prefer (English, Spanish or French).

If you have any questions or difficulties with the survey, please contact us at evaluation@unitar.org

Thank you again for your time and contribution!

Please choose your language on the top right. When you are ready to begin, just click on the "Next" button below.

Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit at UNITAR.



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

About you

* 1. What is your professional affiliation?

2. What is your current position (e.g. programme officer, team leader, etc.)?

* 3. In which field do you primarily work (e.g. health, environment, labour, agriculture)?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labour | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

* 4. What is your age bracket?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 17 | <input type="radio"/> 46-60 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-30 | <input type="radio"/> 61+ |
| <input type="radio"/> 31-45 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

* 5. What is your gender?

* 6. Do you identify as a person with learning disabilities or disorders? Select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person with dyslexia | <input type="checkbox"/> A person with visual perceptual or visual motor deficit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person with dyscalculia | <input type="checkbox"/> A person with other learning disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person with dysgraphia | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to answer this question |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person with a nonverbal learning disability (e.g. problem solving, visual-spatial tasks) | <input type="checkbox"/> A person without a learning disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) | |

* 7. In which country are you currently based?

8. What is your primary working language?

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Arabic | <input type="radio"/> Malay |
| <input type="radio"/> Armenian | <input type="radio"/> Serbian |
| <input type="radio"/> Bengali | <input type="radio"/> Spanish |
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Swahili |
| <input type="radio"/> Filipino / Tagalog | <input type="radio"/> Uzbeks |
| <input type="radio"/> French | <input type="radio"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |

9. What other languages do you regularly use in your professional setting?

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Arabic | <input type="radio"/> Malay |
| <input type="radio"/> Armenian | <input type="radio"/> Serbian |
| <input type="radio"/> Bengali | <input type="radio"/> Spanish |
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Swahili |
| <input type="radio"/> Filipino / Tagalog | <input type="radio"/> Uzbeks |
| <input type="radio"/> French | <input type="radio"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

Participation in the IOMC Toolbox project

* 10. Please indicate which workshop, training, or webinar you attended.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Morocco | <input type="radio"/> FAO Kit de Herramientas para el Registro de Plaguicidas - Paraguay |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Jordan | <input type="radio"/> Southern African Pesticide Regulators Forum (SAPReF) General Meeting and Technical Training |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Tanzania | <input type="radio"/> UNITAR Chemicals and Waste Management - Serbia |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Bangladesh | <input type="radio"/> UNITAR Developing roadmap on GHS - Armenia |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Malaysia | <input type="radio"/> UNITAR/WHO Training on GHS implementation in Uzbekistan |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Fiji | <input type="radio"/> UNITAR GHS Cambodia |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO Pesticide registration Toolkit Training - Uzbekistan | <input type="radio"/> UNIDO Green Chemistry Colombia |
| <input type="radio"/> FAO EAC HHP Strategy and Pesticide Registration Toolkit workshop - Tanzania | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |

11. Why did you attend to the event?

- Nominated by my institution
- Professional interest in chemicals management
- Requested by my supervisor
- Other (please specify)

12. Which of the following best describes the event you attended?

- It was a standalone event (not connected to other activities)
- It was part of an ongoing process/larger project
- Other (please specify)

13. Were you familiar with the IQMC Toolbox before participating in the training?

- Yes
- No
- I am not sure



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

Workshop and Toolbox relevance

* 14. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the workshop you attended?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I do not know
The Toolbox content is relevant to my national context	<input type="radio"/>					
The language(s) of the Toolbox used were accessible to me	<input type="radio"/>					
The Toolbox was easy to navigate and use	<input type="radio"/>					
Overall, the workshop content was relevant to my professional needs	<input type="radio"/>					
The workshop reflected on gender considerations	<input type="radio"/>					
The workshop addressed environmental sustainability aspects of chemicals management	<input type="radio"/>					
The format of the workshop (e.g., presentations, discussions, group work) was appropriate and effective	<input type="radio"/>					
Overall, I was satisfied with the workshop	<input type="radio"/>					

Other comments (please specify)



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

Effectiveness

* 15. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I do not know
Participation in the workshop made me more familiar with the United Nations guidance material on chemical management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participation in the workshop increased my knowledge and skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The workshop provided me with the opportunity to exchange my knowledge and skills on the sound management of chemicals with other participants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It provided me with the opportunity to make connections to other participants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other comments (please specify)



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

* 16. As a follow-up to the event, have you transferred or applied any knowledge/skills acquired from the training to your work?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

17. Please provide examples of the knowledge/skills area(s) which you have transferred or applied to your work.

Please try to be as specific as possible, indicating what you may have done differently as a result of transferring or applying the knowledge/skills.

* 18. After the workshop completion, have you accessed and used the IOMC Toolbox?

- Yes
 No



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

19. How often do you use the IOMC Toolbox?

- Daily
 Weekly
 Monthly
 Yearly
 Other (please specify)

20. What part of the Toolbox, e.g. specific management schemes, tools, modules, materials, guidelines, have you identified, planned to use or have already used, and how?

21. Provide examples of how you have used the Toolbox and its content to draft and adopt policies for the sound management of chemicals?

If this is not the case, write NA or leave the question blank

* 22. How much of your use of the tools, knowledge and/or skills covered by the workshop can you attribute directly to the workshop?

- 76-100 per cent
 51-75 per cent
 26-50 per cent
 1-25 per cent
 0

23. Please describe any changes in how you do your job or in your organization that you attribute to the workshop, and more specifically to the use of the Toolbox.

24. Have you noticed any improved collaboration with other institutions or countries after the training? Please explain

* 25. Which of the following factors supported or hindered your ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained from the training?
Please indicate if each factor enabled or prevented you from applying what you learned, or if it was not applicable to your situation.

	This factor enabled me to use tools, skills and knowledge	This factor constrained me from using tools, skills and knowledge	Not applicable
Opportunity to apply knowledge/skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Importance of knowledge/skills to my job success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support received from my supervisor at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support received from colleagues/peers at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confidence to apply knowledge/skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Action planning in the training facilitated transfer and application of knowledge/skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training design and methodologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Systems and processes supported the use of knowledge/skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sufficient knowledge to be applied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funds available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge/skills applicable to my context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>		



Midterm Evaluation of the "IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management" project

Future directions and feedback

26. What would you improve of the IOMC Toolbox and its toolkits in your context? What would you like to be added?

Write NA if you are not familiar with the Toolbox

27. What could the IOMC Toolbox Project do beyond workshops to support better chemicals management in your country and region?

28. Do you have any other comments, questions, or recommendations, including suggestions to improve the workshop you attended?

* 29. Would you agree to be interviewed to tell us more about how the workshop and the project has been of benefit to you and/or to share your suggestions on how the workshops and project can be more relevant and useful in the future?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please indicate your email address here:

Thank you!

C. List of persons interviewed

Representatives of Participant Organisations

- Ms. Lacye Groening, Occupational Safety and Health Officer, International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- Ms. Halshka Graczyk, ILO
- Mr. Richard Brown, Chemical Safety and Health Unit, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO.
- Virunya Bhat, WHO
- Ms. Valérie Frison, OECD.
- Mr. Bob Diderich, OECD
- Ms. Sylvie Poret, OECD
- Mr. Jorge Ocana, Manager of UNITAR's Chemical and Waste Management Programme Unit
- Ms. Lai Hoa, Consultant/Coordinator under project manager
- Ms. Rodica Ivan, UNIDO
- Ms. Haosong Jiao, UNEP
- Mr. Ludovic Bernaudat, Head of a risk knowledge unit at UNEP and focal point for IOMC, UNEP
- Ms. Oxana Perminova, FAO
- Ms. Giulia Calcagdin, FAO
- Mr. Jao Ratsifandrihamanana, UNITAR
- Rosaria Butera, UNIDO

European Commission

- Mr. Juergen Helbig, EC

IOMC Secretariat

- Mr. Jonathan Krueger, IOMC Secretariat

GFC Fund

- Mr. Eduardo Caldera Petit, GFC Fund Coordinator, UNEP

D. List of documents and sources of information reviewed

Project Documents

- IOMC Toolbox Phase IV Project Document and Logical Framework
- Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Mid-Term Evaluation
- Phase III Final Evaluation report and recommendations
- First Interim Narrative Report (January 2023 - September 2024)
- Project Management Group (PMG) Meeting minutes (Meetings 13-23)

- Contribution Agreement between EU and partner organizations
- Joint Programme Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Policy and Framework Documents

- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly SDG 12 and target 12.4)
- Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) adopted in 2023
- EU REACH Regulation
- International Health Regulations (WHO)

Technical Resources

- IOMC Toolbox website (www.iomctoolbox.org)
- Google Analytics data for website usage statistics
- FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit
- UNIDO Green Chemistry Toolkit
- OECD Best Practice Guides
- WHO Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit

Evaluation Standards and Guidelines

- UNITAR Evaluation Policy
- United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards
- OECD-DAC evaluation criteria
- UNEG Ethical Guidelines
- UNITAR guidelines for ethical use of AI in evaluation

Web Resources Referenced

The report references several specific URLs including:

- <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/chemicals-and-waste>
- <https://www.UNEP.org/global-framework-chemicals>
- <https://www.chemicalsframework.org/page/strategic-objectives-and-targets>
- https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/chemicals/reach-regulation_en

Data Sources

- Online survey responses from 15 participants
- Key informant interviews with 20+ stakeholders
- Training event participant lists and statistics
- Financial reports from partner organizations
- Website analytics and user engagement data

The evaluation also notes that some expected documentation was missing or incomplete, particularly comprehensive participant lists and contact details for events conducted in 2025, which limited the evaluation's ability to conduct follow-up surveys with all intended participants.

E. Evaluation question matrix

Inception Report: Mid-Term Evaluation of IOMC Toolbox Phase IV

Project: IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemicals Management - Phase IV: Towards achieving the SDGs

Evaluation Period: January 2023 - July 2025

Report Date: June 2025

Evaluator: Boru Douthwaite

1. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Purpose

This Mid-Term Evaluation assesses the **relevance** and **effectiveness** of Phase IV of the IOMC Toolbox project, identifies enabling and hindering factors, and provides recommendations for improving implementation during the remaining project period.

Scope

- **Timeframe:** January 2023 to start of evaluation (Q3 2025)
- **Geographic:** Global, with focus on developing countries and countries with economies in transition
- **Coverage:** All project outputs and progress toward expected outcomes per the logical framework

Primary Users

- Project Management Group (PMG) and IOMC partner organizations
- Project participants and Toolbox users
- European Commission (donor)

2. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Overall Approach

- **Mixed-methods evaluation** combining quantitative and qualitative data
- **Participatory approach** engaging stakeholders throughout the process
- **OECD-DAC evaluation criteria** focus on relevance and effectiveness
- **Gender, disability, human rights, and environmental sustainability** considerations integrated throughout
- **Guided by an evaluation matrix, see below**
- **Two-Phase PMG Approach**
 - **First meeting: After Action Review and Strategic Foresight exercise.** Check and finalize list of interviewees and the PO attendees at their events. Do this after preliminary interviews with PO focal points
 - **Second meeting: Preliminary findings presentation**

Key Methods

1. **Initial round of interviews with PO focal points.** To ask for contact details for participants in PO events
2. **After-action review workshop** and foresight activity with PMG members to check main issues
3. **Comprehensive desk review** of project documents, reports, and background materials
4. **Stakeholder analysis** and mapping of key informants
5. **Online surveys** for participants, users, and partners
6. **Key informant interviews** with PMG members, partners, focal points, and users
7. **Data analysis** of website analytics, participation statistics, and financial data

8. presentation of preliminary findings

Evaluation Questions Matrix

The evaluation will address **4 relevance questions** and **10 effectiveness questions** according to the evaluation matrix:

Evaluation Questions	Key Indicators	Data Sources & Methods
<u>Relevance questions</u>		
1. To what extent is Phase IV effectively aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 12 and target 12.4, the 2023 Global Framework on Chemicals and European Union (EU) priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project outputs linked to SDG 12.4 • Evidence of multi-SDG contributions • SAICM alignment and engagement and the Global framework on chemicals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • PMG and donor interviews • SDG mapping analysis
2. Is Phase IV reaching its intended users particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition including those non-English speaking ? What are hindering factors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic distribution of participants and Toolbox users • Target audience participation rates • Identified barriers to access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant surveys • Event data analysis • Country focal point interviews • Web analytics
3. How relevant are the updated Toolbox content, new management schemes, and translated materials to user needs? Do the users find the tools appropriate to their national contexts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User satisfaction with new content • Gap closure from Phase III • Translation quality and coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User survey • Website analytics • Content analysis • Phase III comparison
4. To what extent has Phase IV improved integration of gender equality and human rights compared to Phase III?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEEW strategy development • Gender-disaggregated participation • Content integration of gender/rights • Implementation of recommendations from previous phases related to gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation statistics • Document review • Phase III comparison, • Interview with PMG • MR implementation status

Effectiveness questions

5. To what extent are planned outcomes and outputs on track? What are enabling/hindering factors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against logframe indicators • Milestone achievement • Implementation challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • PMG interviews • Financial analysis
6. Are there unintended outcomes? How to capitalize/mitigate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexpected positive/negative results • Spillover effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder interviews • Survey to training participants
7. To what extent have updated Toolbox and capacity building broadened reach and use? What are enabling/hindering factors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website usage statistics • Training participation trends • User engagement metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • Training data • User surveys
8. To what extent has the project contributed to improving countries' chemicals management capacities and infrastructure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of capacity improvements using the Kirkpatrick-Phillips framework • Policy/institutional changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review; Training evaluations • National focal point interviews • Survey of training participants
9. To what extent are countries and IOMC partners increasingly collaborating? What strengthens collaboration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New partnerships formed • Joint activities evidence • Phase III impediments addressed • Number of events jointly organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner interviews • Collaboration mapping • MR implementation
10. To what extent have the human rights and gender mainstreaming efforts been effective so far?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human rights principles in content • Inclusive participation mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content audit • Document review • Participation lists analysis
11. To what extent has environmental sustainability been integrated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental considerations in activities • Sustainable practices adopted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Activity assessment
12. How effective are partnership modalities, including PMG collaboration and reporting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PMG meeting effectiveness • Partner satisfaction • Reporting quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews and document analysis • PMG workshop with use of future triangle or other foresight tools to inform future collaboration type
13. To what extent have Phase III recommendations been implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific recommendations addressed • Strategy development evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management response and Recommendation tracking
14. What good practices should continue? What corrective actions are needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful approaches identified • Performance gaps requiring attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Gap analysis • PMG planning session/after action review and foresight workshop

3. TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

Deliverable	Date	Recipient
Evaluation Design/Question Matrix	16 June 2025	Evaluation Manager
Zero Draft Report	8 September 2025	Evaluation Manager
Draft Report + Presentation	22 September 2025	PMG
PMG Comments	6 October 2025	Evaluation Manager
Final Report	20 October 2025	All Stakeholders

3. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Primary Stakeholders (funding and implementing organizations):

- **PMG Members:** WHO (lead coordinator), FAO, ILO, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, OECD
- **Donor:** European Commission (DG Environment, EUR 2,000,000 contribution)
- **Users:** Policy makers, regulators, technical professionals in target countries, participants to capacity development activities
- **Partners:** National focal points, training institutions, regional organizations, UNEP Office for the Global Framework on Chemicals
- **Trainers/facilitators**

Main Users and Beneficiaries:

Target Groups:

- Policy and decision makers in environmental, health and safety domains in developing countries and countries with economies in transition
- Technical professionals with roles in chemical assessment and management

Final Beneficiaries:

- Operators and workers using/managing chemicals
- Consumers exposed to chemicals through food, water, and products
- Society at large benefiting from reduced chemical exposure

4. INTERVIEWS

Recommended 20 Key Individuals for Mid-Term Evaluation:

Implementation Level (7 people):

1. WHO Project Coordinator

2. FAO Activity Lead (pesticides/agriculture focus)
3. ILO Activity Lead (occupational safety focus)
4. UNEP Activity Lead (environmental focus)
5. UNIDO Activity Lead (industrial chemicals focus)
6. UNITAR Activity Lead (training/capacity building focus)
7. OECD Technical Platform Manager

Governance/Oversight/Donor (3 people): 8. Project Management Group Chair 9. Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee representative 10. European Commission Project Officer

End Users/Beneficiaries (10 people): 11-13. Policy makers from 3 different developing countries (representing different regions) 14-16. Technical professionals from countries using the Toolbox 17-18. Representatives from countries that have implemented Toolbox guidance 19-20. Participants from recent training events/workshops

This mix would provide comprehensive coverage of implementation effectiveness, governance oversight, and real-world impact assessment.

5. DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Phase 1: Document Review and Stakeholder Mapping (June 2025)

- Review project documents, reports, logical framework
- Analyze Phase III evaluation recommendations implementation status
- Map stakeholders and develop contact lists
- Review website analytics and participation data
- Design data collection instruments to be applied: surveys, interview guidelines
- Conduct brief context assessment
- Conduct initial expectation 30-minute interviews

Phase 2: Primary Data Collection (July-August 2025)

- Deploy online surveys to participants
- Conduct 20 -25 key informant interviews
- Collect additional monitoring data from partners

Phase 3: Validation and Analysis (September 2025)

- Conduct after-action review and strategic foresight workshop with PMG
- Triangulate findings across data sources
- Validate preliminary findings and draft recommendations with stakeholders through PMG workshop

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Data Quality

- **Triangulation** across multiple data sources for each finding
- **Systematic sampling** to ensure representativeness

- **Regular debriefing** sessions during data collection

Ethical Considerations

- Confidentiality and anonymity of informants protected
- Informed consent for all interviews and surveys
- Cultural sensitivity in all interactions
- UNEG ethical guidelines compliance
- Compliance with UNITAR’s Guiding Ethical Principles for Using AI in Evaluation

6. LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION

Anticipated Limitations	Mitigation Strategies
Geographic constraints: No in-person field visits	Utilize virtual meeting platforms for broader reach
Language barriers: Reliance on English and available translations. Online surveys to users and capacity development participants could be translated into other languages depending on the participants' profile, e.g. French, Spanish	Engage local partners for translation support for the on-line survey. Make use of AI translation of documents in French and Spanish
Time constraints: Limited evaluation period for comprehensive coverage	Prioritize most critical evaluation questions
Summer time: Limited availability of stakeholders due to potential holidays	Start interviews already in June, ask PMG members about holiday periods
Response rates: Potential low survey response from some stakeholder groups	Multiple follow-up strategies for survey responses; Use PMG networks to encourage participation
Donor focal point transition: Donor focal point is soon retiring. New focal point may not know the project that well	Contact donor focal point ahead of retirement (done)

7. REPORTING

Report Structure

- Executive Summary (2-3 pages)
 - Main Report (approximately 30 pages)
- vii. Title page
 - viii. Foreword
 - ix. Table of contents
 - x. List of Figures and list of tables
 - xi. Executive summary
 - xii. Acronyms and abbreviations
 10. Introduction
 11. Project description, objectives and development context
 12. Theory of change/project design logic
 13. Methodology and limitations
 14. Evaluation findings based on criteria/principal evaluation questions

15. Conclusions
16. Recommendations
17. Lessons Learned

-

- Annexes including Terms of reference, Survey/questionnaires deployed, List of persons interviewed, List of documents reviewed, Summary of field visit/workshop, Evaluation question matrix, Evaluation consultant agreement form

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Report Content

- **Evidence-based findings** on relevance and effectiveness
- **Actionable recommendations** for remaining implementation period, possibly providing scenarios given the current uncertainties
- **Lessons learned** for future phases
- **Good practices** identified for continuation

8. NEXT STEPS

1. **Finalize inception report** based on PPME feedback and interviews with PMG
2. **Launch document review** and complete stakeholder mapping
3. **Develop data collection instruments** (surveys, interview guides)
4. **Begin primary data collection** in July 2025
5. **Regular check-ins** with evaluation manager throughout process

This inception report will be updated following feedback from the evaluation manager and PMG based on introductory interviews with them to ensure the evaluation meets all stakeholder needs and expectations.

F. Evaluation consultant agreement form

Annex: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form

The evaluator:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Is responsible for his/her performance and his/her product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form¹

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Mark Boru Douthwaite

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation and I declare that any past experience, of myself, my immediate family or close friends or associates, does not give rise to a potential conflict of interest.

Signed at place on date Westport, Ireland on 26/05/2025

Signature: 

¹www.unevaluation.org/unegecodeofconduct



By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.

INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional**, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible**.

ACCOUNTABILITY

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.

RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

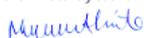
- **Access** to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).

BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits** from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm**. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.



26/05/2025

(Signature and Date)



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