



UNITAR Thematic Workshop on Governance, Civil Society Participation and Strengthening Partnerships for Chemicals and Waste Management and SAICM Implementation

The Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ) is a statutory body created under an Act of Parliament (Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Act of 1990- EPPCA, Cap 204 of the Laws of Zambia).

The Council's Mission Statement is "To regulate and coordinate environmental management, promote awareness, and ensure environmental protection through enforcement of regulations and the prevention and control of pollution in support of sustainable development-so as to provide for the health and welfare of persons, animals, plants and the environment of Zambia."

To achieve this mission, the ECZ has a very strong Inspectorate Wing under which are the Waste, Environmental Impact Assessment, Air, Water, Noise and the Pesticides and Toxic Substances Units. It also has Planning, Human Resource and Accounts units which act as support to the Inspectorate wing. The ECZ has in the past six years also managed to extend its geographical presence to include the Northern Region, Southern Region and also to borders stations such as Chirundu in the southern province bordering Zimbabwe.

It is the Pesticides and Toxic Substances (PTS) Unit that is responsible for the control of the sale, transportation, manufacture, advertisement, importation, exportation, storage, distribution and disposal of Pesticides and Toxic Substances. The Unit also enforces all issues covered under the Ozone Depleting Substances Regulations Statutory Instrument No. 278 of 2001. There is very strong collaboration between the PTS Unit and the Waste Management Unit since the areas looked at are closely linked and intertwined and most often that not, what is considered to be "Hazardous Waste" has chemical components.

Due to the firm legal background and strong political will exhibited by the country in the area of Chemical Management, Zambia was identified in 1995 as a pilot project country for the development of a National Profile to assess the extent of the national infrastructure for the management of chemicals. The Secretariat for this project was (ECZ). More than 17 institutions from a diversity of sectors were represented on this project.

In 2000, Zambia was selected as one of the pilot countries to undertake a project in **Chemical Hazard Communication**. The objective of the project was to enhance comprehension and communication on chemical classification and labeling among all stakeholders. A United Nations

Sub-Committee for the Globally Humanized System of classification of labeling of chemicals recommended that the newly developed Globally Harmonized System of classification and labeling of chemicals (GHS) be implemented globally.

The first workshop on Chemical Hazard Communication was held from the 27th to 30th November 2001 and drew participation from more than 35 organizations, representing a cross section of institutions. Four sectoral working groups namely Agriculture, Industry, Consumer and Transport were formed. The ECZ was the secretariat for this project and various activities were undertaken under this project that culminated into the development of an Action Plan on Chemical Hazard Communication in Zambia.

Currently, a GHS Technical Committee has been set up under the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) to formulate a national GHS standard. ECZ is serving as co-secretariat with the Zambia Bureau of Standards and future Plans are to conduct another comprehensibility testing exercise to cover a wider area and use a different methodology; hold a national stakeholder meeting; follow up on the chemical awareness day and other issues raised in the action plan; and lastly carry out awareness activities on GHS.

In 2002, Zambia commenced a program to develop **National Implementation Plans (NIPs)** for POPs management. This was for an initial period of two years from 2002 to 2004 (however the project has been extended to June 2006). The objective of the project is to strengthen national capacity to manage persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and to assist countries in meeting their obligations under the Stockholm POPs Convention. The project was launched on 14th August 2002 with a subsequent formation of four working groups, namely DDT, PCBs, Pesticide POPs and Dioxins and Furans. This project also embraces a multi-sectoral approach involving various stakeholders from government, NGOs, IGOs and industry.

Under this project various achievements have been made and currently, the country is in the process of drafting the Action Plans to produce the NIP and future plans are to implement the have the NIP endorsed and launched and then implement the various aspects of the NIP.

Another relevant project carried out by the PTS Unit was the **Chemical Information Exchange Network (CIEN)** whose objective was to develop a national system through which chemical information is disseminated. A number of activities undertaken but unfortunately, the main objective was not achieved as a national system is still lacking through which all users- workers, consumers and the public can have access to chemical information relating to what chemicals are present and used in the country, their hazards to human health, the environment and the means to control them. Another very pertinent objective of this project was to ensure that essential information about hazardous chemicals and corresponding protective measures be identified and communicated to different type of users in a comprehensive format.

Lastly but certainly not the least, as an institution, an initiative was taken to establish an **Inter agency Environmental Coordinating Committee (IECC)**. This has a major objective of fostering and enhancing coordination in environmental management in Zambia. The IECC is a platform for regulatory bodies in the environmental and related sectors to discuss issues of common concern,

and to improve their operations through collaboration and avoidance of duplicity and/or overlaps in institutional mandate. So far, two meetings have been successfully held and Terms of References (ToRs) and a calendar of meetings have been developed.

In the international arena, the ECZ has been a keen participant of most of the international fora related to Chemicals Management including but not limited to the Stockholm Convention, Rotterdam Convention, Basel Convention, Montreal Protocol and most recently the proceedings leading to the development of a "Strategic Approach to International Chemical Management-SAICM".

From the above, it is evident that the ECZ and in particular the PTS Unit have a wide experience in the engagement and coordination of stakeholders for various issues and especially matters related to Chemicals and Waste Management. As can be seen, most of the projects were undertaken under a multi-stakeholder umbrella with the ECZ acting as secretariat and therefore would be in the position to share the lessons learnt.

Through wide consultation, a comprehensive situation analysis has been undertaken and it is safe to say that priorities have been identified and these have been clearly outlined in the various Action Plans developed, under both the CHC and NIPs projects to name a few.

There is therefore, an urgent need to collaborate further with various stakeholders in the implementation of the aspects of these action plans to ensure that the projects do not just end at the "action plan" stage but are translated into results oriented projects with all the identified institutions playing their roles according to their specific roles and capacities.

The various sector's role in the implementation of these activities is cardinal to harmonise the initiatives undertaken and also to ensure that all sectors of society are involved from the on set hence guaranteeing ownership and success of the outcomes.

Multi-sectoral involvement is also crucial in making sure that projects meet the exact needs of the targeted populations.

However, from lessons learnt, clearly defined ToRs and MoUs should be developed to ensure that the institutions represented on these project committees have a sense responsibility to see the projects to the end and also that governance procedures are clearly defined.

It is against this background that this "UNITAR Thematic Workshop on Governance, Civil Society Participation and Strengthening Partnerships for Chemicals and Waste Management and SAICM Implementation" is a welcome intervention. Its benefit to the ECZ can not be over emphasised as the institution enters this phase of implementing the Action Plans under the CHC and NIPs projects and perhaps even complete the activities proposed within the CIEN project.

Of particular interest are Theme 3 looking at *"Designing and Implementing Effective Chemical Management Partnership Projects through Collaboration of Government, Industry and Public Interest and Labour Organisations"* and Theme 2 addressing the *opportunities and challenges of*

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implementing effective voluntary industry programs since the industry will be major sector to be engaged and encouraged to have a self regulatory mechanism in chemicals management.

Please note that the nominee has been part of the programmes highlighted above and there is therefore no doubt that I will effectively contribute to this proposed workshop.



Nosiku Munyinda (Mrs.)

Date: ___09. 05.06_____