



National Chemical Management Programme for the Republic of Lebanon

Concept Note

United Nations Environment Programme – Regional Office for West Asia

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I. Background

Nowadays, chemicals play a significant role in our everyday lives, serving various sectors ranging from medicine to agriculture, ultimately benefiting public health, food security and more. The global rise in population, urbanization, and economic development has led to a significant increase in the use of chemicals. In 2017, the size of the chemicals industry exceeded USD 5 trillion, and this number is projected to double by 2030¹. Notably, the Middle East has witnessed a growth rate of 8.5 percent in chemical production between 2000 and 2017². Nevertheless, if not handled and regulated properly, harmful chemicals and their byproducts can pose risks to both human health and the environment.

Therefore, the safe management of chemicals is vital for protecting human health, preserving the environment and achieving sustainable development. It involves proper handling and control of chemicals to minimize the negative health effects and environmental damage caused by their mismanagement. It also involves emergency preparedness and response, and compliance with regulations governing chemicals use, transportation, and disposal.

Lebanon has taken steps to address the challenges of chemical management by establishing a department for chemical safety within the Ministry of Environment as per Decree 2275/2009 and implementing various policies and programmes. Lebanon is also a party to major chemical-related conventions as shown in the table below.

| Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) | Date of Ratification/Accession |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal | 21 December 1994 |
| Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade | 13 November 2006 |
| Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants | 3 January 2003 |
| Minamata Convention on Mercury | 13 October 2017 |

Despite these efforts, Lebanon faces challenges in managing chemicals in an environmentally sound way due to the lack of coordination among different stakeholders and programmes. To address this, the country needs to review its current chemical management system and develop a programme that focuses on chemical safety and the implementation of the chemical-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) that Lebanon has ratified. The Reform Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF), which was launched in response to the Port of Beirut explosion (please see section IV), offers a unique opportunity to initiate an inclusive policy dialogue to progress towards establishing an integrated approach for chemical management in the country.

¹ UNEP. (2019). *Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions*.

² Cayuela and Hagan. (2019). *The Chemical Industry Under the 4th Industrial Revolution: The Sustainable, Digital and Citizens One*.

II. Objective and Output

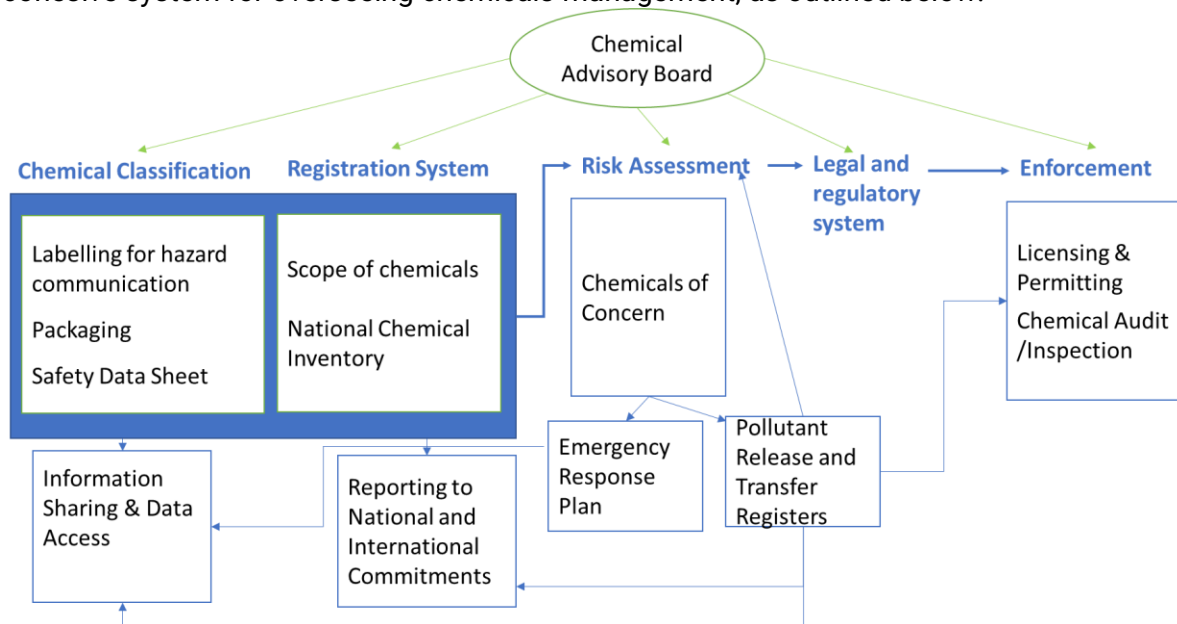
Objective: The aim of this project is to assist Lebanese authorities in the creation of a comprehensive national chemical management programme. This programme will ensure the environmentally sound management of chemicals throughout Lebanon in a coordinated and integrated manner.

Approach: This objective will be accomplished through two key steps:

1. Conducting an in-depth analysis of the current chemical management practices and systems within the country.
2. Formulating a national programme designed to promote environmentally sound chemical management.

Output: A National Chemical Management Programme, complete with a chemical emergency preparedness and response plan.

The primary objective of a chemical management programme is to encompass the entire lifecycle of chemicals. This encompasses activities such as importation, procurement, identification, labelling, inventory management, usage, storage, meticulous record-keeping, and disposal. The National Chemical Management Programme, in particular, aims to assist Lebanon in establishing its national priorities concerning the safe and responsible handling of chemicals. Adherence to existing regulations and standards stands as a core requirement within such a programme. Nevertheless, in cases where regulations fall short, they should be augmented to ensure the development of an effective safety programme. Furthermore, the programme should emphasize both prevention and preparedness, with the inclusion of responsive mechanisms. A fundamental aspect of this programme involves accurately identifying and classifying chemicals. Consequently, the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) holds paramount importance and serves as the foundation of any chemical management initiative. Overall, the chemical management programme will establish a cohesive system for overseeing chemicals management, as outlined below.



III. Project Activities

The project can be divided into two main phases, with a timeline of 18-24 months. The initial phase is the assessment phase, encompassing activities 1 and 2. Following this, the development phase, which includes activity 3, will take place. Additionally, there will be a capacity-building activity, as outlined in activity 4.

Activity 1: Establish a team of stakeholders involved in chemicals management

This initial activity has the fundamental goal of assembling a diverse and inclusive team of stakeholders. This team will encompass various sectors, including government agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and subject matter experts who share a vested interest in chemicals management. The primary purpose of this collective is to establish a collaborative and participatory forum where national stakeholders can engage in a comprehensive dialogue and consultation process.

The key objective is to leverage the collective expertise and insights of these stakeholders to inform and guide the development of a robust national plan for chemicals management. By bringing together individuals and organizations from different backgrounds and perspectives, this team aims to foster a holistic and well-informed approach to chemicals management. Their valuable input will help shape the strategies, policies, and measures outlined in the national plan, ensuring that it addresses the multifaceted challenges and priorities associated with chemical safety in Lebanon. In essence, this collaborative effort will facilitate a well-rounded and effective response to the complexities of chemicals management, ultimately enhancing the safety and well-being of the nation.

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|--|
| Outputs |
| A network of stakeholders involved in chemicals management |

Activity 2: Conduct situation analysis on the current chemicals management practices/system

Activity 2 represents a crucial phase in the project, focusing on conducting a comprehensive situation analysis of the current state of chemical management practices and systems within Lebanon. This analysis involves several key components:

1. **Review of Laws and Regulations:** This step involves an examination of the existing legal framework and regulations pertaining to chemical management in Lebanon. It aims to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current legal infrastructure, pinpoint any gaps or inconsistencies, and assess the extent to which these regulations align with international best practices and standards.

2. **Examination of Strategies and Guidelines:** In addition to legal aspects, this phase also entails a review of the strategies, guidelines, and policies that are currently in place for chemical management in the country. This includes both governmental strategies and guidelines as well as those established by relevant institutions and organizations.
3. **Consultation Workshop:** To ensure a well-rounded and inclusive approach, a consultation workshop will be organized. In this workshop, stakeholders identified in activity 1, representing a diverse array of sectors such as government entities, academia, non-governmental organizations, and experts, will convene to collectively assess the initial draft of the situation analysis report. Their collective input, insights, and feedback will be invaluable in refining the report and addressing any oversights or gaps.
4. **Amended Final Report:** Following the consultation workshop, the situation analysis report will undergo revisions and amendments based on the recommendations and feedback received from stakeholders. The amended final version of the report will represent a more accurate and comprehensive assessment of the current chemical management landscape in Lebanon.

In summary, Activity 2 is a crucial phase that not only provides a clear understanding of the current chemical management practices in Lebanon but also sets the stage for the subsequent development of a tailored national chemical safety programme.

| Outputs |
|---|
| Draft situation analysis report examining the current chemicals management practices/system in Lebanon |
| Consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders to review the draft situation analysis report |
| Final situation analysis report examining the current chemicals management practices/system in Lebanon amended based on stakeholders' recommendations |

Activity 3: Develop a National Chemical Management Programme for Lebanon

Building on the insights and findings from the situation analysis carried out in Activity 2, the subsequent step, Activity 3, involves the development of a comprehensive and strategic National Chemical Management Programme specifically tailored to Lebanon's unique needs and contextual considerations. This programme is envisioned as a pivotal tool for enhancing the environmentally sound management of chemicals across the country. This development of the Programme involves several key components:

1. Coherent and Integrated Approach: The core objective of the National Chemical Management Programme is to foster a coherent and integrated approach to chemicals management. This approach entails harmonizing various aspects of chemicals management, including regulatory frameworks, safety protocols, environmental considerations, and public health concerns. By weaving these elements into a unified strategy, the programme aims to streamline operations,

minimize redundancies, and ensure that the management of chemicals is consistent, efficient, and effective.

2. Tailored to Lebanon's Needs: One of the programme's defining features is its customization to the specific needs and contextual factors of Lebanon. This tailoring process takes into account Lebanon's unique economic, environmental, and societal dynamics, as well as its geographical and geopolitical factors. By aligning the programme with Lebanon's specific circumstances, it becomes more responsive and adaptive to the challenges and opportunities presented by the local chemicals landscape.

3. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop: A critical aspect of this endeavor involves fostering collaboration and inclusivity. To achieve this, a stakeholders consultation workshop will be convened. This workshop will bring together a diverse array of stakeholders as identified in activity 1, including representatives from government agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and industry experts. Their collective expertise and perspectives will be invaluable in shaping the draft of the National Chemical Management Programme.

4. Final National Management Programme: Once all the stakeholder inputs have been gathered and incorporated, a final version of the National Chemical Management Programme will be produced. This comprehensive and refined document will serve as the guiding framework for chemicals management in Lebanon. It will outline clear objectives, strategies, action plans, and timelines, providing a roadmap for improving chemical safety, protecting public health, and safeguarding the environment.

In summary, Activity 3 represents a pivotal stage in the project, where the culmination of data, insights, and stakeholder collaboration from the situation analysis feeds into the development of a tailored National Chemical Management Programme. By taking into account Lebanon's specific needs and involving key stakeholders, this programme is poised to drive positive change and contribute to safer and more responsible chemicals management practices throughout the country.

| Outputs |
|---|
| Draft National Chemical Safety Programme for Lebanon |
| Consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders to review the draft National Chemical Safety Programme |
| Final National Chemical Safety Programme for Lebanon amended based on stakeholders' recommendations |

Activity 4: Capacity building for control of illegal movement of hazardous wastes.

The implementation of a capacity building training programme for Customs and Border Enforcement Officers is a vital step in strengthening Lebanon's ability to manage transboundary waste effectively and combat illegal waste trafficking. This programme

will be conducted in collaboration with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, ensuring alignment with international best practices. The objectives and components of this training includes:

1. Strengthening Competency: The primary goal of this training initiative is to enhance the capabilities of the competent authority, customs officers, and law enforcement personnel stationed at ports and borders in Lebanon. By providing them with specialized knowledge and skills, the programme aims to empower them to effectively manage and control the movement of waste across national boundaries.

2. Preventing Illegal Traffic: One of the key focuses of this training is to equip officers with the tools and knowledge necessary to prevent and combat illegal traffic in hazardous and other wastes. This involves not only identifying potential cases of illegal waste movement but also taking proactive measures to mitigate and stop such activities.

3. Basel Convention Compliance: The training will comprehensively cover the Basel Convention on transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes. This includes the latest developments and updates relevant to the convention's implementation in Lebanon. Ensuring that officers are well-versed in the provisions of this international agreement is critical for effective waste management and compliance.

4. Risk Management and Intelligence: Officers will be trained in risk management and intelligence gathering techniques specifically tailored to waste management and enforcement. This involves understanding waste classification, recognizing priority waste streams, and becoming proficient in the harmonized commodity description and coding system, all of which are essential for efficient monitoring and enforcement.

5. Addressing Environmental Crimes: The training programme will delve into environmental crimes related to hazardous and other wastes. Officers will be educated on relevant procedures for handling cases involving illegal waste trafficking, and other illicit activities that pose a threat to the environment and public health.

In conclusion, the capacity building training programme for Customs and Border Enforcement Officers in Lebanon represents a proactive and strategic step in strengthening the country's ability to manage hazardous waste movement effectively and combat illegal trafficking. By imparting specialized knowledge and skills and aligning with international agreements, this initiative aims to promote a safer, more responsible, and environmentally sound approach to hazardous waste management and control.

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| Outputs |
| Trained for Customs and Border Enforcement Officers to control transboundary waste |

IV. Link to the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework

Launched in December 2020, the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) was originally designed as a response plan to address the urgent needs of the population affected by the explosion of the Port of Beirut on 4 August 2020 and to implement much-needed reforms to support reconstruction and to help restore people's trust in governmental institutions by improving governance.

The 3RF is a unique and inclusive platform to respond to Lebanon's national reform challenges and unlock investments in reconstruction. The 3RF is a collaborative and strategic partnership between the Government of Lebanon, the civil society and the international community. The 3RF focuses on facilitating inclusive policy dialogue to progress towards implementing reforms that can unlock further investments into supporting reconstruction efforts and rebuild public trust in governmental institutions by enhancing governance practices.

The project's approach will be articulated through an inclusive policy dialogue, aligning with the principles of the 3RF and actively contributing to the formulation of an integrated chemical management plan at the national level. This integrated chemical management programme, designed to ensure the safe handling of chemicals, will play a pivotal role in rebuilding public trust in governmental institutions by promoting transparency and accountability in governance. Consequently, it will foster a resilient and inclusive recovery process.

V. Budget Plan

| Activity | Estimated Budget (USD) |
|---|------------------------|
| Activity 1: Establish a team of stakeholders involved in chemicals management | 30,000 |
| Activity 2: Conduct situation analysis on the current chemicals management practices/system | 115,000 |
| Activity 3: Develop a National Chemical Management Programme for Lebanon | 120,000 |
| Activity 4: Capacity building for control of illegal movement of hazardous wastes | 50,000 |
| Project Support Cost (13%) | 40,950 |
| Total (inclusive of Project Support Cost of 13%) | 355,950 |

VI. Conclusion

This project aims to help the Republic of Lebanon manage chemicals in a sound, cooperative and integrated way at the national level. It would also advance sustainable development and support the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) by adopting an inclusive people-centred policy approach and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the programme.