Final Evaluation

of the projects

Action Plan Training/Skills Building for 25 Least Developed Countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention - GLO/04/G35 – PIMS 3055

and

Action Plan Skills Building for 15 Least Developed Countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention

Atlas Project no. 00048698 - PIMS 3545

Report Prepared

for

UNITAR, UNDP, GEF

by

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October 8, 2008
Final Evaluation – 40 LDCs - Action Plan Training and Associated Skills Building

DISCLAIMER

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this report are entirely those of the author and should not be attributed in any manner to UNITAR, UNDP, UNEP, the GEF, or any of their Staff.

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Final Evaluation of the Projects

Action Plan Training/Skills Building for 25 Least Developed Countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention - GLO/04/G35 – PIMS 3055
and
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Atlas Project no. 00048698 - PIMS 3545

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Some 1,373 persons of the world’s least developed countries (LDCs) and countries with economies in transitions have received skills building training by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) via three projects. Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (15 LDC) – 376 participants (with two countries pending - Eritrea and DR Congo); Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (25 LDC) – 741 participants; and Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (9 Swiss Supported Countries) 256 participants.

The workshop schedules are set out at Annex E.

These action plan training and skills building projects were to assist these countries in developing sound NIPs whilst simultaneously contributing to capacity building and human resource development. The 25 LDC project document was signed May 2004, and implementation commenced in June 2004. Because of increased demand for such training, a second project was initiated. The 15 LDC project document was signed in 28 January 2006. The total budget of the first project was $2,025,000 (excluding in-kind contributions). The total budget for the second project was $1,450,000 (excluding in-kind contributions) funded by GEF and UNDP with co-financing provided by the Government of Switzerland. The Implementing Agency, in both cases, was UNDP and the Executing Agency, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

The overall goal of the project(s) were to provide, over a period of 24 months (25 LDC project) and 20 months (15 LDC project), national-level training, and technical and financial support to countries that have signed and/or are Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

Not all 50 LDCs could be addressed by this project, just 40, with 38 being completed to date (see Annex E for training schedules). The decision on how many countries to include in the project(s) was set mainly by resource limitations but was also due to the fact that some countries were in a war situation / zone or war torn and/or due to the number of LDCs that were Signatories or
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Parties to the Stockholm Convention. However, UNITAR, with financial support from the Swiss Government, was subsequently able to provide skills building training workshops for an additional nine developing countries and countries with economies in transition (Ghana; Cote d'Ivoire; Mongolia; Georgia; DPR Korea; China; Thailand; Pakistan and, Kazakhstan.

It was deemed cost-prohibitive to undertake detailed follow-up evaluations by Consultants of the training received in all 40 countries. Eight countries were therefore selected by UNITAR, and the selection endorsed by the Project Advisory Committee. The countries that were evaluated included: Asia – Cambodia, Laos, and Nepal; and, – Africa – Chad, Comoros, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The field evaluation component was undertaken between June 9-22, 2008 (Asian countries) and June 30 - August 6, 2008 (the five African countries) by two consultants; Mr. G. Victor Buxton focusing on the Asian countries (Nepal, Bangladesh and Cambodia) and two English speaking African countries (Uganda and Tanzania) and with responsibility also for methodology development (in consultation with UNITAR staff), evaluation design (including questionnaire(s) design) that flowed from a series of matrices that were subsequently used to create a summary of findings and for a comparative and horizontal analysis of the evaluation data and final report preparation. The second consultant, Dr. Eduardo R. Quiroga, conducted interviews in three French-speaking African countries (Chad, Comoros and Madagascar) and provided input to the principal consultant during the report preparation phase.

The TORs for the two Consultants are set out at Annex A. The list of persons met in each of these countries is set out at Annex B. The list of documents reviewed is set out at Annex C. The list of questions posed to both the beneficiaries and the project organizers and implementers is set out at Annex D. The actual schedule of the UNITAR training workshops is set out at Annex E. The list of the acronyms used in this Evaluation Report, the six Annexes, and the individual country field reports (completed matrices) is set out at Annex F.

The detailed countries notes from the field visits are available through UNITAR.

The evaluation methodology focused on four components: the country participant’s (beneficiaries) perceptions, experience and feedback; the train-the-trainer component; the assessment of the project(s) design / suitability / adequacy, including the management systems and the engagement created at the national level; and, the evaluation of the outcomes achieved vis-à-vis prior agreed performance indicators.

Due to the complexity of and multitude of inputs to the NIP development process, this evaluation could not measure the complete impact of the training projects on NIP development. Similarly, this evaluation is not considered to be an evaluation of the NIP program overall.

The two training projects appear to have been carefully designed reflecting state-of-the-art knowledge and experience in developing country training. The peer review process of training materials appeared also to have worked well. The pilot phase was a success in that it achieved its goals both from the perspectives of UNITAR and the participating countries. Feedback from both the peer review process and the pilots resulted in the remediation of the materials that the
subsequent countries received. UNITAR “senior fellows” (contracted consultants) with extensive
knowledge and experience in POPs and other chemicals issues were used for much of the
training. This appears to have worked very well also. The two project budgets (15 and 25
countries) were reportedly allocated and spent in accordance with the plan(s), the exception
being the train-the-trainers component that was not allocated as originally envisioned with the
funds for this purpose having been utilized for other components. IAs did not attend the
UNITAR training workshops but perhaps should have as there was little evidence of the
anticipated connectivity between the UNITAR training sessions and the NIP actions via the IAs.
The post training evaluation sheets could be strengthened and yielded little in the way of
information that could be used to improve future sessions. IAs could have given greater effort to
integrating this skills building project into their plans for creating the NIP in their client
countries. The UNITAR role seems to have been performed with both alacrity and competence.

From the perspective of the LDCs, the UNITAR project(s) were somewhat of a minor adjunct or
“add on” to the $400-500 K US GEF POPs enabling project(s). With so little money allocated to
the country for this project ($5,000), it was difficult for UNITAR to capture the needed attention
of the country to pursue the workshop organizational aspects thus increasing UNITAR’s
transaction costs. Nonetheless, the two project budgets (15 and 25 countries) were reportedly
allocated and spent in accordance with the plan(s). Other than the change in direction to not
undertake train-the-trainer sessions in each country (in the 25 LDC project), there were no
unforeseen adverse budgetary impacts. There was a perception of insufficient project funding
reported from UNITAR itself. For example, from time-to-time, UNITAR had to send more than
one representative to the training session (high level UNITAR participation requested and /or the
UNITAR Manager himself needed to better understand the efficacy of the emerging project
design etc.) and there were insufficient funds available for this purpose. Although there were no
adverse budgetary impacts per se, it was the feeling of both UNITAR and the countries that the
GEF funds provided for the 40 country project were insufficient.

The efficacy of the training provided by this project(s) and the potential future usefulness varied
amongst the beneficiaries and depended largely on the countries’ state of development and thus
core capacity (include level of computer literacy) to be built upon as well as the relation with the
Implementing Agency (IA) in the creation, and future delivery, of the NIP. The commitment of
the countries participating in this training project included direct involvement in order to provide
them directly with tools for the development of projects to support Stockholm Convention (SC)
implementation, based on the outcomes of the NIPs. This commitment was not met in some
countries. Government staff participation in the NIP creation varied from “fully engaged”
(example, Cambodia), to “limited engagement” (example, Bangladesh and Nepal). This
commitment failure in many instances was likely a reflection of lack of core (adsorption)
capacity and state of development but in some cases (Nepal) it could at least, in part, be due to
the IAs desire to reduce transaction costs; unfortunately, at the expense of building indigenous
capacity.

The conclusions from the post training session evaluation sheets indicated that the time allotted
to the workshop were too short. Participants felt that presentations had to be rushed, and
exercises could not be finalised. There was a need identified by beneficiaries for UNITAR
follow-up and support, including duplicating such workshops at the regional level but there were
no resources available for this request. Most of the beneficiaries indicated that the workshop experience was very useful and the methodologies/techniques presented by UNITAR will be applied to other areas beyond just chemicals management. UNITAR training although of a very high quality, was of questionable usefulness for the creation of the NIP in countries where the NIP was well advanced or even completed in draft form at the time of the training (examples, Madagascar, Tanzania). However, the methodology did prove useful in upgrading the quality of the NIPs and there is likelihood that the UNITAR training provided to those countries will, nonetheless, bear fruit in the broader context of the sound management of chemicals.

In general, it is too early to assess whether there has been any evidence of translation of training skills to other chemical management aspects. Many participants indicated that they intend to use the newly acquired skills in future for chemical management activities, especially SAICM.

The greatest barrier and impediment observed pertaining to skill development and sustaining results, was the lack of core capacity in many countries and in the case of the French-speaking African countries, computer literacy and/or available of the needed computer programs (software). One country that participated during the pilot phase (Cambodia), indicated that it would have benefited more from the training if it had been trained on the use of the materials (log frame) that UNITAR added later. For some, (example, some Tanzania NGOs) the training materials were seen as being too complicated (they felt they lacked enough of a technical background to properly absorb the training).

In many, if not most LDCs, there is either insufficient capacity as yet to implement fully chemical management programs in the field (example monitoring industrial emissions for dioxins and furans). The lead agencies do not have sufficient staff to properly address POPs and other chemicals. Thus, many of the LDCs are heavily reliant on external expertise and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This does not bode well for sustaining result. Where the needed LDC capacity or emerging capacity is reported to exist, (example, Cambodia), the needed operational funds are lacking, especially for needed training. LDCs (example Cambodia) also noted problems with their inability to raise counterpart funding to meet GEF project requirements.

In general, although there is clear evidence of under representation, there appears to be no observed, or perceived, special problems of gender participation in LDCs although it was conceded that the participation is perhaps less than desirable and Governments are undertaking initiatives such as: a constitutional reference to the need for affirmative action; decisions to assign additional University entrance consideration to females based on sex; and Government decision (in several countries) to require 30% female in top Agency Executive positions;

This evaluation revealed an interesting paradox: UNITAR Skills training for Action Plan building was provided to those being trained on the understanding that this would, firstly, help them create their action plans. However, as noted, in a few cases (e.g. Madagascar, Tanzania, Bangladesh), the NIPs and their proposed action plans, were well advanced (or they had even completed the first draft) by the time the training was provided somewhat precluding this first goal. Also, in the case of Nepal, UNIDO and the Government decided to use a National expert and three international experts to create the NIP, a modus operandi that somewhat comprised the
UNITAR training (as per the primary project objective) since government staff are precluded from the opportunity to applying and thus gaining practical experience on the application of these skills. This was stated by some that were interviewed. Nonetheless, the UNITAR training clearly added to the personal management capacity of the individuals trained and awareness of the constituencies they represent but there were no plans observed (as yet, though this was discussed) in any of the countries evaluated to sustain this capacity.

It was noted by some training beneficiaries that there was inconsistency between what IA workshops suggested (example, UNIDO) and what UNITAR espoused during the training. UNITAR has indicated that all of the IAs reviewed their draft training materials and therefore, this should not have been an issue. These issues need to be explored by the GEF.

It was also noted (example, Bangladesh, African countries) that the LDCs are severely resource constrained and require long advance notice to plan for training and even for such short evaluation missions. This long advance notice requirement was not always met; especially in the case of the evaluation missions, and UNITAR needs to pay greater attention to this aspect in future.

Many countries recognized the needs (and existing shortfalls and deficits) for sustaining results as set out in this report and would like further future assistance in this regard.

The post UNITAR training evaluation sheets solicited, for the most part, yes / no responses and were thus of little follow up value. Training and upgrading of chemicals knowledge and skills is a needed ongoing activity that needs to be institutionalized or sustainability of skill acquired are at risk (likely to be lost in the foreseeable future).

In LDCs, there is often no single Ministry that has lead responsibility for chemicals management (the exception is perhaps Tanzania where the Government designated Chief Chemist, situated in the official Government laboratory has policy responsibility for chemicals). Nonetheless, in most countries, there is either one Ministry or the Focal Point for POPs / SAICM that assumes the chemicals coordination role.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical feature and a defining characteristic of a “healthy” chemical management process. Most countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Madagascar, Uganda and Tanzania) showed evidence of wide stakeholder engagement. Nepal was not able to engage many of the stakeholders (especially government staff) in the detailed NIP preparation, following the workshop, as espoused (and anticipated) during the UNITAR training. This may have been due to a conflict with Implementing Agency (IA) decisions on how best to create the NIP; core capacity issues or anticipated high transaction costs. The interviews could not ascertain the root cause of this problem.

Sustaining chemicals management results and addressing emerging challenges requires that the minimal infrastructure needed to carry out the needed project activities at the country level be in place. In general, this minimal infrastructure is in place or the signs are hopeful. Guidance offered by the UNITAR modules should be made to be consistent with the GEF and the IAs.
otherwise differences are viewed by the UNITAR training participants as conflicting information.

IA NIP-creation project-related concern or responsibility in relation to this project, appears to have been without regard for concomitant capacity building and institutional strengthening yet this is the fundamental thrust of the UNITAR training. There may thus be a conflict of basic interests because a key IA interest is to get in, get out, create a good NIP at the least cost. UNITAR’s interest and key performance indicator is indeed capacity built and institutions strengthened. The GEF needs to address this issue. Sustainability of training results and skills built is perhaps the key shortfall of the training provided by UNITAR and needs to be a critical consideration in future training undertakings.

A key measurement of effectiveness of training is when there is evidence that it has contributed to the development objectives of a project or the country assistance strategy. There are three dimensions in this regard that required examination: Learning outputs: Did training result in acquisition of new knowledge and skills relevant to the achievement of SC objectives? The conclusions reached in this regard is that all of the countries visited showed evidence of the achievement in learning; Workplace behavior outcomes: Are trainees applying acquired skills in the workplace in a manner likely to contribute to the achievement of SC goals? Based on observed outputs Cambodia, Uganda, Tanzania and Madagascar are currently applying learned skills in the workplace. Nepal was to some extent precluded this opportunity by the lack of direct Government staff involvement in the preparation of the NIP following the workshop, Bangladesh due to staff and other resource constraints, Chad and Comoros due to considerable structural constraints in governance. (Chad because of security concerns aggravates by the oil boon and Comoros as a result of significant economic management problems.); and, Impact on development capacity: Is there evidence of improved institutional strength or enhanced organizational performance as a result of the UNITAR training? The countries visited have not as yet begun implementing their NIP and the observance of NIP implementation is what is needed to arrive at a proper performance and institutional strengthening judgment.

There are many lessons learned from this evaluation. The most noteworthy are as follows:

- Holding a one day meeting of the peer review group (as opposed to conference calls) would have been a more effective and efficient means of obtaining the needed input.
- Undertaking “pilots” is a very useful and “value added” exercise and should be included where a large number of countries are to be trained.
- Training to assist in NIP creation that arrives after the NIP is drafted is of little value in this context. Such skills building projects need to be fast tracked by the GEF when such a situation exists.
- Post session evaluation sheets need to be carefully designed with more substantive information requests and perhaps more time allocation for this component within the workshop construct / agenda.
- There should be no disconnection between skills building project(s) and the work with the same countries in creating the NIP. This was not the case in several countries even though the IAs are/were committed on paper to providing any needed follow-up to the training.
IAs should be attending the UNITAR training workshops. Had IAs attended the UNITAR training workshops (for their client countries), this would have provided a catalyst for the needed integration (training and actual action plan creation).

The GEF needs to secure the needed linkage (coupling for consistency rather than decoupling) of the guidance and training provided by UNITAR and all of the IAs. This will not likely happen unless there is a GEF follow-up in this regard.

In many of the LDCs, especially the French-speaking African countries, there is little point in teaching state-of-the-art data and other management techniques without first providing the needed software and providing training on its use.

A key component of this evaluation relates to “who” and “how” the NIPs and action plans were created in each country because this element underpins the translation of training into both capacity and institutional strengthening. (We learn by doing). Having action plans created by external (to government) Consultants undermines government and institutional skills development efforts by UNITAR and others. If training provided is not used, skills developed will soon be lost. There will be little to no benefits to be accrued from the training if government staff are precluded from assuming a direct engagement and leadership role, even if the IA transaction costs are likely to be high. This issue needs to be addressed if cost/benefit considerations are to be taken seriously.

We know that broad stakeholder engagement fosters problem ownership, accountability, sharing and team play, future cooperation and most importantly, sustainability of results achieved. The lack of adequate and/or consistent engagement by government staff (including all key Ministries) could be a reflection of the state of development, lack of core capacity and other resource constraints. Close consideration needs to be given to these problems during the course of project design and delivery, not just at the time of final project evaluation.

If conflicts are to be avoided, UNITAR’s training materials must be made consistent with the guidance / demands by the IAs.

The training function needs to be made part of the lead Ministry (for chemicals) within the country (and others) organizational structure and be assigned a regular budget; otherwise, any training provided by UNITAR, the IAs or the GEF will likely not be sustained.

Recipient countries need to better understand this sustaining capacity risk (some already do (example, the Ministry of Energy, Tanzania).

Lack of action on chemicals in LDCs should not be read as due solely to lack of political will because for the most part, resources are severely constrained and many countries priorities are: poverty alleviation; malaria control and other critical near term economic issues. When viewed against poverty alleviation, ensuring food supply and addressing health issues such as the high level of malarial deaths and AIDS, additional internal Government funding allocations for chemicals management in many LDCs is not likely to receive any elevated priority.

As an “add-on” project to a GEF project, UNITAR provided the training workshops but had little, to no, connection with the actual creation of the NIPs. While UNITAR was involved in development of the UNEP/WB interim NIP guidance and in some cases served as the co-executing agency for NIP development, better integration of training for delivery, and delivery, is clearly needed.
Better integration of the training provided by UNITAR and other implementation activities of the IAs is also needed. The UNITAR project perhaps should have been a part-of, rather than an “add on” to the GEF POPs enabling project. This would have resulted in more timely cooperation and input from the LDCs.

Short notice missions (example, evaluation missions) are a recipe for disaster i.e. failed logistics, knee jerk participation, insufficient time for interviews etc.

For countries like Bangladesh where attendance at training sessions is, reportedly, dependent on incentives, it was suggested that even evaluation missions should allocate a small amount in the budget to provide food and perhaps some incentives to cover their often out-of-pocket travel costs and thus encourage individuals to participate.

One cannot successfully conduct a review of the adequacy of training materials 2.5 or more years after the training and where there has been limited follow up (use) of the materials and skills by government staff (example, Nepal) due to the modus operandi of the IA.

Although under representation of women remains a concern, the root causes are often education based and are being ameliorated over time. LDCs will not be able to respond to gender issues in the same way, or in the same timeframe, as developed countries. Gender equity issues must be kept both in perspective and in the context of the current state of development of the country.

Insufficient resource allocations for training results in implementation difficulties and less than optimum organization and perhaps participation (at the country level).

A more detailed consideration of anticipated workshop cost(s) needs to be given by the GEF, taking into account the special situation and behavioural norms of participants in the LDCs.

The specialized services provided by UNITAR can be a “value added” adjunct to GEF training projects. However, many IAs see the provision of such training to be in their responsibility domain so some turf sorting and delineation may be required by the GEF.

As to recommendations, the author’s views are as follows:

UNITAR training materials should be made to be consistent with all of the IA’s requirements (i.e. include log frame analyses or other tools they request countries to use). The IA’s requirements should also be made consistent amongst themselves, perhaps through guidance from the GEF.

To enhance efficacy, and depending on the existing core capacity of a training targeted country, computer software and associated training should be made part of the overall training package.

Closer consideration needs to be given to the cost/benefit consideration in the selection of countries for training. If a core capacity (the ability to comprehend and absorb) to enhance does not exist, then there will be little if any benefits likely to accrue.

“Core capacity” (including computer literacy and availability of the software need to implement the tools) should be a consideration in selecting those to participate in such training and the actual design of the workshop. A longer training program is likely required in the least developed of the LDCs (especially Bangladesh and the African countries) if training needs to include the provision and use of the needed software.

Many considered the workshop time to be too short and therefore, a more careful consideration needs to be given to the rate of absorption of the designated beneficiaries as
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well as the fastest (most cost effective) rate of presentation of training materials. The time
needed for a workshop needs to be predicated upon current state of development and
existing core capacity in the country.

More careful attention needs to be given to who is to receive the training avoiding those
attending simply for the incentives and/or curiosity.

Those to be trained should commit (and be enabled by the IA modus operandi) to the use
of the new skills in the near term. If this is not possible, then, there is no need for the
training.

The GEF / UNITAR may wish to consider confining training to those that the country
confirms will actually be working on creating (or directly inputting through consultations
etc.) to the NIP (or in future, perhaps SAICM). The IAs must be made aware of this as
well.

Where countries participate as “pilots”, and additional materials are subsequently added,
there should be some form of refresher training provided, if not by UNITAR, then by the
IA. The GEF will need to provide additional support if this is to occur.

In order to address the sustainability issue, the training materials should include teachings
on contingency (sudden loss of capacity) and succession planning and sustaining
knowledge acquired from the training.

Knowledge of chemicals management requires enhanced dissemination in almost all of
the LDCs visited (both inside Ministries and in other fora). There were no mechanisms
in place towards this endpoint. The Consultant introduced the concept of the informal
“brown bag” informal lunchtime seminars to spread information when country reps
attend UN meetings and other Conferences in several of the countries he visited and this
was enthusiastically received as, not only needed, but a “no-cost” option. This technique
should be further advocated by both UNITAR and the IAs.

The level of involvement of those undertaking training and their involvement in the
creation of their NIP was outside UNITAR control or even influence. Where training of
LDCs is to occur in future, there needs to be some understanding with the country and the
IAs that the training received will be used and not be precluded via the utilization of non-
government consultants (international or domestic).

UNITAR in cooperation with the GEF Secretariat may wish to give consideration to how
best to resolve such conflicts (use of contractors versus government staff) in the creation
of the NIP in guidance provided to developing countries.

In countries where core capacity (including computer literacy) is weak and thus
transaction costs to the IA likely to be high, special funding consideration by the GEF
may be needed.

Guidance provided to countries by both UNITAR and the IAs needs to be made
consistent.

Training modules need to be customized i.e. not too advanced relative to the current
practices (incremental enhancement) and should take into account current (local)
management practices and constraints to the degree possible.

Consideration should be given to including practical (local) examples and videos as part
of the training materials, (the notion being as requested by some beneficiaries “a picture
is worth a thousand words”).
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- A special module explaining how best to train-the-trainers and/or on establishing a training unit, should be included in UNITAR’s guidance materials as this will strengthen the potential for sustaining results.
- IAs should make an effort to encourage the participation of women and UNITAR might wish to include a module in future training programs pointing out the importance of the participation of women in chemicals management.
- As to gender equity issues, UNITAR may wish to consider creating a reference in their training materials to the key role to be played by women (soft sell promotional materials on enhancing female participation).
- A greater effort needs to be put into the post training evaluation sheet design to create a format that could facilitate future evaluations such as this.
- Consideration needs to be given to creating a special case for the LDCs as they reportedly cannot compete fairly for project funding with the more financially lucrative developing countries such as China.

II. INTRODUCTION

II.1 Background

In implementing the Stockholm Convention, governments are obligated to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment. A basic and early requirement of a country to fulfill these obligations is the preparation of a National Implementation Plan (NIP), and associated Action or Implementation Plans within two years of ratification. Many of the 50 UN-designated Least Developed Countries (LDCs), however, lack the skills needed to adequately develop the strategic approaches required in a manner, and to a degree, satisfactory to the GEF Secretariat.

When and where such skills are lacking, experience has shown that the baseline NIPs from such countries may: be inconsistent in terms of quality between countries; need strengthening in the detail/quality required for the costed sets of interventions that are expected to result; contain Action Plan objectives and targets that are somewhat unrealistic and/or inappropriate; have roles and responsibilities for NIP implementation among stakeholders including sectoral ministries that are not defined in sufficient detail; and require strengthening in terms of stakeholder participation in the NIP process. A lack of skills development in LDCs in the area of project planning/action plan development is a likely root cause for such outcomes.

These two projects (the original 25 country project and then the 15 additional country project) are action plan training and skills building to assist these countries in developing sound NIPs whilst simultaneously contributing to capacity building, human resource development and institutional strengthening through skills building in project planning and management which, in turn, will likely contribute to various other future efforts toward the sound management of chemicals, for example SAICM.
The 25 LDC project document was signed in May 2004, and implementation commenced in June 2004. The project was extended into 2008 to allow for successful completion of Component IV (described later) of the project, “Project Evaluation and Final Report”. The GEF accredited Implementing Agency (IA) for the project is the United Nations development Programme (UNDP) and the Executing Agency of the project is the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Because of increased demand for such training, a second project was initiated and 15 additional LDCs project document was signed in 28 January 2006, and implementation commenced in March 2006. This project was again extended into 2008 for the same reason.

The project strategy was to commence with a “pilot” in five countries during which training materials and training methodologies could be field tested then refined as needed before continuing with the remaining countries. The primary target beneficiaries / target organizations within the countries included: governmental organizations; civil society organizations (including NGOs); women’s organizations and women’s groups; the private sector; academics, research and “think-tank” institutions; professional groups and associations and perhaps trade unions.

The overall goal of the projects was to provide, over a period of 24 months (25 LDC project) and 20 months (15 LDC project), national-level training, and technical and financial support to countries that have signed and/or are Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and have prepared and submitted GEF Enabling Activity proposals to develop/strengthen skills to undertake project planning, including Action Plan development.

The more specific project objectives included:

- Raising awareness among training recipients of relevant approaches to project and strategic planning;
- Ensuring training recipients are familiar with, and able to effectively use, key project and strategic planning tools and methodologies;
- Applying such action plan development approaches in the context of the Stockholm Convention; and,
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned between countries receiving the training, and identifying possible country-driven follow-up activities.

Unfortunately, not all 50 LDCs could be addressed by this project(s) (just 40). This was due mainly to resource limitations but also due to the fact that some countries were in a war situation / zone or war torn and/or due to the number of LDCs that were Signatories or Parties to the Stockholm Convention. However, UNITAR, with financial support from the Swiss Government, was able to fund skills building training workshops for an additional nine developing countries and countries with economies in transition bringing the total of countries trained to 48.

As part of the GEF requirements, all such project must be subjected upon conclusion to an evaluation by one or more independent experts. The evaluation exercised was mobilized by UNITAR in early 2008 with field work (country interviews) occurring between June 9 and August 6, 2008.
The main objectives of this final project(s) evaluation are:

- To enhance organizational and development learning;
- To strengthen the adaptive management and monitoring functions of future projects;
- To play a critical role in supporting accountability for the achievement of the GEF objectives;
- To enable informed decision-making;
- To examine and promote cost-effective projects by examining and offering guidance on improving the sustainability of results achieved;
- To promote gender equity; and,
- To serve as a resource base and change agent where possible.

II.2 Budgetary Considerations

The main input to project GLO/04/G35 – PIMS 3055 (25 least developed countries project) was the in-kind national government(s) contributions to their respective NIP enabling activity. The total budget as per the project document was $2,025,000 US ($1,000,000US GEF and $1,025,000US parallel financing). The total budget was funded by GEF and UNDP with co-financing provided by the Government of Switzerland. The NIP project itself also provided significant government input and infrastructure (e.g. project committee and subcommittees on action plans, etc.) that are essential for the successful execution of this project.

The funding was allocated as per Tables #1 and #2 which follow.

**Table 1 - 25 Country Project (GLO/04/G35 - PIMS 3055)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component (GEF portion in brackets)</th>
<th>GEF Budget (USD)</th>
<th>Other Sources (USD)</th>
<th>Total (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project development *</td>
<td></td>
<td>25,000*</td>
<td>25,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Coordination (5 days per country @$800 per day)</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Experts (15 days per country @$600 per day; and project evaluator’s fees @$6,000)</td>
<td>229,000</td>
<td>96,000</td>
<td>325,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support (5 days per country @$500 per day)</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>62,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>185,000</td>
<td>375,000</td>
<td>575,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcontracts: 25 project grants of 5000 USD per country (for local consultants, workshop costs)</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and DSA ($7,000 per country, plus $5000 additional travel/DSA stipend for Phase III Review Meeting and $4000 for project evaluator travel)</td>
<td>184,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>208,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component (GEF portion in brackets)</th>
<th>GEF Budget (USD)</th>
<th>Other Sources (USD)</th>
<th>Total (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project development *</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50,000*</td>
<td>50,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Coordination (5 days per country @ $800 per day)</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Experts (15 days per country @ $600 per day; and project evaluator’s fees @ $6,000)</td>
<td>141,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>291,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support (5 days per country @ $500 per day)</td>
<td>37,500</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>117,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>121,500</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>271,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcontracts: 15 project grants of 5000 USD per country² (for local consultants, workshop costs)</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and DSA ($9,000 per country, plus $5000 additional travel/DSA stipend for Phase III Review Meeting and $4000 for project evaluator travel)</td>
<td>144,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>144,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Material Development</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/miscellaneous</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>52,500</td>
<td>92,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Support Costs (8%)</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>97,500</td>
<td>153,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>700,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>750,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,450,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Swiss funding: costs for UNITAR staff in preparing GEF submission as well as project document requesting funds from other sources (not included in the project total).

Each participating country was provided $5,000 to organize the workshop logistics.

**II.3 Project(s) Construct**

The two projects utilized the same project construct, the only difference being that the second project (additional 15 countries) did not require the pilot test phase. Nevertheless, the description of the first project construct can illustrate the construct for both.

Project **GLO/04/G35 – PIMS 3055** (25 least developed countries project) consisted of four major components that are summarized in the following table.
### Table 3 – Project Construct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Outputs Expected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component I – Existing guidance and training materials</strong></td>
<td>1) Distribution of guidance and training materials to IA/EAs, POPs Secretariat, and other experts for peer review; 2) Provision to UNITAR of comments on materials; 3) Revision/adaptation of materials, if necessary; 4) Finalization of materials for use in “front-runner” countries</td>
<td>Communication of feedback on guidance and training materials to UNITAR</td>
<td>Revised set of guidance and training materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component II – Training/skills building in 5 front runner countries (LDCs) and Country-Level “Train the Trainers” Sessions</strong></td>
<td>(Pilot the action plan training/skills-building workshop and country-level “train the trainers” sessions in 5 “front-runner” countries); 5) Completion of five Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) comprising country workplans and budgets; 6) Provision of guidance and training materials to each country in advance of workshops; 7) Conduct 2-3 day action plan skills building/training workshops in each country; 8) Conduct “train-the-trainers” sessions at the country level; 9) Distribute preliminary evaluation questionnaires; 10) Provide in-depth follow-up assistance for each country, where</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reports on each training workshop; roster of trainers. Revised set of guidance and training materials for global use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Component III – Using the experience gained in Component II, undertake 20 action plan training/skills-building workshops

| Requested; 11) Distribute second evaluation questionnaire. |
|---|---|
| 1) Revision of guidance and training materials based on lessons learned; 2) Complete 20 MOAs comprising country workplans and budgets; 3) Provision of guidance and training materials to each country in advance of workshops; 4) Conducting 2-3 day action plan skills building/training workshops in each country; 5) Distribution of preliminary evaluation questionnaires; 6) Provide in-depth follow-up assistance for each country, where requested; 7) Distribute second evaluation questionnaire | Reports on each training workshop. |

### Component IV – Project evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undertake evaluations (when by whom, how many)</th>
<th>Communication of feedback on projects – including lessons learned</th>
<th>Evaluation report.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

UNDP is the Executing Agency (EA) for the project(s) and the strategy consisted of three phases: (I) Review of Guidance and Training Materials, and Preparatory Work on Project Countries; (II) Action Plan Skills-Building and (III) Project Evaluation Meeting and Final Report. The intent of the second phase project was to train an estimated additional 300-500 NIP participants on action planning-related tools and approaches.

### II.4 Sustainability Considerations

The sustainability of the mechanisms created by the project was to be ensured in the following manner:

- The project was to directly involve the National Coordinating Committees (NCCs) in the countries for the development of the NIPs in all participating LDCs, thereby ensuring that the project benefits could be maintained by, and through, the activities of, such national committees. The NCCs were created but this action although potentially contributing to sustainability is not enough in and of itself. There are many other features noted in this
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- report that create the conditions needed for sustainability and in most of the countries visited, these conditions are not in place or likely to be for the foreseeable future.

- Trained personnel would now exist in project countries that were given project/action planning skills and it was thought that these could now be applied to other project/programme development activities, including the development of Stockholm Convention implementation projects for GEF/other donors. This will be the case in some countries but not those lacking the core capacities needed.

- It was thought that the increased skills in project countries among NIP participants would lead to better planned and executed projects and programmes, leading to greater efficiencies and possibly synergies within and among projects. These improvements were to demonstrably improve the ability of countries to reach project and programme objectives, thus eliminating the need to repeat projects and strengthening environmental protection through improved projects. This may be the case in some countries but certainly not in all cases, especially where all of the inventories have been compiled by non-government staff and the NIP prepared by non-government staff.

Sustainability is perhaps the key shortfall of the training provided by UNITAR and needs to be a critical consideration in future training undertakings, although the challenges of this as part of an add-on project are recognised.

II.5 Replicability

The second (15 country) project was to build on the GEF-funded UNITAR/UNDP project Action Plan Training/Skills Building for 25 Least Developed Countries designed to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention. The first project had already provided insight into the replicability of the project at the time of commencement of the second. Lessons learned in the first set of countries trained under that project implied, for example, that the training could be applied at any point in the NIP project, including as an informal review of an advanced draft of the overall NIP. In addition, the earlier drafts of the UNITAR methodology was developed originally to assist countries in developing action plans for priority topics of chemicals management as part of Swiss-supported projects to develop Integrated National Programmes for the Sound Management of Chemicals. The guidance was also adapted to assist countries to develop plans to implement the Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals; and to assist in risk management decision-making on priority chemicals. The methodology for the project is clearly highly replicable and adaptable, as it is intended for use by any interested country. However, it is of limited use in enabling the creation of NIPs if it occurs after the NIPs are already completed so the value of the training needs to be viewed from the broader sound management of chemicals context.

II.6 Country Selection for Evaluation

It was deemed cost-prohibitive to undertake detailed follow-up evaluation by Consultants in all 40 countries. Eight countries were therefore selected by UNITAR, and the selection endorsed by
the Project Advisory Committee. The countries evaluated included – Asia – Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal; and, Africa – Chad, Comoros, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda. This selection was, reportedly, based on the following criteria: regional, linguistic, and programmatic distribution; a good range of differing levels of development, training at an early or late stage of NIP development (five and three respectively), and project distribution (six countries from the 25 LDC project and two countries from the 15 LDCs).

II.8 Project(s) Management

Although UNDP was the GEF Implementing Agency for this project, UNITAR, was the Executing Agency (in the driver’s seat) establishing the project management structures necessary for the successful execution of both projects. The team leader was the UNITAR project coordinator. An Advisory Committee to focus on coordination issues was established and was chaired by the GEF Secretariat and included UNDP, UNEP, WB, FAO, UNIDO, donors and other experts. UNITAR acted as the Secretariat. Those selected to be on the Advisory Committee were those Agencies with direct responsibilities with regard to POPs; POPs funding and / or POPs implementation at the international level.

The Project Coordinator (UNITAR) was responsible for insuring coordination with other technical assistance activities addressing the implementation of the Stockholm Convention, as well as keeping the advisory committee informed of the progress in implementing the project.

The committee was to meet at least three times (by teleconference): at the end of component I to review the guidance and training material and ensure coordination in the 5 “front-runner” countries; at the end of component II to ensure coordination in the further 20 countries; and to take stock after completion of project activities. There have been just three Project Advisory Committee meetings (April 2005; November 2005 and October 2006). This front-end loading of the meetings was perhaps appropriate because this was when the input was most needed. It is difficult to assess whether these were enough meetings but the suspicion, in the absence of any observations to support a contrary view, is yes it was.

Figure 1: Project(s) Coordination Arrangements

Advisory Committee

Chair: GEF Secretariat

Secretariat: UNITAR

Other Participants: UNDP, UNEP, WB, FAO, UNIDO
II.9 Project(s) Expectations and Performance Measurement

II.9.1 Anticipated Risks

The risks identified for these projects were:

Major risks

a. Governments participating in the project may not undertake the necessary follow-up work required to ensure that action plans are developed to the degree needed to prepare detailed, costed interventions. The risk is there, but it is acceptable because national governments are signatories and/or Parties to the Convention (and therefore should have a high level of commitment to its provisions); and there are numerous environmental NGOs and others in these countries monitoring the progress and participating in implementing the requirements of the Convention.

UNITAR was to manage this risk through regular communication with project countries, providing additional and continuing advice on action plan development prior to and after each country workshop. UNITAR was also available to evaluate action plans in full draft form (no such requests were made), and use the GEF network of IAs to assist in such evaluations.

b. The minimal infrastructure needed to carry out project activities at the country level may not be in place.

While there was this risk (and this was the case in one or more countries (examples Nepal, Bangladesh, Chad, Comoros, Madagascar)) support already provided for the NIP, as well as a modest grant provided through this project (linked to a Memorandum of Agreement between UNITAR and each project country outlining deliverables), was expected to provide adequate certainty that the project activities would be carried out at the country level.

Minor risks

a. An insufficient number of countries will sign up for the project. This was not the case.

UNITAR did not expect this to be the case (insufficient numbers), however. UNITAR contacted each potential participating country at a very early stage in the project to ensure that the services provided would be utilized to the fullest extent possible. However, the control over this feature (utilization of the training to be provided by UNITAR) rested with the IAs and utilization of training provided by UNITAR was not always the case.

b. The necessary technical follow-up by the GEF IAs will not materialize in a timely manner consistent with each country’s NIP development timeline.
Section III.3.5 describes in more detail, the evaluators assessment of the responses to the risks and unforeseen barriers and impediments.

II.9.2 End-of-project expectations

The end-of-project expectations were as follows:

a. Key NIP participants, including representatives of key ministries and stakeholders outside of government in all participating countries will have been trained to use/ and/or adapt a tested methodology for project planning/action plan development. This was achieved;

b. Increased awareness of and capacities in project/action planning in approximately 40 LDCs. This was achieved;

c. NIPs and other Stockholm Convention-related Action Plans reflect improved project and action planning capacities in recipient countries. This appears to have been achieved but was difficult to assess in situations where, reportedly, the IAs prepared the NIP with little to no government staff engagement other than consultation and sign off on drafts;

d. Participating countries integrate mutual lessons and experience into their respective project and action planning processes. This was achieved but many countries visited have not as yet begun implementing their NIP;

e. Recipient country priority NIPs interventions are clearly targeted, costed and presentable to potential donors. This was difficult to assess as UNITAR was not involved with this aspect and the evaluators TORs did not include a critical review of NIPs;

f. Internal (baseline) financial and human resource mobilization to address Convention obligations will be strengthened. This was difficult to assess as UNITAR was not involved with this aspect and the evaluators TORs did not include a critical review of NIPs;

g. Recipient country priority NIP interventions are realistic and achievable. This was difficult to assess as UNITAR was not involved with this aspect and the evaluators TORs did not include a critical review of NIPs;

h. NIP implementation roles and responsibilities, including coordination, are clearly defined. This was difficult to assess as UNITAR was not involved with this aspect and the evaluators TORs did not include a critical review of NIPs; and
i. An Action Plan Development Guidance and Training Package tailored for the needs of countries addressing Stockholm Convention obligations, including associated supporting materials (including CD-ROMs, exercises and project planning software) will also be included. This was achieved although in francophone Africa there were concerns expressed about insufficient customizing of training packages.

II.10 **Evaluation Scope and Methodology**

**II.10.1 Evaluation Team and Division of Work**

As noted, although there are 40 countries in total covered by the two UNITAR training and skills development project, due to travel and other cost considerations, it was decided to limit the field evaluation scope to eight countries that were, nonetheless, deemed to be representative of the entire group.

The field evaluation component was undertaken by two Consultants; one focusing on the Asian countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia and Nepal) and English speaking African countries (Uganda and Tanzania) and also with responsibility for methodology development (in consultation with UNITAR and UNDP staff), evaluation design (including questionnaire(s) design) that will flow from a series of matrices that will subsequently be used to create a summary of findings and for a comparative and horizontal analysis of the evaluation data. The final report preparation was the responsibility of the lead Consultant with review and comment by the second Consultant. The second Consultant conducted interviews in three French-speaking African countries (Chad, Comoros and Madagascar) and provided field data and reports to the principal Consultant during the report preparation phase.

**II.10.2 Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation methodology focused on four components:

1) the country participant perceptions, experience and feedback (Matrix#1);

2) the train-the-trainer component (Matrix #2);

3) the assessment of the project(s) design / suitability / adequacy including the management systems and the engagement created at the national level (Matrix #3); and,

4) the evaluation of the outcomes achieved vis-à-vis prior agreed performance indicators (Matrix #4).

1) The country experience and impacts (Matrices #1 and #4) were explored in detail through country visits, and interviews with national-level key stakeholders that received the training. This component included an assessment of:

- the timing of the project as to where they were in the NIP development process;
- the guidance and training materials;
- the skills building workshops (structure and presentation);
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- the train-the-trainer workshops (structure and presentation);
- comprehensiveness of stakeholder participation;
- level (active or passive) of stakeholder engagement;
- adequacy of who was trained and the numbers;
- perceptions of new and additionally of capacity built;
- views on institutionalization of capacity built;
- evidence in support of capacity built;
- collateral positive impacts;
- barriers and impediments and how they were overcome;
- views on training improvements (if any);
- overall conclusions on the training provided;
- gender participation observations;
- country-specific perspectives on sustainability of results;
- country perspective on lessons learned; and
- country rating of the projects success relative to country expectations.

2 and 3) The train-the-trainer component (Matrix #2) and the assessment of the project(s) design / suitability / adequacy including the management systems and the engagement created at the national level (Matrix #3) was designed to focus on the efficacy and utilization of individuals trained to be trainers. The evaluation of the project design / suitability / adequacy including the management systems was based upon interviews with UNITAR staff in both Bangkok and Geneva and included:

- the responses to anticipated risks;
- the identification of barriers and impediments and remediation measures taken;
- assessment of the project design construct;
- assessment of the project management and coordination mechanisms;
- the level and nature of EA/IA engagement; and
- assessment of the role played by UNITAR.

4) The overall evaluation of the success of the project(s) (Matrix #4) is based on the evaluation (in-country interviews) with a particular focus on the observable outcomes / impacts achieved taking into account prior agreed performance indicators including where possible:

- measurable and if possible, quantifiable, indications of enhanced project management and planning skills;
- achievements relative to prior agreed performance indicators;
- the utilization of the participatory performance framework;
- gender participation;
- sustainability and replicability of results achieved; and
- lessons learned.

The questions posed (for all 8 countries) as well as UNITAR staff, are set out at Annex D.
III. FINDINGS AND EVALUATION OUTCOMES

III.1 Country Contexts

To properly understand the training implications it is important to take into consideration, *inter alia*, where each of the countries were /are at regarding their NIP at the time of the training, which ones were fore-runners and who were the respective IAs and their modus operandi. This is important because the IA modus operandi not only affects the quality of the data (inventories etc.) and the NIP, but perhaps more importantly, the sustainability of results achieved, and the sustainability of the capacity built in each country for the sound management of chemicals in future. What follows is a brief summary of the situation (referred to as “context”) in each country. Each of the IAs for the LDCs that received UNITAR training is identified in the two tables at Annex E. What follows is a brief context description for each of the countries visited. This was most often obtained during the initial interviews with the senior officials in the lead Ministry or with the designated POPs focal point.

### III.1.1 - Bangladesh

The UNITAR Skills Building workshop was held December 4-6, 2005. Bangladesh ratified the Stockholm Convention on POPs on March 7, 2007. A National Implementation Plan (NIP) was prepared under a GEF-funded project, by the Department of Environment (DoE), with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) as the cooperating agencies. The first draft of Bangladesh’s NIP had already been completed seven months (April 2005) before the UNITAR training. However, Bangladesh’s NIP was under review (internal approval procedures) for a long time being accepted by the POPs Secretariat in 2007.

There were some 60 participants at the UNITAR training workshop (19 from MOEF/DoE and the remainder coming from the other co-implementing agencies (Bangladesh Power Board (PCBs) and the Department of Agriculture Extension (pesticides) and a wide assortment of constituencies). Only a small number (15) could be interviewed as part of this evaluation. The reasons: some were originally (and still are) located outside Dhaka and it was not feasible or possible to interview them; and, because of this time lag (evaluation occurring some 2.5 years after the training), it was noted that many workshop participants had changed posts or been assigned to other parts of the country.

Bangladesh Government staff indicated that, unfortunately, there are still no specific responsibility centre(s) within Government for curtailing emissions of POPs. This responsibility reportedly falls under the general mandate of MOEF to protect the environment but it was noted that there in no infrastructure / resources available for this purpose.
III.1.2 - Cambodia

Cambodia was the first country to received training 19-21 October 2004, almost four years ago. Cambodia ratified the Stockholm Convention on 25 of August 2006. Cambodia’s NIP was submitted May 3, 2007. The IA was/is UNEP.

Some interviewed in Cambodia noted that illegal trade of POPs pesticides in Cambodia is a major concern and mitigates against efforts to encourage integrated pest management (IPM). Some suspected sources of the illegal trade were noted: chlordane (from Thailand); DDT and other POPs as well (from Vietnam). Recently they noticed illegal POPs from China arriving via Vietnam.

III.1.3 - Chad

Chad ratified the Stockholm Convention on 23 May 2004. UNIDO was/is the executing agent for the POPs project (NIP creation). The UNITAR training workshop took place 5-6 April 2005. The participants were principally members of the Ministries of: Environment, Finance (Customs), Higher Education and Scientific Research, Agriculture, Planning, and several NGOs dealing primarily with consumers rights, promotion of veterinary health. Several activities were conducted prior to the preparation of the NIP.

1. Preparation of inventories of chemical products at the national level (this was done based upon training provided by UNIDO) where the following groups were trained: pesticides (Min of Agriculture); PCBs (National Company of Water and Electricity – Ministry of Energy and Mines); D&F (led by a national consultant). Each group included a report on contaminated sites. Also, a national consultant conducted a Socio Economic Impact Study of the POPs effects on health and environment.

2. A workshop was carried out to identify priorities and objectives for training. This was followed by a validation workshop (Feb 2005).

3. Finally, the workshop for the preparation of action plans was conducted (April 05) under the direction of UNITAR. The following groups participated in the UNITAR training workshop: pesticides ([Min. of Agriculture); dioxins andfurans (national consultant); PCBs (National Company of Water and Electricity– Ministry of Energy and Mines); Information-Education-Training – Communication-Exchange of information (national consultant); and, Contaminated sites (national consultant).

The Principal Technical Advisor (national consultant) was responsible for reviewing and coordinating action plans under the direction of National Coordinator. The NIP was approved at the country level Sept. 2005. Although the NIP has not been implemented as a national effort, the PCB component has begun its own independent implementation within the framework of a regional project (the GEF-financed project led by Senegal which is the Regional Center for the Basil Convention for the Francophone Countries.) This was endorsed by the Chad-GEF focal point in March 2005. The first phase (2007-2008) has been completed. It dealt with re-inventorying the PCB in the country and preparing the action plan. Regrettably, for the other
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POPs chemicals, there is nothing upcoming in terms of financing possibilities, with the possible exception of another regional effort in capacity building run by UNIDO.

### III.1.4 - Comoros

The Union of Comoros was one of the first countries to sign the Stockholm Convention on 22 May 2001. The adoption of the Convention by the National Assembly took place in November 2006 and its ratification in January 2007. UNITAR conducted the following training activities: the preparation of the national profile in 2005; this was followed by training key stakeholders (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment, henceforth (MAFE) to carry out inventories related to PCB, dioxin and furan and pesticides; and, finally, in 2007, a training workshop for preparation of the action plans.

Based on the UNITAR workshop, the NIP was prepared by a national team from key stakeholder organizations (MAFE and Min of Health) with the support of UNITAR senior fellows and staff and UNDP. A workshop for validation of the NIP was held in 2007 under the auspices of UNDP. Comoros now searching for financing to implement the NIP.

The following are the NIP chemicals with respective lead organizations: pesticides – MAFE – Directorate of Agriculture; and PCBs – National Company of Water and Electricity (Ministry of Energy); and dioxins and furans – MAFE – Directorate of Environment.

In the capital (Maroni) there is a National Coordination and Management Committee which also serves as the Focal Point for the Stockholm Convention. Each Island is represented by a Consultative and Coordination Committee with representatives of the Ministries of MAFE, Transportation and the Farmers National Union.

### III.1.5 - Madagascar

Madagascar ratified the Stockholm Convention on August 3, 2005 and UNEP is the executing agency for the NIP. There was no national workshop for skill building prior to the elaboration of the NIP’s first draft (March 2004). The NIP was prepared by a national team composed of members of the National Committee for Project Coordination led by the POPs focal point, following the guidelines of UNEP. Subsequently, UNITAR held a national workshop for the preparation of action plans for NIP (4-6 October 2006).

The UNITAR workshop provided guidelines to prepare national action plans. It focused on techniques needed to draft an action plan. Training materials were distributed covering the application of techniques such as: decision making trees, log frames, Gantt charts, performance indicators etc. Each participant during the workshop learned how to prepare an action plan associated with his/her domain. During the workshop, the following working groups were assembled in accordance with the various POPs categories and each with a lead organization: pesticides (Ministry of Agriculture); DDT (Ministry of Health); dioxin and furans (Ministry of Industry); PCBs (Ministry of Energy’s Water and Electricity Distribution Co (JIRAMA));
information and awareness raising (Ministry of Environment, Water, Forest and Tourism); and, capacity building (Ministry of Environment, Water, Forest and Tourism). Based on the workshop outcomes, the national team prepared the second draft of the NIP and sent it to a consultant for review after which it was submitted to UNEP for review and comment. On June 2008, the final version of the NIP was submitted to UNEP. It is anticipated that in August 2008 a national workshop will be convened to validate the NIP.

As reported by the focal point, the Ministry of Environment has requested UNIDO to finance the implementation of the NIP with particular reference to the last two components (information and awareness raising and capacity building). These components include a strategy to train trainers. UNIDO is now reportedly reviewing the financing. Implemented is anticipated to occur in 2009.

### III.1.6 - Nepal

The Nepal Skills training Workshop was held on 18-20 May 2006. Nepal ratified the Stockholm Convention on October 13, 2006. The NIP was developed in late 2006 and early 2007, then submitted and approved by Government on March 21, 2007. At the time of the workshop, Nepal wished to proceed simultaneously with the development of their POPs action plan. They therefore used the occasion of the training workshop to undertake the actual developmental components of the future action plan. For the training experience, they created three working groups (pesticides, dioxin and furans and PCBs) and the participants in each group during the workshops were both the actual responsibility centres and other relevant stakeholders to the respective issues). Government staff interviewed indicated that Nepal utilized all of the key elements outlined in the workshop training sessions. For example, Nepal undertook a gap analysis and identified the legislative and regulatory shortfalls that needed to be addressed to address all of the obligations arising from ratification of the Stockholm Convention. They also identified the actions needed. While there was somewhat limited direct Government staff involvement in the preparation of the NIP details following the workshop, they feel they created their NIP themselves and profited greatly from the UNITAR training.

### III.1.7 - Uganda

Uganda’s UNITAR workshop was held November 23-25, 2005 (almost 3 years ago). Uganda ratified the Stockholm Convention on July 20, 2004 (before the training workshops). The IA for Uganda’s NIP is UNEP. National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) Staff feel that they are developing the NIP themselves utilizing a National Consultant to manage task teams (composed of a wide range of stakeholders) for the inventory phase and with an international Consultant (the UNITAR senior fellow) to provide refresher training and additional guidance and advice as needed. The NIP is, reportedly, now ready in draft form with just one category requiring further input which is expected shortly. They expect submission and Secretariat acceptance of their NIP by early fall 2008. Uganda has a National; Coordinating Committee (NCC) composed of senior key Ministry officials; academics; NGOs; plus trade associations and other NGOs. The NCC does not engage in the details but rather focuses on product review and
approval etc. The day-to-day management aspects falls to the POPs Project Coordination Unit (PCU) especially its head.

NEMA indicated that most of the individuals trained by UNITAR are very active and are providing input in one form or another first to POPs and now with their SAICM project. There were no train-the-trainers sessions held in Uganda. They feel the UNITAR training was an excellent empowering experience creating not only planning skills but also giving the full vision and creating for the first time the occasion for all of the key Ministries to work effectively together and this is now paying dividends with regards to SAICM as well. The only complaint was that $5,000 was insufficient funds to organize and orchestrate the UNITAR training workshop.

It was reported that Uganda’s NIP has taken longer than initially expected due to the time needed to create the inventories. The benefits of the UNITAR training for Uganda identified were: a kick start; vision setting; clear mission statement and confidence to proceed; awareness raising inside and outside government; and, caused the creation of the correct structures (coordinating mechanisms).

### III.1.8 - Tanzania

Tanzania ratified the POPs Convention in December 2004. Tanzania had completed the first draft of their NIP in advance of the UNITAR training. In fact, at the time of the workshop, Tanzania was at an advanced state of drafting of their action plans. Tanzania was the third workshop and this took place 17-19 January 2005. About 28 persons from a wide variety of stakeholder groups participated. The final version of the NIP was completed in December 2005. The UNITAR training assisted in strengthening the draft NIP. Staff noted that another (related) purpose of the workshop was to test UNITAR guidance and training materials for the project. As a frontrunner country, Tanzania tested UNITAR’s draft action plan training methodology and associated materials, and gave extensive feedback on the materials and training approach in general. UNIDO was the IA for the NIP.

### III.2 Beneficiaries’ Perceptions and Assessments

#### III.2.1 Training and Training materials

Those interviewed were asked if the training materials provided were adequate and if not why not? Most indicated that they felt the UNITAR training experience was excellent (Nepal, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda) and contributed significantly to their individual capacity for creating the action plan and even to the broader issue of the sound management of chemicals. Chad and Madagascar noted the lack of software (and needed training on its use) to utilize the Gantt chart training. A Cambodian NGO (pesticide advocacy group) that undertook the training indicated that the materials received during training were used in their subsequent training and awareness raising presentation aimed at farmers. Especially
important was the knowledge pertaining to adverse impacts. However, some (example, Nepal), felt that, in retrospect, there were some shortfalls such as: a lack of focus during the training on sustaining newly acquired capacity, lack of consistency with UNIDO action plan creation directions, etc.

Bangladesh government staff noted that since this training occurred some 2.5 years ago and after the NIP had been prepared and there has been no opportunity since for any MOEF staff to utilize the skills in project preparation, (this was done on a “hit-and-run” basis by UNIDO staff) all MOEF/DoE staff indicated that they do not remember the training other than they thought it was good at the time. In general, the academics that undertook the training were able to put the training materials to immediate use and thought it was very useful as did the pesticide constituency (especially the updating on toxicity, fate and effects etc.). The laboratory participants (Bangladesh) said it increased their awareness but they have no equipment to analyze for POPs. Uganda emphasized how good and useful the exercises were (for example, how to do the inventories).

Chad noted that the tool kit for dioxin and furan analysis needed customization. For example, the tree varieties used as examples were of European origin. Chad, Comoros and Madagascar also noted the need for skill enhancement with the needed software (including the need for computer literacy training).

Cambodia noted that since they developed their NIP using UNEP guidance, they would have liked to have received training on log frames. (This was subsequently incorporated into the training materials.)

Tanzania noted that videos showing practical situations would have been very helpful in learning how to better recognize the problems and to show what needs to be done.

**Conclusions and Lessons learned with regard to training and the training materials.**

- Generally speaking most considered the training materials to be good to excellent. However, one cannot successfully conduct a review of the adequacy of training materials 2.5 or more years after the training and where there has been no follow up (use) of the materials and skills by government staff due to the modus operandi of the IA (Nepal - UNIDO);
- Consideration needs to be given to the training implementation requirements i.e. computer literacy training where needed, otherwise, the efficacy of the training provided is seriously undermined;
- UNITAR training materials should be consistent with all of the IA’s requirements (i.e. include log frame analyses or other tools they request countries to use). Better still, the IA’s requirements should also be made consistent perhaps through guidance from the GEF;
- Many expressed the view that the workshop time was too short and therefore, a more careful consideration needs to be given to the rate of absorption as well as the fastest possible rate of presentation of training materials. Similarly, a few (Tanzania, some NGOs) expressed the view that the materials were too complicated and they felt they lacked enough of a technical background to properly absorb the training. This also
speaks to the issue of “core capacity” ability to comprehend and absorb) as a criterion for those to participate in such training;

- Consideration should be given to using both practical examples and videos as part of the training materials, (the notion being “a picture is worth a thousand words”);
- There is a need to take into account (in both the design and implementation of the training materials), the gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the internet and those who do not. This was especially problematic in the French-speaking African countries visited;
- Cambodia would have benefited more from the training if it had the materials that UNITAR added later. Perhaps where countries participate as “pilots” and additional materials are subsequently added, there should be some form of refresher training provided if not by UNITAR then by the IA. The GEF will need to provide additional support if this is to occur;
- As will be seen later, some recognized the need for sustaining results and noted that the training materials should include teachings on contingency (sudden loss of capacity) and succession planning and sustaining knowledge acquired by the training;
- Also, there is a need for UNITAR’s training materials to be consistent with demands by the IAs; and
- The post training evaluation sheets solicited, for the most part, yes / no responses and were thus of little follow up value. A greater effort needs to be put into the post training evaluation sheet design to create a format that could facilitate future evaluations such as this.

III.2.2 Train-the-Trainers

“Train-the-trainers” sessions at the country level for the five front-runner countries, as originally outlined in the 25 LDC project document, did not take place as planned. Instead, it was considered adequate for potential trainers learn the methodology by attending the national action plan skills building training. In addition, for the front-runner workshops, as well as some of the subsequent ones, a UNITAR senior fellow accompanied a UNITAR staff familiar with the methodology to be trained as a future trainer. Conventional train-the-trainer reportedly occurred only in Kiribati and Senegal.

In the case of Kiribati, because of their Island geography, it was not feasible to have all those that required training to attend the single UNITAR training workshop. It was therefore necessary to conduct further training sessions. The Kiribati project team decided who would be the trainers.

In the case of Senegal, after the UNITAR training, a country official conducted training sessions in other countries in the region as a UNITAR senior fellow. In these limited cases, the trainers were trained through attendance at the UNITAR skills building workshops. There were no specific train-the-trainers session devoted solely to this aspect.

Trainers were selected by a few countries by their own project teams without input on the selection from UNITAR. Thus, if there were any selection criteria, they were unknown to UNITAR.
It is difficult to determine precisely how many trainers were trained since there was little follow-up communication after the workshop sessions. However, the number is likely very low. It was not possible for either UNITAR or the evaluator to assess whether enough people were trained or the right people as the selection was made by the country. For the most part, the informed guess is that those that needed to be trained at the time of the training (may not be the same now) were trained.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Training**

Many countries now realize (especially after this evaluation) that training and upgrading of chemicals knowledge and skills is a needed ongoing activity that needs to be institutionalized. Participants for UNITAR training, in future, need to be more closely scrutinized in relation to future use. This implies a commitment not only on the part of the country but the IA as well. In the context of training, there is a need to address the gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the internet and those who do not. Otherwise, the use of tools such as those provided through UNITAR training will remain theoretical and to the detriment of training results.

Lack of core skills, knowledge and capacity precludes training benefits. The training function needs to be made part of the organizational structure and have a regular budget otherwise any training provided by UNITAR, the IAs or the GEF will likely not be sustained. Recipient countries need to better understand this risk (some already do – example, the Ministry of Energy in Tanzania). Therefore, a special module explaining how best to train-the-trainers and/or how to establish and enable a training unit, should be included in UNITAR’s guidance materials.

**III.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement (national level)**

There is often no single Ministry that has lead responsibility for chemicals management in the LDCs (the exception is perhaps Tanzania where the Government designated Chief Chemist, situated in the official Government laboratory has overarching policy responsibility for chemicals). There was virtual unanimity amongst the participants that the training sessions were very successful in creating POPs awareness. However, the issue is whether this enhanced awareness has been translated into enhanced political will and this is difficult to answer. As was noted by many, lack of action on chemicals should not be read as necessarily lack of political will because for the most part, resources in LDCs are severely constrained and many countries priorities are: poverty alleviation; malaria control and other critical near term public health and economic well being issues. It was noted that the average life expectancy of males in many of the LDCs is age 50 (or even less) and the trend over the last few years due perhaps to malaria and AIDS is moving even lower.

In each country, the key Ministries (Environment, Agriculture, Health, Energy etc.) were engaged as well as the NGOs and this lead to enhanced awareness. In general, those that needed to be engaged were engaged. However, in some countries (both in Asia and Africa), there was little sign of private sector engagement and this is needed. We know that broad stakeholder
engagement fosters problem ownership, accountability, information sharing and team play, future cooperation; and, most importantly, sustainability of results achieved. Perhaps, the most illuminating feature of the stakeholder engagement component of the evaluation relates to who and how the action plans were created in each country because this really translates training into both capacity and institutional strengthening. (We learn by doing).

In Nepal, the Government staff did not lead on the creation of the NIP, it was written by a national Consultant based on input from international Consultants hired by UNIDO. Maybe this was the most cost effective way of creating the NIP from UNIDO’s perspective but it somewhat compromised the training provided to government staff by UNITAR. (Some of those interviewed indicated they had forgotten what the training was about since there was no occasion or opportunity to use the skills.) Furthermore, in Nepal, many of those interviewed (from a broad range of stakeholders) say they played little or no role whatsoever in NIP development following the workshop. However, staff from the lead Ministry (Environment, Science and Technology) did not agree with these observations and noted that the other Ministries and others had been invited to consultations during the NIP preparation exercise but did not show up. Probably, somewhere in the middle of these viewpoints is the reality. In other countries (examples, Cambodia, Comoros, Madagascar, Tanzania), it was the Government themselves that played, or are playing, the lead role on the creation of the NIP and creating the various action plans.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Stakeholder Engagement

Broad stakeholder engagement is a critical feature and a defining characteristic of a “healthy” and sustainable chemical management process. Almost all countries showed evidence of wide stakeholder engagement. As discussed, Nepal was not able to fully engage the stakeholders in the NIP preparation following the workshop as espoused in the training. This may have been due to a conflict with IA decisions on how best to create the NIP, or, just a sign of a lack of inter-ministerial cooperation. If it was the latter, it was hoped that the creation of the NIP itself would enable such cooperation but this has not been the case. UNITAR in cooperation with the GEF Secretariat, may wish to give consideration on how best to resolve such conflicts in guidance provided to developing countries and on the rules of engagement.

When attempting to explore the problems in Nepal to more depth, it was reported that in Nepal, most of the time, stakeholder ministries and NGO organizations recommended, or sent, new people to each NIP-related meeting (no continuity of representation) and only a very few attended who had participated in the UNITAR training reappeared in even the subsequent IA-initiated training/workshops on POPs. The lack of adequate and/or consistent engagement could also be a reflection of the state of development, lack of core capacity and/or just simply resource constraints.

III.2.4 Sustainability of Results (national perspectives)

Sustaining chemical management results and addressing emerging challenges requires that the minimal infrastructure needed to carry out project activities at the country level be in place. In general, in the French-speaking African countries, various infrastructural elements were
observed to be lacking (data collection, monitoring, enforcement etc). In general, in the Asian
and the English-speaking African countries visited, this minimal infrastructure is in place or the
signs are hopeful. For example, even Nepal with its current problems, noted that there are some
remaining legislative / regulatory shortfalls, and the Ministry of Environment has developed new
/ draft legislation specifically on POPs that will ensure all of the SC obligations can be met. They
indicate that this new legislation will give a special focus to unintentional POPs and PCBs. This
is not likely to mean much as long as there is no capacity for monitoring or enforcement.
Nevertheless, on a very positive note, and with regard to PCBs, Nepal reports that all of the
detailed inventories have now been completed and for example, all of the utilities are now
importing only mineral oil transformers.

In the case of Bangladesh, it was observed that there is no capacity as yet to implement programs
in the field (example monitoring industrial emissions for dioxins and furans). It was also noted
that the lead agency does not have sufficient staff to properly address POPs and other chemicals.
The evaluator’s sense is that DoE and the other agencies are very small and are heavily reliant on
external expertise and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This does not bode well for
sustaining training results.

Cambodia notes that it has the needed infrastructure but lacks operational funds, especially for
needed training. They also noted their problems with their inability to raise counterpart funding
to meet GEF project requirements. They feel there ought to be a special case for the LDCs so
they can compete fairly with the more financially lucrative developing countries such as China.
MoE staff asked that the evaluator to note and pass on the message to UNITAR that Cambodia
very much wishes to be included in any new UNITAR GEF proposals for training.

Uganda noted that infrastructure is missing in several key areas (example, hazardous chemical
disposal facilities; monitoring POPs both in the environment and in the population; and,
addressing POPs legal issues).

Tanzania noted that in most cases the minimal infrastructure for chemicals management is not in
place (for example, monitoring and enforcement are not as yet practiced for almost all of the
POPs). However, when viewed against poverty alleviation, ensuring food supply and addressing
health issues such as the high level of malarial deaths and AIDS addition internal Government
funding allocation for chemicals management is not likely to receive any elevated priority.

In Comoros, the missing infrastructural elements are all reportedly referenced in the NIP.

In Madagascar it was observed that, with regard to DDT, although there may be sufficient
personnel that could execute programs and become trainers, there are no legal procedures to
regulate its use. In the regions, there are weaknesses particularly in the areas of training and
extension. These appear to be structural conditions. The critical issue is that training and
awareness raising at the farm level needs reinforcement. The Ministry of Industry has expressed
the view that insufficient infrastructure has been installed for the proper management of
chemicals.
Training is thus an ongoing requirement that underpins sustainability. With the exceptions of the Agriculture Ministries (pesticides) and sometimes Health Ministries (DDT for anti malaria campaigns) in most LDCs evaluated, there are no organizational chart references to training, no routine budget lines for training new staff on chemicals, no contingency plan for unexpected loss of capacity or any succession plans as trained staff retire or leave.

Almost all countries noted that these shortfalls are noted in their NIP.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Sustaining Results

In all of the countries visited there was a recognition that the lack of contingency and succession plans as well as the institutionalization of routine training of new staff (the exception again being Agriculture ministries for pesticides) leaves them very vulnerable to capacity eradication due to normal staff turnovers. Sustainability of UNITAR and other training provided will remain at risk (not translate into institutional strengthening) until such time that training and upgrading of skills becomes incorporated into government structures and contingency and succession planning becomes a reality.

Training needs to be built upon a core and stable existing capacity. In the case of Bangladesh, Nepal and several other LDCs, core capacity does not as yet exist. Anticipating the sustainability of skills from a UNITAR workshop is thus premature where core capacity does not exist.

In Cambodia, with the exception of Agriculture, training is a recognized but unfunded need with insufficient priority due to competition for limited resources with very high priority issues such as poverty, alleviation, food security etc. Since training must be ongoing, there is a demonstrated need for train-the-trainer sessions in all countries. However, the budgetary requirements for this are recognized as a challenge. Many noted that training is urgently needed on the safe handling of chemicals. All of the LDCs visited acknowledged the need for routine training and noted that the train-the-trainer sessions are also needed as an enabling tool.

In the LDCs, the sustainability of training results will remain at risk as long as there are insufficient operating funds to at least facilitate occasional chemicals training projects including refresher courses. (Often there are funds to pay salaries of management staff but no funds to conduct training programs.)

From the perspective of sustaining training results, perhaps UNITAR’s training modules themselves should include a session on sustaining results. Perhaps the GEF needs to consider some conditionality i.e. training will be provided providing the recipient country commits to take steps to sustain the capacity. This might include: refresher training; training of new staff; and, succession and contingency planning. The train-the-trainer module possibly via UNITAR could be the enabling tool.

In conclusion, UNITAR training was successful from the perspective of assisting many LDCs to create or polish their draft NIP but perhaps falls short on its longer term objective of contributing in a sustainable manner to the sound management of chemicals.
III.2.5 Gender Equity Considerations (national perspectives)

In general, the level of female participation in NIP creation varied considerably due to country-specific history, culture and other factors. In Chad, the female participation was estimated to be just 1%. In Nepal, it was noted that there were no active programs to recruit or promote female participation. Ministries were asked to participate and they chose, based on expertise and responsibilities, whom to send without consideration of sex.

In Cambodia the situation was very different. It was reported that under past political regimes, women were denied an education and thus were not empowered to participate. Currently, women’s education is increasing dramatically. Nevertheless, of the 80 staff of the Ministry of Environment in Cambodia, only 4 or 5 are women. To respond to this, the Ministry has created a “Gender Committee” who is, reportedly, working to enhance women’s participation. It was also noted that in Cambodia women prefer (at least currently) to work in the marketplace rather than Government (more money).

Similarly, in Madagascar the participation of women was considered quite important and was estimated to be currently about 15%.

Many of the other LDCs (examples, Uganda, Tanzania) have affirmative action programs underway.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Gender Equity

In many countries visited (examples, Uganda and Tanzania), it was conceded that female participation is perhaps less than desirable and the Government of Uganda, for example, has undertaken several initiatives to address this: a constitutional reference to the need for affirmative action; recent decision to assign additional University entrance consideration to females based on sex; and the recent Government decision to require 30% female in top Agency Executive positions. Other countries (example, Tanzania) also have government-sponsored affirmative action programs. The Universities in Tanzania have lowered entrance requirements for women to the science programs and offer special remedial training to those who need further training in order to be admitted.

It was observed that in Chad, only 5% of the women attend University thereby greatly reducing their potential for participation at the professional level in chemicals management.

In Madagascar it was noted the women have preferences for teaching, nursing and pharmacy and this is contributing to the lack of their engagement in chemicals management.

LDCs will not be able to respond to gender issues in the same way, or in the same timeframe, as developed countries. Awareness raising targeted to females might help but is unlikely, in and of itself to remedy the situation.

Gender equity issues must be kept both in perspective and in the context of the current state of development of the country. Nonetheless, the IAs should make an effort to encourage the
participation of women and UNITAR might wish to include a module in future training programs pointing out the importance of the participation of women in chemicals management (it was noted that it is the men that spray the pesticides but the women who pick the fruit).

III.3 Evaluation of Project(s) Design and Management

The two projects appear to have been carefully designed reflecting state-of-the-art knowledge and experience in developing country training. UNITAR “senior fellows” (contracted consultants) with extensive knowledge and experience in POPs and other chemicals issues were used for much of the training. This appears to have worked very well.

III.3.1 Budgetary Considerations

The two project budgets (25 & 15 countries) were reportedly allocated and spent in accordance with the plan(s). However, in the first project (25 countries), there was a specific budget component planned for train-the-trainers although there was no separate budget line for this activity. Also, as noted, this activity only took place in a few countries (Kiribati and Senegal) and was undertaken in more of an internal country mode than was originally thought. Money thought to be necessary for training of trainers were actually utilized in the broader context of the workshop costs and in training UNITAR senior fellows. Other than this change in direction, there were no unforeseen adverse budgetary impacts.

From the perspective of the countries, this training project(s) was, from the perspective of the recipient countries, somewhat of a non-descript and insignificant “add on” project to the $400-500 K US GEF POPs enabling project(s). With so little money allocated to the country for this training project ($5,000), it was difficult for UNITAR to capture the needed attention of the country to pursue the workshop organizational aspects. This increased UNITAR’s transaction costs.

There was also a perception of insufficient project funding reported from UNITAR itself. For example, from time-to-time, UNITAR had to send more than one representative to the training session (high level UNITAR participation requested and the UNITAR Manager himself needed to better understand the efficacy of the emerging project design etc.) and there were insufficient funds available for this purpose.

Conclusions and Lessons learned regarding budgets

Although there were no adverse budgetary impacts per se, it was the feeling of both UNITAR and the countries (they received just $5,000 US each to organize the training events) that the GEF funds provided for the 40 country project were insufficient. Perhaps accessing additional funds from the GEF enabling activity project was not possible.

Insufficient resource allocations for training results in implementation difficulties and less than optimum organization and perhaps participation (at the country level). A more detailed
consideration of anticipated workshop cost(s) needs to be given by the GEF, taking into account the special situation and behavioural norms of participants in the LDCs.

III.3.2 Training Materials and the Pilot Phase

With regard to the training materials, UNITAR orchestrated a peer review of the workshop training materials (many of which had been created with earlier funding support by the Swiss government). The criteria used to select the participants in the peer review of materials were: leaders in the field; experience with POPs; experience delivering projects; experience in development and implementation at the international level; and, experience in training. The comments received were based on the reviewer’s preferences for training methodology and approach. In general, the requests to UNITAR were to simplify the training materials. There were also suggestions pertaining to the interactive exercises. The feedback was, reportedly, very useful. As a result of this feedback, it was decided to add a module to address decision trees. The training materials were subsequently revised accordingly and used in the pilot phase.

However, during the implementation phase, further needs were identified and further adjustments made. All those interviewed expressed the viewpoint that the training materials were excellent with one exception where an NGO felt the material was too complicated.

To field test the training materials, UNITAR selected five pilot countries (Cambodia; Yemen; Tanzania; Gambia; and, Ethiopia). The criteria used for this selection were: countries with a good working experience in past; core capacity; expressed interest in participating in the pilot; observed competence; and, expectations of useful feedback. MOAs were signed with each country and were as comprehensive as required. Guidance and training materials were provided to each country in advance of the workshops. All workshops were three day sessions following a standard format. However, there were some variations in the program for Tanzania because they were in an advanced state of their NIP preparation at the time of the training. Some critical feedback was obtained via the pilots on the application of the methodology at the country level from a recipient’s perspective. They commented on the relevancy of the training materials to their country situation. (The training material was generic but using POPs examples.) (The purpose was to strengthen the training skill for NIP development.) The pilot phase appears to have proceeded precisely as per the plan.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned on the Training materials and the Pilot Phase

The peer review process of training materials appeared to work well but in retrospect, UNITAR observed that holding a one day meeting of the peer review group (as opposed to conference calls) would have been a more effective and efficient means of obtaining the needed input because it would have facilitated more interaction. A two day UNITAR retreat, which included a substantial session on the action plan development material (with UNEP participation), was also held during the 25 LDC project duration.

The pilot phase also appears to have been a success in achieving its goals both from the perspectives of UNITAR and the participating countries. Across the board, the participants in the pilots reported that they found the experience to be excellent. Keeping in mind these five countries were volunteer “guinea pigs”, lessons learned here resulted in the valuable remediation
of the materials that the subsequent countries received. Generally speaking, the results were a tightening up (removal of duplication); better focus of the working group exercises; improved time allocations for the various elements and interaction with participants. An example was the inclusion of log frame use training.

The lesson learned is that “pilots” are a very useful and “value added” exercise and should be included where a large number of countries are to be trained.

### III.3.3 Post Training Session Evaluations

The UNITAR representatives providing the training passed to all participants, post training evaluation sheets, usually one pagers requesting generally (but not always) a yes/no response to a series of very general questions. Keeping in mind that the post workshop evaluation is suppose to provide information in sufficient detail to facilitate adaptive management decision taking, this experience was not as useful as hoped. The evaluation sheets seemed poorly designed with too many yes / no responses that create more “feel good” responses than guidance on renewed pathways needed. A common comment was “not enough time for the workshop” suggesting the questions were not specific enough to generate the detail feedback that might have been useful.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Post Workshop Evaluations**

The conclusion and lesson learned is that post training evaluation sheets need to be carefully designed with more substantive information requests and perhaps more time allocation for this component within the workshop construct / agenda itself.

### III.3.4 Project Management and Coordination

The Project Coordination Committee was created as envisioned and consisted of: the GEF representative (who acted as Chair); the IAs (UNIDO; UNEP; UNDP; WB); UNITAR; and, FAO. Those on the Committee were those Agencies with direct responsibilities with regard to POPs; POPs funding and / or POPs implementation at the international level. Responsibilities and accountabilities of the participants appear to have been clearly defined. All of the IAs reportedly participated at the right level. The chairmanship (via the GEF) was reportedly effective as was the secretariat functions provided by UNITAR. Several telecoms took place / were needed because, as usual, with busy staff / Agencies, meeting times needed to be adjusted frequently taking into account other ongoing commitments and events. Reportedly, there were many positive outcomes from these telecoms. There were good discussions of lessons learned and how to improve various elements of the training and associated communications between UNITAR and the IAs.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learned on Project Management and Coordination**

It is the view of the author that there was probably no better way of coordinating such a project other than the Advisory Committee route. As to the degree of participation in the Committee, some (GEF, UNEP, UNDP) were stronger than others both in terms of input provided and the level of active participation.
IAs did not attend the UNITAR training workshops but perhaps should have as this would have provided a catalyst for the needed integration (training and actual action plan creation). There thus seemed to be somewhat of a disconnect between this skills building project and the work with the same countries in creating the NIP even though the IAs were committed to provide any needed follow-up to the training. Perhaps IAs could have given greater effort to integrating this skills building project into their plans for creating the NIP in their client countries.

The lesson learned here is that creating the needed linkage between UNITAR training and IA guidance and follow-up will not happen with just participation on an Advisory Committee alone. GEF follow-up is needed in this regard. The GEF needs to secure the needed linkage (coupling rather than decoupling of the guidance and training provided by both UNITAR and all of the IAs).

III.3.5 Response to Risks and Validity of Assumptions

Section II.2.1 sets out the many risks identified in the project documents. In response to these, this evaluation revealed that:

- Although there was an initial concern that too few countries would sign up for the training, interestingly, almost all of the 50 UN-listed LDCs expressed an interest in receiving the UNITAR skills building training and 40 became part of the expanded project. The cut-off at 40 was based on the financial limitations imposed by the project(s) budget;

- Nevertheless, another nine training workshops were conducted by UNITAR, outside the auspices of this project, targeted to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. These were: Ghana (9-11 March, 2005); Cote d’Ivoire (2-5 August, 2005); Mongolia (16-18 August, 2005); Georgia (15-16 December, 2005); DPR Korea (6-10 March, 2006); China (15-17 March, 2006); Thailand (20 and 22 March, 2006); Pakistan (28-31 March 2006); and, Kazakhstan (29-31 March, 2006) with financial assistance provided by the Swiss Government;

- Governments (or the IAs ... it was not possible to precisely determine in all cases) did undertake the necessary follow-up work required to ensure that action plans were developed to the degree needed to prepare detailed, costed interventions. The training methodology likely helped to facilitate accurate costing. However, this was difficult to assess precisely since in many countries the costing was done by national or international consultants and not government staff;

- Regarding the determination of whether, after the training, the minimal infrastructure needed to carry out the needed project activities at the country level, in general, is in place … this appeared to vary greatly between countries. In most LDCs there is insufficient infrastructure for data collection, monitoring and enforcement. Most also need training, either for upgrading or for new staff;

- Some countries (example Nepal) undertook the NIP creation using consultants with government officials reportedly having a limited role, other than oversight. A contributing factor could have been a lack of core capacity in Nepal to undertake this task. Training will not ameliorate this situation;
In the cases of Cambodia, Comoros, Madagascar, Uganda, Tanzania, it was the country that was, reportedly, both fully engaged and occupying the driver’s seat;

Based on those interviewed and the TORs for this evaluation, the evaluators were unable to assess whether the necessary technical follow-up by the IAs occurred in a timely manner consistent with each country’s NIP development timeline;

The need to be able to response to ongoing NIP development questions was initially seen as a risk. In response, UNITAR developed an online help desk (FAQs) as well as an offer to respond to questions via direct email enquiries. The FAQs (responses) were to be based on workshop experiences. However, there was a surprising lack of response by LDCs to these initiatives (no questions asked of UNITAR). This could be due to the fact that LDC questions were, instead, directed to the respective IAs; or, many that undertook the training had little or no opportunity to use it in a practical sense during which the additional questions would likely arise;

For the sound management of chemicals, generally speaking, it appeared that all of the stakeholders that needed to be engaged, were engaged. The participants were chosen by the countries and not UNITAR so this issue was difficult to assess without a more detailed analysis of the allocation of responsibilities within the country which was beyond the scope of the TORs for this evaluation.

Since many of those trained did not actually use the training, any unforeseen barriers and impediments were difficult to identify.

In the organizational phase for the workshops, countries were encouraged to provide female participation with a view to promoting gender equality. However, regarding what transpired, female participation, varied greatly between countries based on cultural consideration and also educational practices. Gender participation enhancement is reportedly currently under affirmative action programs in many countries and also under study by UNITAR.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned related to Perceived Risks

Perhaps the greatest barrier and impediment observed pertaining to skill development and sustaining results, was the lack of core capacity (including computer literacy in the French-speaking African countries).

It is too early to assess whether there has been any evidence of translation or transfer of training skills to other chemical management aspects. Many participants have indicated that they intend to use the newly acquired skills in future for chemical management activities, especially SAICM. Early evidence from both the Asian and African countries visited suggests that there has been a transfer of knowledge from the UNITAR training to other governmental Ministries (ie Energy – PCBs), programs and Universities (upgrading of curricula).

The level of involvement of those undertaking training and their involvement in the creation of their NIP was outside UNITAR control or even influence. Where training of LDCs is to occur in future, there needs to be some understanding with the country and the IAs that the training received will be used.
As to gender equity issues, UNITAR may wish to consider creating a reference in their training materials to the key role to be played by women (promotional materials on female participation).

III.3.6 Evaluation of Role Played by UNITAR

UNITAR’s role in the project overall was the training material design and the workshop delivery. UNITAR also selected the countries, drafted the training materials, provided secretariat services for the steering committee; and, provided the liaison and coordination with the IAs. UNITAR designed the architecture for project oversight and management. There were no funds available for any kind of in-country follow-up. This was a job well done.

At the time of this evaluation, UNITAR had delivered 38 of the 40 workshops (two remained to be delivered). UNITAR reported that they are ready and waiting on the countries in order to complete these last two.

Conclusions and Lessons learned on the role played by UNITAR

The UNITAR role seems to have been performed with both alacrity and competence. Delivery delays are due to internal country political processes and not UNITAR’s delivery schedule. The lesson learned is that the specialized services provided by UNITAR can be a value added adjunct to GEF training projects. However, it appears, based on somewhat oblique observations made, that many IAs see the provision of such training (as provided by UNITAR) to be in their responsibility domain so some turf sorting and delineation may be required by the GEF if UNITAR is to play a continuing training role.

III.3.7 Evaluation of the Role played in the project by the IAs.

Since UNITAR is not an IA designated by the GEF, UNDP provided the IA function. In general, all of the IAs were supposed to ensure that additional, substantive POPs-related information and expertise were made available to each country. Based on interviews, this was, reportedly, either not done, or not done to an adequate degree. Some noted that this needed information was made available only to the government officials that participated in the international meetings but there was little or no subsequent circulation of this information within the country to the other stakeholders. There were also complaints from NGOs interviewed in this regard. Perhaps the role of the IAs versus the country government regarding information dissemination needs to be more clearly set out.

As per the project documents, IAs were also supposed to review action plan(s) drafts. For the most part, it appears as though action plans were created by the Consultants hired by the IAs (an exception being Cambodia who did their own). What role the IAs had in overseeing the work of their Consultants was not clear. This responsibility (creation and review of action plans) should have been assigned to the Country POPs leadership (and not just sign off). Although this would have been more time consuming (therefore costly), this was the required follow-up to embed the training.
UNITAR had, reportedly, offered to review and comment on draft NIPs prepared by, or in conjunction with, LDCs, but no such requests materialized from either the countries or their IAs.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learned regarding the participation of the IAs**

Having action plans created by external (to government) Consultants undermines skills development efforts by UNITAR and others. If training is not used, skills developed will soon be lost. This issue needs to be addressed if cost/benefit considerations are to taken seriously.

Guidance provided by countries by both UNITAR and the IAs needs to be made consistent (some interviewed reported conflicting guidance with the IA-provided guidance taking precedence).

UNITAR training was of a very high quality but of questionable usefulness for the creation of the NIP. Training to assist in NIP creation that arrives after the NIP is drafted is of little value in this context. However, the methodology training was useful for strengthening the NIP and with likely collateral benefits for future endeavours. Such skills building projects need to be fast tracked by the GEF when such a situation exists.

There is likelihood that the UNITAR training provided will nonetheless bear fruit in the broader context of the sound management of chemicals.

As an “add-on” project to a GEF project, UNITAR had to provide the workshops but had little to no connection with the actual creation of the NIPs but, nonetheless, UNITAR guidance likely made a positive contribution. Better integration of the training provided by UNITAR and the implementation activities of the IAs is also needed.

**IV. EVALUATION of OBSERVABLE OUTCOMES**

**IV.1 Post Workshop Evaluations / Feedback**


The following is a summary of the results obtained from the feedback forms.

- The overall rating for the Action Plan Training Workshops was “excellent” or “very good”, as reported by 82% of participants;
- As to what they liked most about the workshop, approximately 86% of the participants referred to the “training content” and/or “training approach”. The “educational skills of training experts” was also cited as an important feature of the workshop (indicated by more than 10% of the total answers submitted);
- The most frequent answers regarding the training content included: information/methodology provided on action plan development and/or project development; specific
management tools/techniques provided, such as the GANTT chart; and, the Stockholm Convention and chemicals specific information shared during the workshop;

- The most frequent responses concerning the training approach included: the hands-on approach enhanced by group exercises, including the continuous development of an action plan throughout the training exercises; and, the participative approach of the training which offered many opportunities for discussions and deliberations, for example, in working groups, in plenary discussion sessions after each presentation, and during working group presentation/reporting;

- As to what participants liked least was the notion of the workshops not having enough time;

- As to the adequacy of the guidance and training materials, ninety-eight percent (98%) answered felt they were adequate but some also observed that it would have been more useful at the beginning of the development of the countries’ NIP, and that more time would have been helpful in practicing the skills learnt;

- Almost all participants (96 %) indicated that they would recommend the use of these training materials for other countries; and

- The overarching conclusions from the evaluation sheets were that: the time allotted to the workshop was too short. (Participants felt that presentations had to be rushed, and exercises could not be finalised); there was a need for UNITAR follow-up and support, including duplicating such workshops at regional level; the workshop experience was very useful and the methodologies/techniques presented could likely be applied to other areas beyond just chemicals management; direct requests were made to the national executing agency for continuous follow-up or for increasing the scope of the stakeholders involved in the project; and, it would have been better (more useful) if the workshops had been held earlier in the process as work was already underway on some aspects covered.

**IV.2 Changes in Project Management / Planning Skills**

Success measurement in this evaluation refers to the evaluation of project performance in relation to the indicators, assumptions and risks specified in logical framework matrices and other project documents.

As noted in the TORs, the planned results included:

- Key NIP participants, including representatives of key ministries and stakeholders outside of government in all participating countries will have been trained to use/adapt a tested methodology for project planning/action plan development;

- Increased awareness of and capacities in project/action planning in 25 and 15 LDCs respectively;

- NIPs and other Stockholm Convention-related Action Plans reflect improved project and action planning capacities in recipient countries;

- Participating countries integrate mutual lessons and experience into their respective project and action planning processes;

- Recipient country priority NIPs interventions are clearly targeted, costed, and presentable to potential donors;
1893  ♦ Internal (baseline) financial and human resource mobilization to address Convention obligations will be strengthened;
1894  ♦ Recipient country priority NIP interventions are realistic and achievable;
1895  ♦ NIP implementation roles and responsibilities, including coordination, are clearly defined; and,
1896  ♦ An Action Plan Development Guidance and Training Package tailored for the needs of countries addressing Stockholm Convention obligations, including associated supporting materials (including CD-ROMs, exercises, and project planning software) will also be included.

The following Table uses a logical framework matrix as the basis for assessing both training projects.

**Table 4 – Project(s) Performance Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions And Risks</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good project management in the field of chemicals management, and for Stockholm Convention implementation in particular.</td>
<td>The NIP of each participating country is completed and submitted to the Conference of the Parties with appropriate action plans included. Countries’ project proposals are of improved quality. Countries NIPs projects/programmes receive funding and technical support from donors.</td>
<td>COP reports. Report of consultations between UNITAR and project countries regarding develop of project/programme proposals or action plans in follow-up to NIP completion.</td>
<td>Country commitment to strengthening chemicals management. Knowledge and experiences gained in countries are put into practice. Continued commitments of countries to complete NIPs. Country becomes Party to the Stockholm Convention. Stable staffing contingents in countries (minimal turnover of staff being trained).</td>
<td>All made this commitment. This has occurred in many but not all of the countries.</td>
<td>This has occurred in many but not all of the countries. Lack of core capacity and IA modus operandi have precluded this in some cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and capacities are strengthened in undertaking project planning - including action plan development.</td>
<td>Raised skills levels in LDCs that receive training are reflected in improved action plans/NIPs. Each participant completes a workshop evaluation form that reflects their state of knowledge both before and after the workshop.</td>
<td>Workshop reports and evaluation. NIPs with action plans. Project proposals resulting from NIPs/action plans.</td>
<td>High willingness of NIP participants to take part in action plan training. Countries willing to accept training as part of NIP development. NIP development is ongoing in participating countries. Participating countries integrate mutual lessons and experience into their respective project and action planning processes.</td>
<td>The willingness was there but not always for the right reasons. This was the case. This is the case. Little evidence to support that this has happened in many of the countries visited.</td>
<td>Some will undertake training regardless of area of responsibility. Training was seen as a minor add on to the bigger GEF enabling project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased awareness of the necessity of project/action planning among</td>
<td>Significant number of key NIP participants in each participating country</td>
<td>Workshop reports and lists of participants. Completed sets of NIP participants have a high level of engagement in/commitment to the NIP.</td>
<td>In theory yes, and in some countries yes, but in many countries, no.</td>
<td>Many were not invited to engage to the degree they wished.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td><strong>IV.3 Stakeholder Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Article 7(2) of the Stockholm Convention directly refers to consultation with stakeholders to facilitate, <em>inter alia</em>, the development of implementation plans. The GEF has subsequently confirmed stakeholder involvement as an important component of National Implementation Plan development. In addition, UNITAR, in its work to assist countries with integrated chemicals management, national profile development, priority-setting exercises and action plan development, requires the direct participation in project structures of a wide range of...</td>
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</table>
stakeholders as a prerequisite.

As those involved in this project were intended to be those that are participating in the NIP development process, it was expected that a wide range of stakeholders in each LDC would participate. It was anticipated that stakeholder participation would be drawn from, key Ministries, and, inter alia: industry; environmental public interest organizations; public and children’s health organizations; consumers groups; and women’s groups. In addition to all relevant ministries within government, representatives of sub-national level governments, where appropriate, were anticipated to be project participants. This was the case.

It was anticipated that the Lead Agency identified at the national level for each NIP would also comprise the Lead Agency for this project. This was also the case.

Regarding stakeholder participation, the primary mechanism for stakeholder participation was to be through the NIP project committee in each country. This committee was to have been in place at the commencement of the project. All report this to be the case but this was not an active mechanism in many countries;

At the global level, a committee consisting of the UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, FAO and the World Bank, along with the Government of Switzerland, was to be convened / invited to participate in the project. This committee was also to assist with project evaluation. This Committee did participate in providing oversight to this project but did not participate in the evaluation;

Regarding social and participation issues, the major predicted social/participation issue for the project was anticipated to be the possibility that, in some participating countries, stakeholder participation would not be as broad as in others. UNITAR with its long history of working with countries that involve stakeholders in projects, various means, including communication and sharing of experience between participating project countries, encouraged stakeholder participation to the fullest degree possible. This was confirmed by the evaluators in that stakeholder participation was broad and not an issue.

The core commitments of the countries participating in this project related closely to each country’s core commitment to the development of its NIP. The direct involvement of each NIP coordinating committee, and NIP secretariat including the NIP coordinators as recipients of the skills-building, was seen to be critical to ensure access to the training materials, and benefits from the transfer of skills to as wide a proportion of NIP participants as possible. This was not only to assist them in the effective completion of their NIP projects, but was also to provide them directly with tools for the development of projects to support Convention implementation, based on the outcomes of the NIPs. This was not the case in some countries where government staff participation was “limited” (example, Bangladesh and Nepal).
V. CONCLUSIONS

A key measurement of effectiveness of training is when there is evidence that it has contributed to the development objectives of a project or the country assistance strategy. There are three dimensions in this regard that required examination:

1. Learning outputs: Did training result in acquisition of new knowledge and skills relevant to the achievement of SC objectives?

The conclusion reached in this regard is that all of the countries visited showed evidence of the achievement in learning.

2. Workplace behavior outcomes: Are trainees applying acquired skills in the workplace in a manner likely to contribute to the achievement of SC goals?

Based on observed outputs Cambodia, Uganda, Tanzania and Madagascar are currently applying learned skills in the workplace. Nepal was to some extent precluded this opportunity by limited direct Government staff involvement in the detailed preparation of the NIP following the workshop, Bangladesh due to staff and other resource constraints, Chad and Comoros due to considerable structural constraints in governance. (Chad because of security concerns aggravated by the oil boon and Comoros as a result of significant economic management problems.)

3. Impact on development capacity: Is there evidence of improved institutional strength or enhanced organizational performance as a result of the UNITAR training?

The countries visited have not as yet begun implementing their NIP and the observance of NIP implementation is what is needed to arrive at a proper performance and institutional strengthening judgment.

What follows are conclusions relating to the more detailed aspects:

V.1 Project Design and Project Management

- The two training projects appear to have been carefully designed reflecting state-of-the-art knowledge and experience in developing country training;
- The peer review process of training materials appeared also to have worked well;
- The pilot phase was a success in that it achieved its goals both from the perspectives of UNITAR and the participating countries;
- Feedback from both the peer review process and the pilots resulted in the remediation and upgrading of the materials that the subsequent countries received;

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UNITAR “senior fellows” (contracted consultants) with extensive knowledge and experience in POPs and other chemicals issues were used for much of the training. This appears to have worked very well also;

The two project budgets (25 & 15 countries) were reportedly allocated and spent in accordance with the plan(s), the exception being the train-the-trainers component that was not allocated as originally envisioned with the funds for this purpose having been utilized for other components;

As to the degree of participation in project oversight, some (GEF, UNEP, UNDP) were stronger than others both in terms of input provided and the level of active participation;

Most of the beneficiaries interviewed considered the training materials prepared by UNITAR to be good to excellent;

Some countries noted the need for software and training in the application of software in order to achieve the intended benefits from the UNITAR training;

IAs did not attend the UNITAR training workshops but perhaps should have as there was little evidence of the connectivity between the UNITAR training session and the NIP actions via the IAs;

The post training evaluation sheets were poorly designed and yielded little in the way of information that could be used to improve future sessions;

IAs could have given greater effort to integrating this skills building project into their plans for creating the NIP in their client countries; and

The UNITAR role seems to have been performed with both alacrity and competence.

V.2 Budget

The two project budgets (25 & 15 countries) were reportedly allocated and spent in accordance with the plan(s). Other than the change in direction to not undertake train-the-trainer sessions in each country, there were no unforeseen adverse budgetary impacts;

From the perspective of the LDCs, this was somewhat of a minor adjunct or “add on” project to the $400-500 K US GEF POPs enabling project(s). With so little money allocated to the country for this project, it was difficult for UNITAR to capture the needed attention of the country to pursue the workshop organizational aspects thus increasing UNITAR’s transaction costs;

Although there were no adverse budgetary impacts per se, it was the feeling of both UNITAR and the countries (they received just $5,000 US each to organize the training events) that the GEF funds provided for the 40 country project were insufficient; and

There was also a perception of insufficient project funding reported from UNITAR itself. For example, from time-to-time, UNITAR had to send more than one representative to the training session (high level UNITAR participation requested and/or the UNITAR Manager himself needed to better understand the efficacy of the emerging project design etc.) and there were insufficient funds available for this purpose.
V.3 Project Outcomes / Impacts

- Some 1,373 persons of the world’s LDCs and countries with economies in transitions have received skills building training by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) via the three projects: Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (25 LCD) – 741 participants; Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (15 LCD) – 376 participants (with two countries pending – Eritrea and DR Congo); and, Strengthening Skills for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention: National Training Workshop (9 Swiss Supported Countries) – 256 participants;

- The efficacy of this training and the potential future usefulness varied greatly amongst the beneficiaries and depended largely on the countries’ state of development and thus core capacity as well as the relation with the IA in the creation, and future delivery, of the NIP;

- The commitment of the countries participating in this project included direct involvement in order to provide them directly with tools for the development of projects to support Convention implementation, based on the outcomes of the NIPs. This commitment was not met in some countries. Government staff participation in the NIP creation varied from “fully engaged” (example, Cambodia, African Countries) to “limited” (example, Bangladesh, Chad, Comoros, Nepal);

- Commitment failure was likely a reflection of many factors: Bangladesh, the lack of core (adsorption) capacity and state of development; Chad due to internal security issues compounded by the oil boom; Comoros because of a governance crisis (economic management issues); and, Nepal, at least, in part, due to the IAs desire to reduce transaction costs but at the expense of building indigenous capacity;

- The conclusions from the evaluation sheets indicated that the time allotted to the workshop was too short. (Participants felt that presentations had to be rushed, and exercises could not be finalised);

- The beneficiaries indicated that the workshop experience was very useful and the methodologies/techniques presented by UNITAR will be applied to other areas beyond just chemicals management;

- There was a need identified by beneficiaries for UNITAR follow-up and support, including duplicating such workshops at regional level but there were no resources available for this request;

- UNITAR training, although of a very high quality, was of questionable usefulness for the creation of the NIP in many countries where the NIP was well advanced or even completed in draft form at the time of the training;

- A structural constraint in francophone Africa is the current state of the civil service. There is mounting evidence showing that the training needs for the public sector are overwhelming. Key issues include (i) the absence of institutional structures that encourage accountability transparency and information sharing, and (ii) low levels of salaries and delays in payment. This latter factor may be a consequence of (a) a serious lack of experienced professionals with management skills; and/or (b) the politicization of public administration institutions and an absence of merit-based systems. Against this
background, UNITAR and other donor-sponsored-capacity building training is likely to have little overall influence i.e. not a major determinant. However, there could be strategic gains in certain countries arising from UNITAR training. For example, in Madagascar stakeholders interviewed have come to realize the linkages between the various chemicals Conventions: Basel, Rotterdam (PIC), Montreal Protocol, Stockholm (POPs). There are thus likely opportunities for cost sharing to enhance the benefits from investments in training. For example, stakeholders have become aware of the transfer of knowledge from UNITAR training and this transfer of knowledge goes beyond planning techniques. The Ministries of Health and Agriculture are in the process of considering transferring Integrated Pest Management from Agriculture to Malaria control in the Health Ministry. The special benefit is that IPM does not use DDT, it relies heavily on extension techniques and mass communication;

- With the exception of transference of knowledge to Universities, in many cases it is too early to assess whether there has been any evidence of translation of training skills to other chemical management aspects. Many participants have indicated that they intend to use the newly acquired skills in future for chemical management activities, especially SAICM. However, the Consultant for the French-speaking African countries noted that There is early evidence from Madagascar and Chad of the transference of skills from UNITAR training to the government programs and extension programs as well;

- The greatest barrier and impediment observed pertaining to skill development and sustaining results, was the lack of core capacity (and computer literacy in African countries) in many countries;

- One country (Cambodia) would have benefited more from the training if it had the been trained on the use of the materials (log frame) that UNITAR added later;

- For some, (example, Tanzania, some NGOs) the training materials were seen as being too complicated (they felt they lacked enough of a technical background to properly absorb the training);

- In many, if not most LDCs, there is either insufficient capacity as yet to implement chemical management programs in the field (example monitoring industrial emissions for dioxins and furans). The lead agency does not have sufficient staff to properly address POPs and other chemicals;

- Many of the LDCs are heavily reliant on external expertise and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This does not bode well for sustaining results;

- Where the needed LDC’s core capacity is reported to exist, (example, Cambodia and some African countries (Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda)), the needed operational funds are lacking, especially for needed training;

- LDCs (example, Cambodia) also noted problems with their inability to raise counterpart funding to meet GEF project requirements; and

- In general, there appears to be no observed, or perceived, special problems of gender participation in LDCs although it was conceded that the participation is perhaps less than desirable and Governments are undertaking initiatives such as: a constitutional reference to the need for affirmative action; decisions to assign additional University entrance consideration to females based on sex; and Government decisions to require 30% female in top Agency Executive positions. In one country reviewed in francophone Africa, the cultural expectations of women’s role in society may need to be reconsidered so women’s participation in society is acknowledged.
V.4 Other Conclusions

- This evaluation revealed an interesting paradox. UNITAR Skills Training for Action Plan building was provided to those being trained on the understanding that this would firstly, help them create their action plans. However, a few were well advanced (or had even completed the first draft) by the time the training was provided somewhat preempting this first goal;

- In the case of Nepal, UNIDO and the Government decided to use a National expert and three international experts to create the NIP, a modus operandi that somewhat compromised the UNITAR training since government staff are precluded from the opportunity to apply and thus gain practical experience on the application of these skills. This was stated by some that were interviewed;

- The UNITAR training clearly added to the personal management capacity of the individuals trained and awareness of the constituencies they represent, but, there were no plans observed (as yet, thought this was discussed) in any of the countries evaluated to deploy mechanisms to sustain this capacity;

- It was noted that there was inconsistency between what UNIDO workshops suggested and what UNITAR espoused during the training. UNITAR has indicated that all of the IAs reviewed their draft training materials. These issues need to be explored by the GEF;

- It was also noted (example, Bangladesh) that the LDCs are severely resource constrained and require long advance notice to plan for training and even such short evaluation missions;

- Many countries recognized the need (and existing shortfalls and deficits) for sustaining results;

- The post training evaluation sheets solicited, for the most part, yes / no responses and were thus of little follow up value;

- Training and upgrading of chemicals knowledge and skills is an ongoing activity that needs to be institutionalized or sustainability if skill acquired are at risk (likely to be lost in the foreseeable future);

- In LDCs, there is often no single Ministry that has lead responsibility for chemicals management (the exception is perhaps Tanzania where the Government designated Chief Chemist, situated in the official Government laboratory has policy responsibility for chemicals). However, there is often a “lead Ministry” from the point of view of coordination or this is assigned to the POPs /SAICM Focal Point(s);

- Stakeholder engagement is a critical feature and a defining characteristic of a “healthy” chemical management process. Most countries showed evidence of wide stakeholder engagement;

- Nepal was not able to fully engage the stakeholders (especially government staff) in the NIP preparation as espoused (and anticipated) during the UNITAR training. This may have been due to a conflict with Implementing Agency (IA) decisions on how best to create the NIP; core capacity issues or anticipated high transaction costs;

- Sustaining chemical management results and addressing emerging challenges requires that the minimal infrastructure needed to carry out the needed project activities at the
country level be in place. In general, (but not in all cases), this minimal infrastructure is
in place or the signs are hopeful;

- Guidance offered by the UNITAR training modules should be made to be consistent with
the GEF and the IA’s guidance, otherwise, differences are viewed by the UNITAR
training participants as conflicting information;

- IA NIP-creation project-related concern or responsibility in relation to this project,
appears to have been without regard for concomitant capacity building and institutional
strengthening; yet, this is the fundamental thrust of the UNITAR training;

- There may be a conflict of basic interests because some (if not all) of the IA’s interest is
to get in, get out, create a good NIP at the least cost. UNITAR’s interest is indeed
capacity building and institutional strengthening. The GEF needs to address this issue;

- Sustainability is perhaps the key shortfall of the training provided by UNITAR and needs
to be a critical consideration in future training undertakings.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

- Holding a one day meeting of the peer review group (as opposed to conference calls)
would have been a more effective and efficient means of obtaining the needed input;

- Undertaking “pilots” is a very useful and “value added” exercise and should be included
where a large number of countries are to be trained;

- Training to assist in NIP creation that arrives after the NIP is drafted is of no value in this
context. Such skills building projects need to be fast tracked by the GEF when such a
situation exists.

- Post session evaluation sheets need to be carefully designed with more substantive
information requests and perhaps more time allocation for this component within the
workshop construct / agenda;

- IAs should be attending the UNITAR training workshops. There was a disconnect
between this skills building project and the work with the same countries in creating or
“polishing” the NIP even though the IAs were committed on paper to providing any
needed follow-up to the training. Had IAs attended the UNITAR training workshops (for
their client countries), this would have provided a catalyst for the needed integration
(training and actual action plan creation);

- The GEF needs to secure the needed linkage (coupling rather than decoupling) of the
guidance and training provided by UNITAR and all of the IAs. This will not happen
unless there is a GEF follow-up in this regard;

- A key component of this evaluation relates to “who” and “how” the NIPs and action
plans were created in each country because this element underpins the translation of
training into both capacity and institutional strengthening. (We learn by doing). There
will be little to no benefits to be accrued from the training if the government staff are
precluded from assuming a direct engagement and leadership role in this exercise even of
the IA transaction costs are likely to be high;

- Broad stakeholder engagement fosters problem ownership, accountability, sharing and
team play, future cooperation and most importantly, sustainability of results achieved;
It was reported that in Nepal, most of the time, stakeholder ministries/organizations recommended new people for each meeting and only a few who had participated in the UNITAR training reappeared in subsequent POPs events. The lack of adequate and/or consistent engagement by government staff could be a reflection of the state of development, lack of core capacity and/or resource constraints. Close consideration needs to be given to anticipating these problems during the course of project delivery, not just at the time of final project evaluation;

Having action plans created by external (to government) Consultants undermines skills development efforts by UNITAR and others. If training is not used, skills developed will soon be lost. This issue needs to be addressed if cost/benefit considerations are to taken seriously;

If conflicts are to be avoided, UNITAR’s training materials must be made consistent with the guidance / demands by the IAs;

The training function needs to be made part of the lead Ministry (for chemicals) within the country (and others) organizational structure and be assigned a regular budget; otherwise, any training provided by UNITAR, the IAs or the GEF will likely not be sustained;

Recipient countries need to better understand this sustaining capacity risk (some already do (example, the Ministry of Energy in Tanzania);

Lack of action on chemicals in a LDCs should not be read as not necessarily a lack of political will because for the most part, resources are severely constrained and many countries priorities are: poverty alleviation; malaria control and other critical near term economic issues. When viewed against poverty alleviation, ensuring food supply and addressing health issues such as the high level of malarial deaths and AIDS addition internal Government funding allocation for chemicals management in many LDCs is not likely to receive any elevated priority;

As an “add-on” project to a GEF project, UNITAR provided the training workshops but had little, to no, connection with the actual creation of the NIPs. Better integration of training for delivery, and delivery, is clearly needed. Better integration of the training provided by UNITAR and other implementation activities of the IAs is also needed;

The UNITAR project perhaps should have been a part-of, rather than an “add on” to the GEF POPs enabling project. This would have resulted in perhaps more timely cooperation and input from the LDCs;

Short notice missions (example, evaluation missions) are a recipe for disaster i.e. failed logistic, knee jerk participation, insufficient time for interviews etc.

For countries like Bangladesh where attendance is dependent on incentives it was suggested that even evaluation missions should allocate a small amount in the budget to provide food and perhaps some incentives to encourage individuals to participate;

One cannot successfully conduct a review of the adequacy of training materials 2.5 or more years after the training) and where there has been limited follow up (use) of the materials and skills by government staff due to the modus operandi of the IA (Nepal - UNIDO);

LDCs will not be able to respond to gender issues in the same way, or in the same timeframe, as developed countries. Gender equity issues must be kept both in perspective and in the context of the current state of development of the country;
Insufficient resource allocations for training results in implementation difficulties and less than optimum organization and perhaps participation (at the country level). A more detailed consideration of anticipated workshop cost(s) needs to be given by the GEF, taking into account the special situation and behavioural norms of participants in the LDCs; and

The specialized services provided by UNITAR can be a value added adjunct to GEF training projects. However, many IAs see the provision of such training to be in their responsibility domain so some turf sorting and delineation may be required by the GEF.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

UNITAR training materials should be made to be consistent with all of the IA’s requirements (i.e. include log frame analyses or other tools they request countries to use). Better still, the IA’s requirements should also be made consistent amongst themselves, perhaps through guidance from the GEF;

Training materials need to include software and software usage where computer literacy is an issue;

Closer consideration needs to be given to the cost/benefit consideration in the selection of countries for training. If a core capacity (the ability to comprehend and absorb) to enhance does not exist, then there will be little if any benefits likely to accrue;

Many considered the workshop time to be too short and therefore, a more careful consideration needs to be given to the rate of absorption of the designated beneficiaries as well as the fastest (most cost effective) rate of presentation of training materials. The time needed for a workshop needs to be predicated upon current state of development and existing core capacity in the country;

“Core capacity” (including computer literacy) should be a consideration in selecting those to participate in such training and the actual design of the workshop. A longer training program is likely required in the least developed of the LDCs;

More careful attention needs to be given to who is to receive the training avoiding those attending simply for the incentives and/or curiosity. The GEF / UNITAR may wish to consider confining training to those that the country confirms will actually be working on creating (or directly inputting through consultations etc.) to the NIP (or in future, perhaps SAICM). The IAs must be made aware of this as well;

Those to be trained should commit (and be enabled by the IA modus operandi) to the use of the new skills in the near term. If this is not possible then there is no need for the training;

Where countries participate as “pilots” and additional materials are subsequently added, there should be some form of refresher training provided if not by UNITAR then by the IA. The GEF will need to provide additional support if this is to occur;

The training materials should include teachings on contingency (sudden loss of capacity) and succession planning and sustaining knowledge acquired by the training;

The level of involvement of those undertaking training and their involvement in the creation of their NIP was outside UNITAR control or even influence. Where training of LDCs is to occur in future, there needs to be some understanding with the country and the
IAs that the training received will be used and not be transposed through the utilization of non-government consultants (international or domestic);

- UNITAR, in cooperation with the GEF Secretariat, may wish to give consideration to how best to resolve such conflicts (use of contractors versus government staff in the creation of the NIP in guidance provided to developing countries);

- In countries where core capacity is weak and thus transaction costs to the IA likely to be high, special funding consideration by the GEF may be needed;

- Guidance provided to countries by both UNITAR and the IAs needs to be made consistent (some interviewed reported conflicting guidance with the IA-provided guidance taking precedence);

- Training modules need to be not too advanced relative to the current practices (incremental enhancement) and should take into account current (local) management practices and constraints to the degree possible;

- Consideration should be given to including videos as part of the training materials, (the notion being as requested by some beneficiaries “a picture is worth a thousand words”);

- A special module explaining how best to train-the-trainers and/or on establishing a training unit, should be included in UNITAR’s guidance materials as this will strengthen the potential for sustaining results;

- IAs should make an effort to encourage the participation of women and UNITAR might wish to include a module in future training programs pointing out the importance of the participation of women in chemicals management;

- UNITAR may wish to consider creating a reference in their training materials to the key role to be played by women (promotional materials on female participation);

- A greater effort needs to be put into the post training evaluation sheet design to create a format that could facilitate future evaluations such as this; and

- Consideration needs to be given to creating a special case for the least developed countries as they reportedly cannot compete fairly for project funding with the more financially lucrative developing countries such as China.