

IOMC Webinar on Chemical Accidents

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Setting the scene: Public health management of chemical accidents

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World Health
Organization

Background



In 2016, more than 1.5 m deaths attributable to chemical exposures – This is an underestimate!

65 000 deaths caused by technological disasters between 2009-2018.

The size of the global chemical industry is projected to double by the year 2030.

Further investments are urgently needed to ensure that chemicals are used in a safe way without unnecessary impact on human health and the environment,

....especially in resource poor countries where efforts and capacities to manage chemicals are lacking behind most.

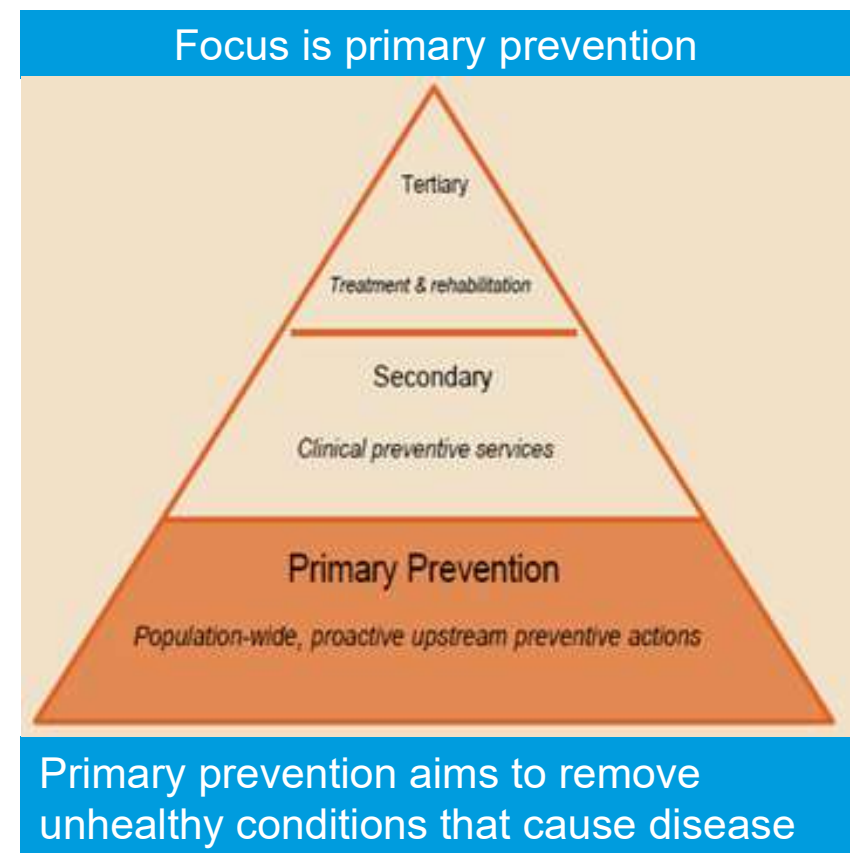


The Role of WHO



WHO is the directing and coordinating authority on international health

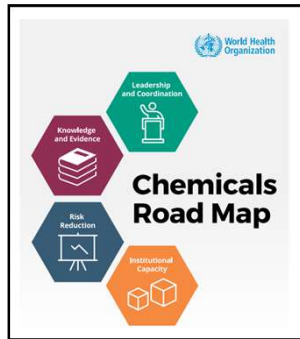
- Provides leadership on matters critical to health
- Shapes the health research agenda
- Defines norms and standards for health
- Articulates policy options for health
- Provides technical support and builds capacity to monitor health trends.



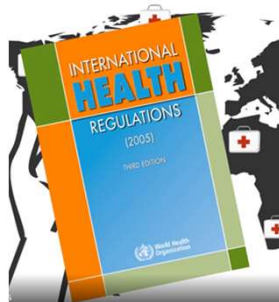
WHO and Chemical Events



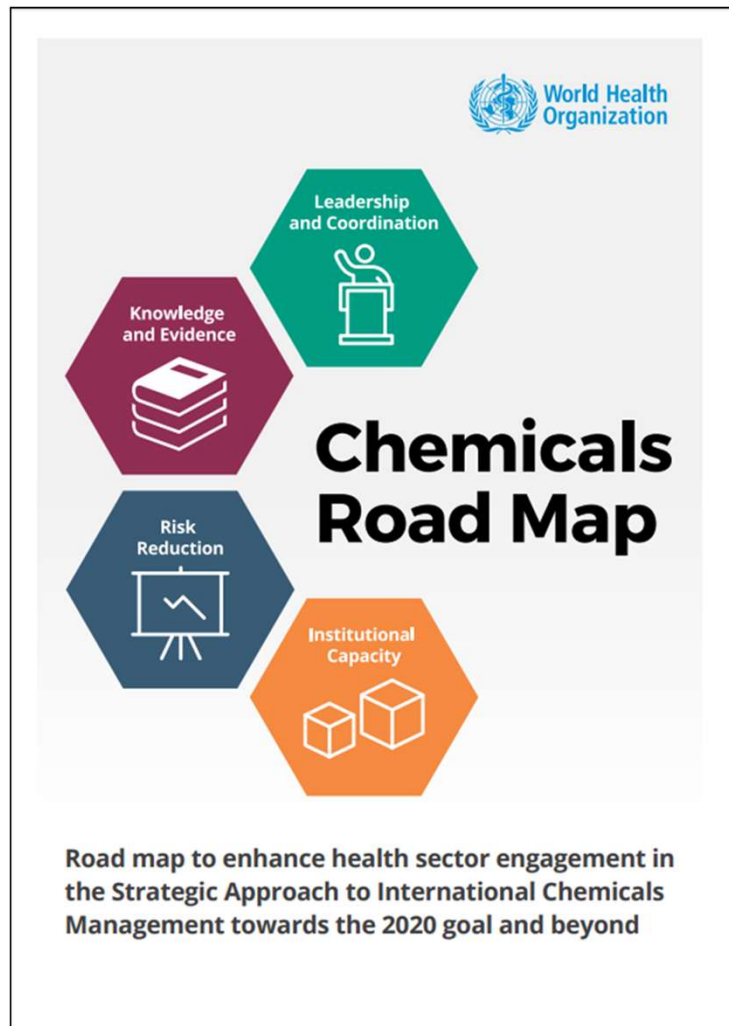
- Public health management of all types of chemical incidents and emergencies.



- Health sector engagement in SAICM towards the 2020 goal and beyond, including for chemical accidents.



- Acute public health risks that have the potential to cross borders and threaten people worldwide.



- Approved by the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017.
- Applicable to Member States at all stages of development, as well as a broad range of stakeholders.



ACTION AREAS

RISK REDUCTION



- Health protection strategies
- Healthy health care settings
- Raising awareness

KNOWLEDGE AND EVIDENCE



- Risk assessment, biomonitoring and surveillance
- Measuring progress
- Sharing and collaborating

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY



- National policy and regulatory frameworks
- International Health Regulations (2005)
- Training and education

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION



- Health in all chemicals policies
- Health sector engagement and coordination
- Engagement with other sectors and stakeholders

Overall objective of the Strategic Approach

To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Achieving the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle is a cross-cutting issue that will contribute to achieving many, if not all, 17 Sustainable Development Goals. **The targets below are only those that specifically mention chemicals.**



Goal 3
Target 3.9



Goal 6
Target 6.3



Goal 12
Target 12.4

Actions where the **health sector** has a lead or important supporting role, recognizing the need for multi-sectoral cooperation.



Institutional capacity- IHR

Strengthen public health **preparedness, detection and response.**

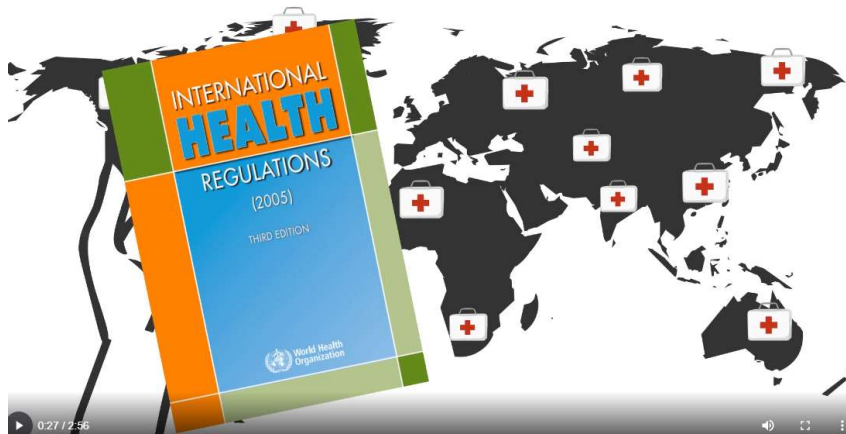
Contribute to an **international health workforce** to be mobilized to respond to chemical emergencies.

Strengthen existing and establish new **poison centres**

Strengthen and share access to **laboratory capacity.**

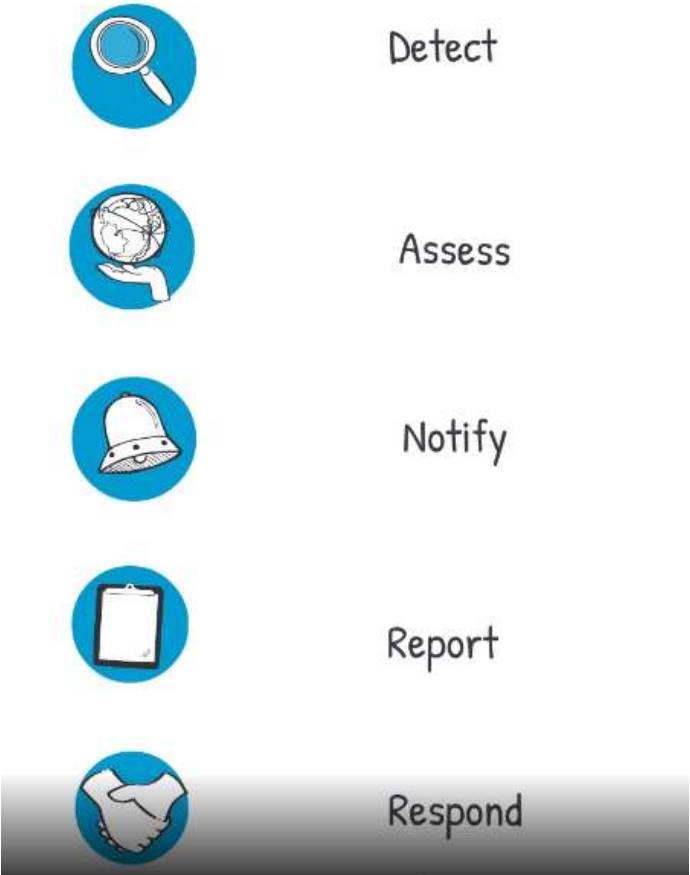
Improve **communication & collaboration** between IHR national focal points and focal points of other agreements, e.g. MEAs.





The International Health Regulations (IHR) are an international legal instrument that is binding to help the international community prevent and respond to acute public health risks that have the potential to cross borders and threaten people worldwide.

Core Capacities and reporting



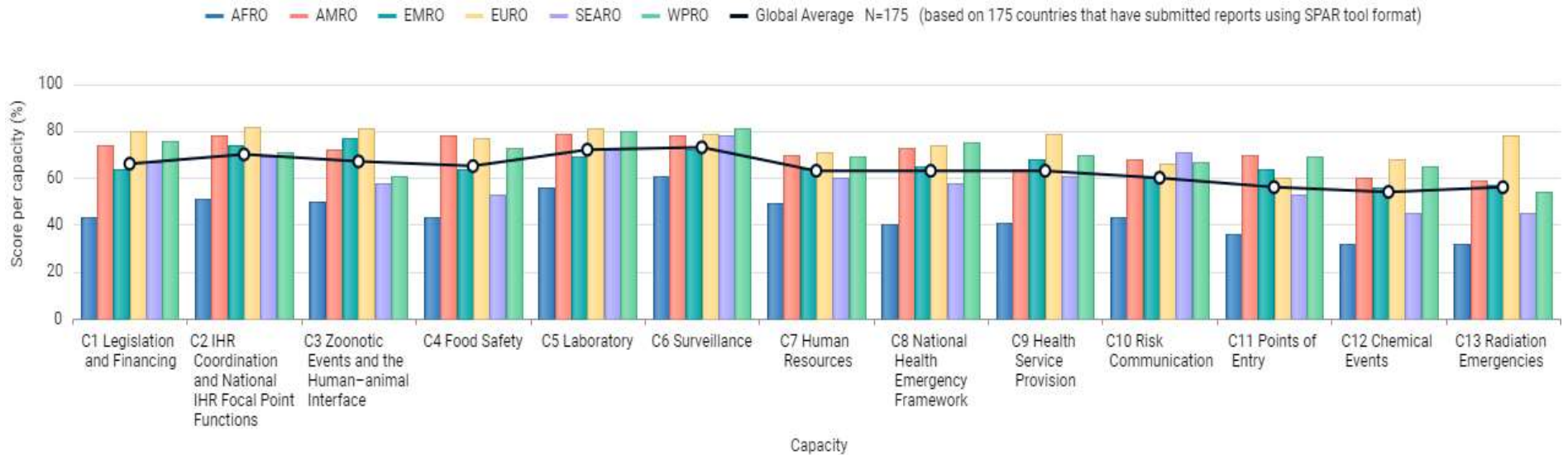
IHR – Indicator: Chemical event



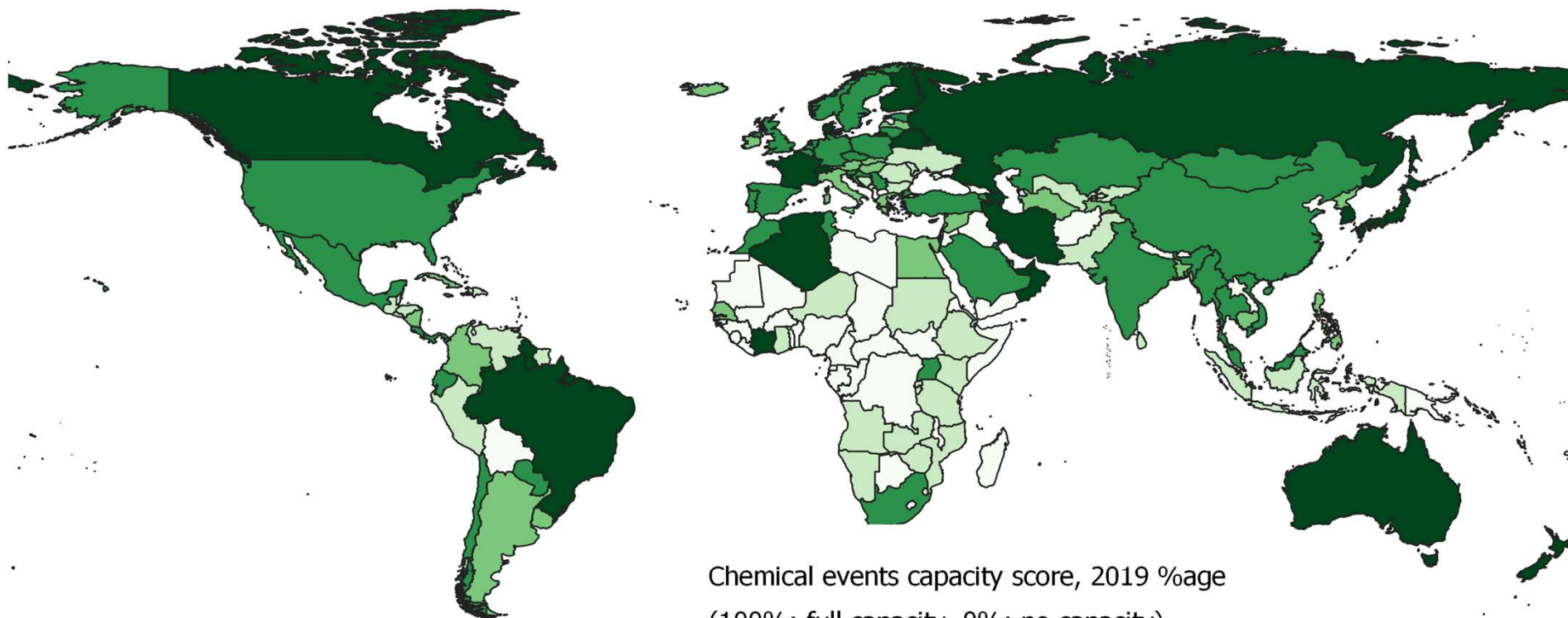
Level	C12.1 Resources for detection and alert	
Level 1	Surveillance mechanisms and resources ⁸⁷ for chemical events or poisoning are under development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2	<p>Surveillance capacity for chemical exposures is available on an ad hoc basis, e.g. a poison information service that operates only during office hours or that only serves part of the country</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Access to laboratory capacity⁸⁸ for identifying and quantifying exposures to key chemicals of concern⁸⁹ is available on an ad hoc basis</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3	A poisons information service ⁹⁰ or equivalent national service that performs surveillance for chemical exposures, and for communication of alerts is in place on a 24/7 basis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4	Access to laboratory that conforms to national quality standard for identifying and quantifying chemical exposures to key chemicals of concern is in place	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 5	An integrated system of public health surveillance linked with environmental monitoring ⁹¹ , that captures and assesses data on chemical exposures from multiple sources, is under development or in place	<input type="checkbox"/>

IHR - Reporting

IHR Score per capacity All WHO regions 2019 (Updated on 29-03-2021)



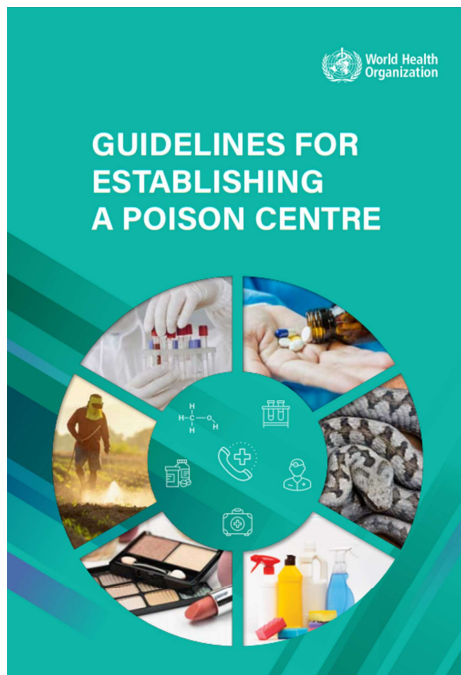
IHR – Core capacities: Chemical events



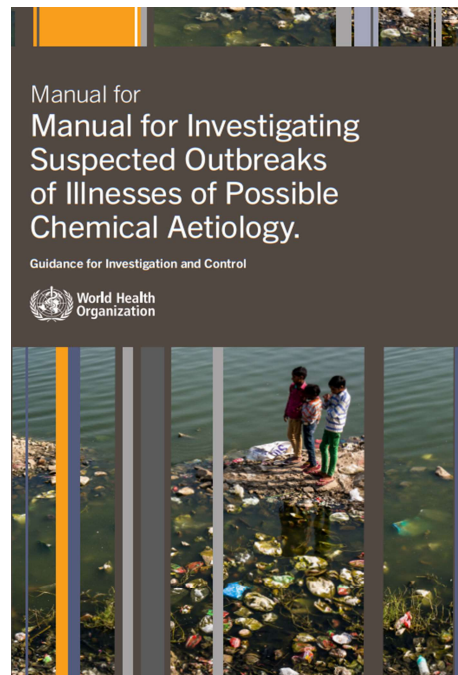
Chemical events capacity score, 2019 %age
(100%: full capacity, 0%: no capacity)

- 0 - 30
- 31 - 50
- 51 - 70
- 71 - 90
- 91 - 100

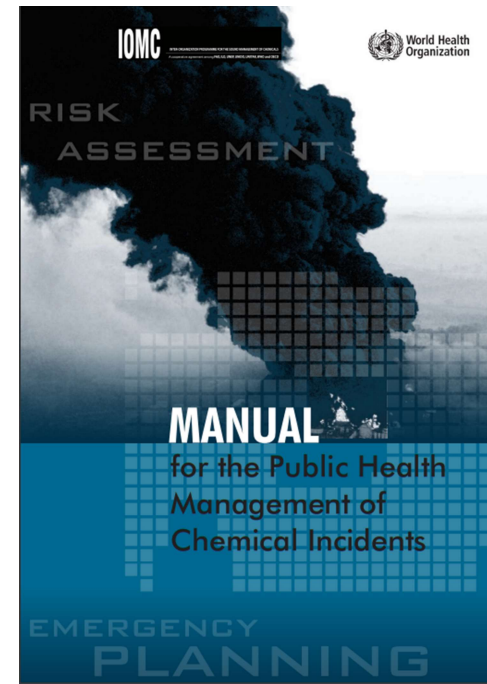
New and upcoming WHO guidelines



Just published



Published very soon



Update in progress



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Health topics: Chemical Safety and
Chemical Incidents

Name of Author | Function | Division | Country

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