IOMC Webinar on Chemical Accidents

28 April 2021

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.

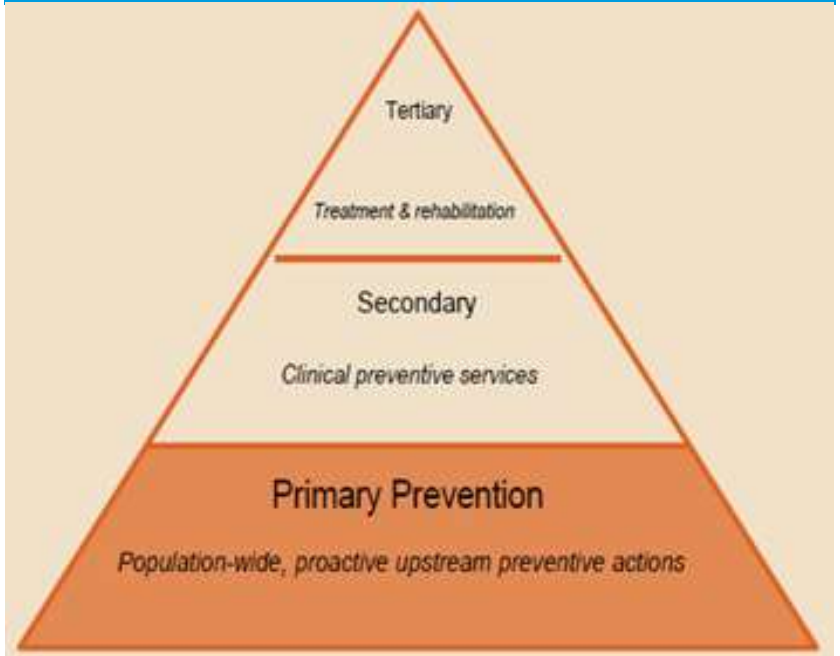
World Health Organization

The Role of WHO

WHO is the directing and coordinating authority on international health

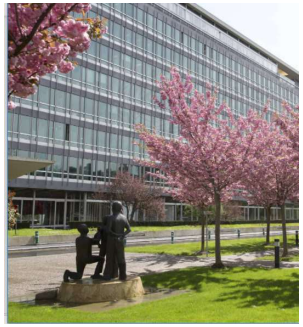
- Provides leadership on matters critical to health
- Shapes the health research agenda
- Defines norms and standards for health
- Articulates policy options for health
- Provides technical support and builds capacity to monitor health trends.

Focus is primary prevention

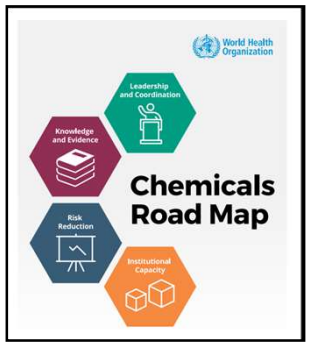


Primary prevention aims to remove unhealthy conditions that cause disease

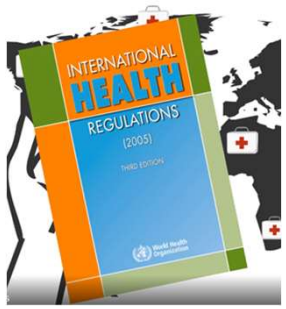
WHO and Chemical Events



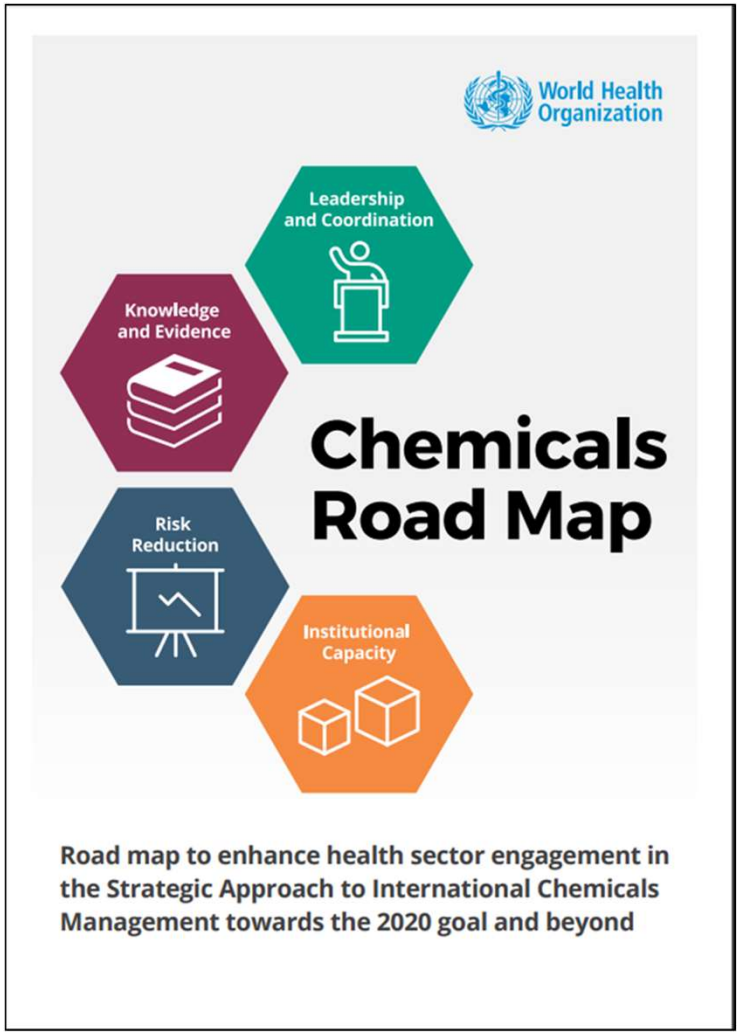
- Public health management of all types of chemical incidents and emergencies.



- 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.

World Health Organization

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

Institutional capacity- IHR

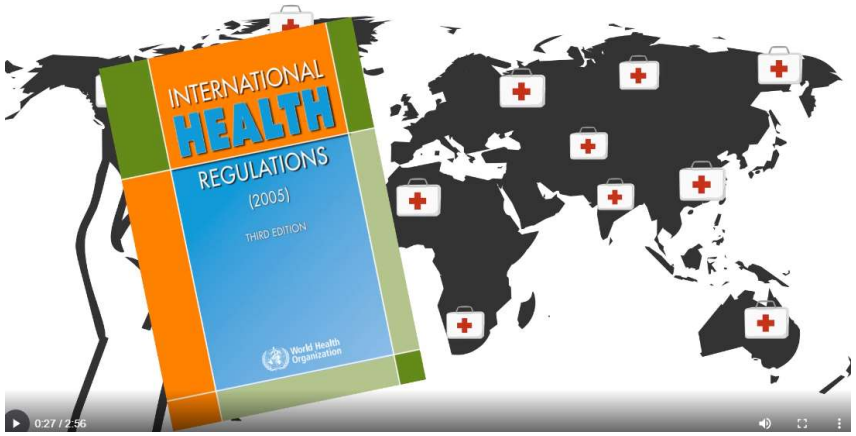
Strengthen public health **preparedness, detection and response**.

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**.

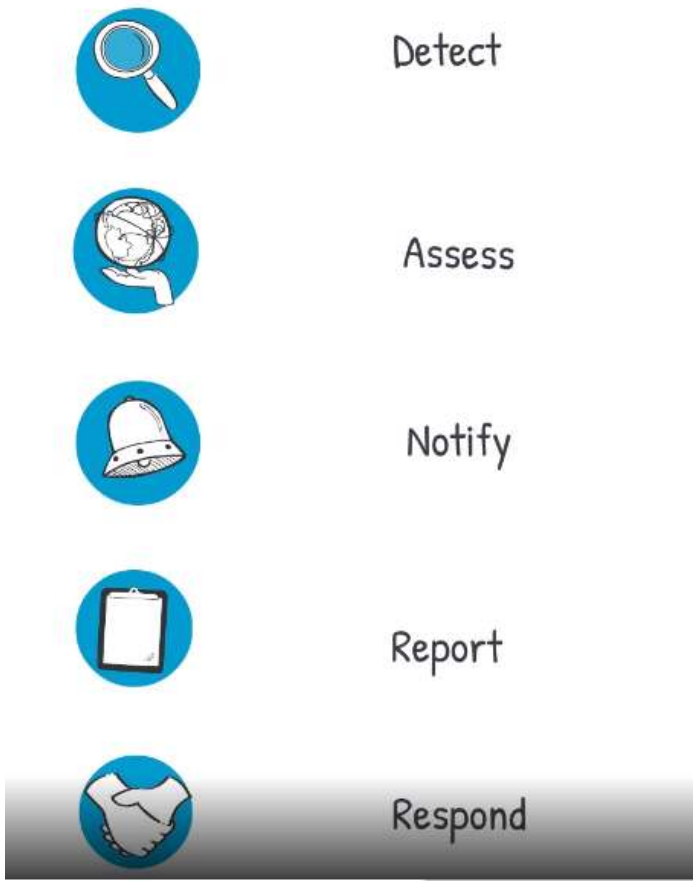
Improve **communication & collaboration** between IHR national focal points and focal points of other agreements, e.g. MEAs.



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

World Health Organization

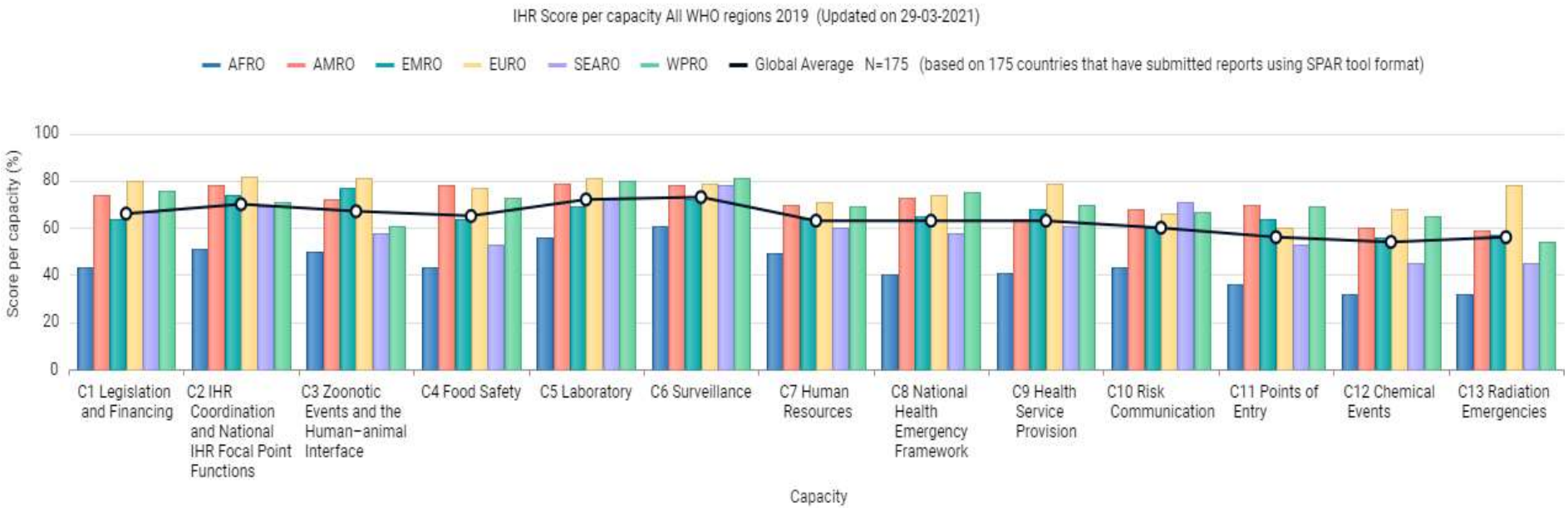


IHR – Indicator: Chemical event

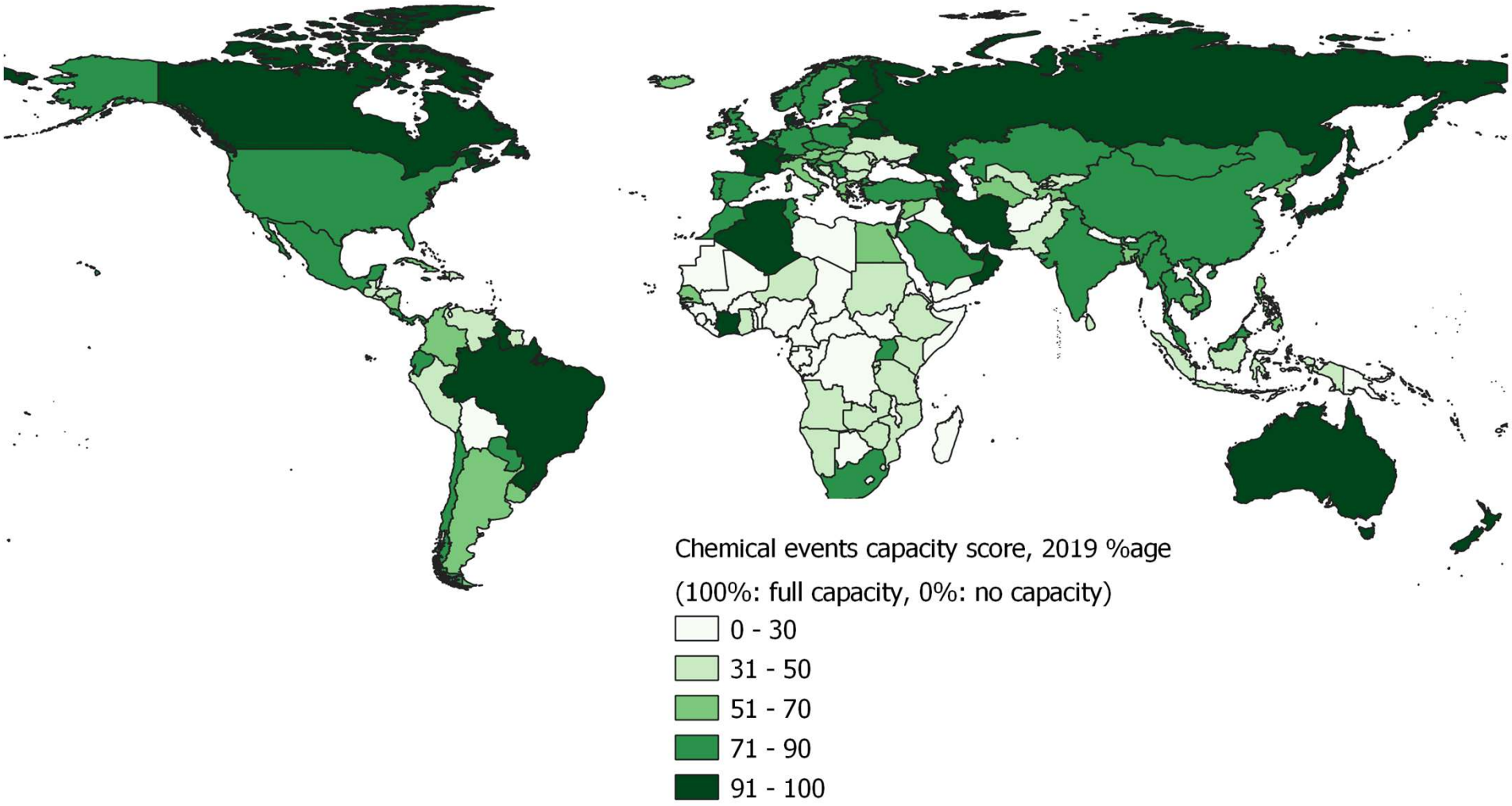
World Health Organization

Level	C12.1 Resources for detection and alert	
Level 1	Surveillance mechanisms and resources[87] for chemical events or poisoning **are under development**	☐
Level 2	**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 AND **Access to laboratory capacity**[88] for identifying and quantifying exposures to key chemicals of concern[89] **is available on an ad hoc basis**	☐
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**	☐
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**	☐
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**	☐

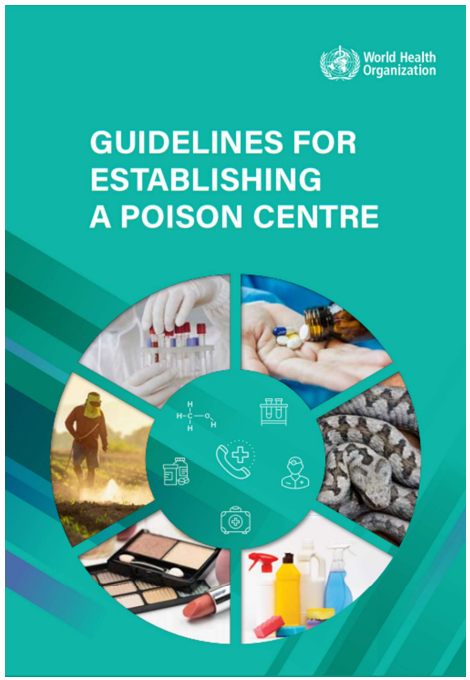
IHR - Reporting



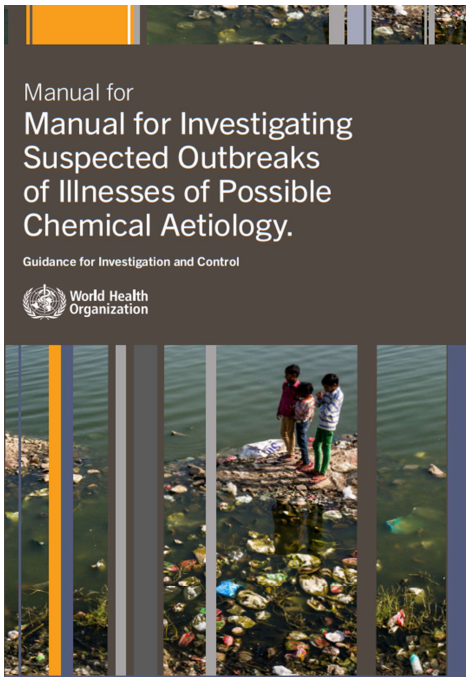
IHR – Core capacities: Chemical events



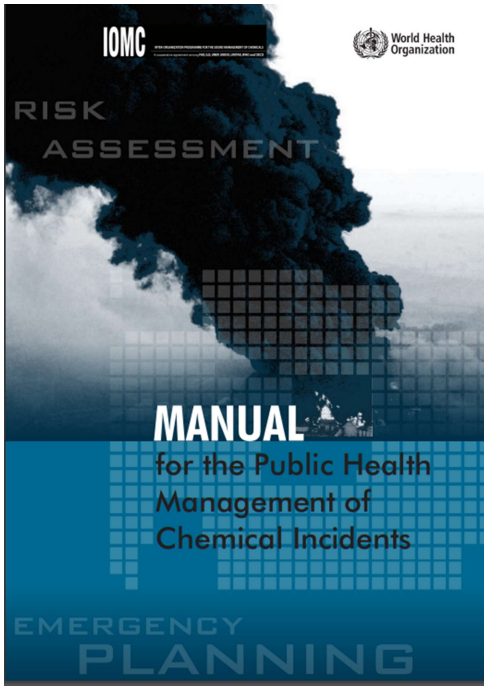
New and upcoming WHO guidelines



Just published



Published very soon



Update in progress

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Health topics: Chemical Safety and Chemical Incidents