Accelerating action

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Implementation Programme

"Industry Engagement and Action along Value Chains"

Construction Sector Implementation Programme

Draft Terms of Reference Annex 1 - Illustrative Activities, Workstreams and Areas of Collaboration

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About this document:

This document accompanies the Terms of Reference of the Construction Sector Implementation Programme under the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC). Developed with inputs from the Programme's initial Working Group, it presents illustrative activities, thematic workstreams and potential areas for collaboration to advance the sound management of chemicals and waste across construction value chains, particularly in support of GFC Target D6. The document is intended to guide stakeholder engagement, identify opportunities to build on existing initiatives and inform the development of the Programme's implementation workplan. The proposed activities are indicative and non-exhaustive and will be further refined through stakeholder consultations, priority-setting and the identification of implementation partners and resources.

Contributing partners and organizations: UNDP Cambodia; Ministry of Environment, Cambodia; Costa Rica Green Building Council; Bioregional; Habitable; Circular Innovation Lab; Tarkett; Hernán Baulo Darhanpe.

Annex 1 - GFC Construction Sector Implementation Programme TORs

Illustrative Activities, Workstreams and Areas of Collaboration - Companion document to the Draft Terms of Reference
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Purpose of this document

This Annex document accompanies the Terms of Reference for the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) Construction Sector Implementation Programme. It provides an indicative and non-exhaustive set of potential activities, workstreams and areas of collaboration through which stakeholders may contribute to the objectives of the Programme and the implementation of relevant GFC targets, particularly Target D6.

The document is intended to support stakeholder engagement, facilitate the identification of opportunities for collaboration, and inform the development of the Programme Workplan. It builds on the thematic areas identified in the Programme Terms of Reference and provides illustrative examples of how these areas could be translated into practical activities.
The activities presented in this document are not intended to constitute a fixed or mandatory workplan. Activities may be undertaken by individual organizations or through partnerships at local, national, regional or global levels and may involve public-sector, private-sector, academic, civil society and multi-stakeholder collaboration across construction value chains.

The further refinement, prioritisation, sequencing and operationalization of activities will be undertaken through the Construction Sector Working Group and reflected in the development and periodic update of the Programme Workplan, taking into account stakeholder inputs, regional and national priorities, available capacities and resources, and emerging scientific, technical and policy developments.

i. Awareness Raising and Knowledge Exchange

Illustrative activities may include:

- Development of targeted awareness materials, guidance notes, and training modules for architects, engineers, contractors, material manufacturers, developers, and policymakers on chemical risks and safer alternatives in construction.
- Sector-wide awareness campaigns and professional development programmes to integrate chemical safety into mainstream sustainability and circularity discourse within the construction sector.
- Engagement with existing stakeholder platforms and networks, including the GlobalABC, WorldGBC, One Planet Network, and professional associations.
- Development or support of knowledge-sharing platforms or hubs to consolidate scientific, regulatory, technical, and practical information relevant to chemicals in construction.
- Production of sector-specific narratives and communication materials linking chemicals management to indoor air quality, occupational health, biodiversity, climate, and circular economy objectives.

- Integration of chemical safety and sustainable chemistry topics into vocational training, university curricula, certification programmes, and continuing professional education.
- Facilitate peer-learning exchanges, communities of practice, and regional or thematic stakeholder dialogues to support knowledge-sharing and collaboration across the construction value chain.
- Organize workshops, webinars, and multi-stakeholder engagement forums to exchange lessons learned, showcase emerging practices, and strengthen coordination across initiatives.

ii. Transparency, Traceability, Data Availability, and Information Systems

Illustrative activities may include:

- Promotion of material inventories, material passports, building passports, and digital product information systems to support lifecycle traceability of chemicals in construction materials and products.
- Development of guidance and frameworks for ingredient disclosure and transparency in construction products and materials.
- Support for pilot projects integrating chemical information into Building Information Modelling (BIM) systems and other digital construction tools.
- Mapping of information and data flows across construction value chains to identify gaps in transparency and traceability.
- Promotion of systems that enable retrieval of chemical information across long building lifespans, including during renovation, deconstruction, reuse, and waste-processing stages.
- Promotion of harmonized data requirements, interoperability approaches, and open-access information systems where appropriate.

iii. Chemicals of Concern and Safer and More Sustainable Alternatives

Illustrative activities may include:

- Compilation and periodic refinement of lists of chemicals of concern relevant to major construction material categories, drawing on existing global inventories, scientific assessments, and regulatory frameworks.
- Mapping of functional uses of chemicals of concern across construction materials, products, and applications.
- Support for methodologies and approaches to assess chemicals of concern using hazard, exposure, risk, functionality, and volume-of-use criteria.
- Promotion of safer substitution approaches and guidance for high-impact material categories.
- Support for research and knowledge generation related to chemicals of concern in emerging construction materials and technologies.
- Facilitation of stakeholder dialogue and collaboration on phase-out pathways and safer and more sustainable alternatives.

iv. Life-Cycle Approaches, Circularity, and Sustainable Construction Systems

Illustrative activities may include:

- Promotion of life-cycle approaches, lifecycle assessment (LCA), and life-cycle costing methodologies that account for the long-term environmental and health impacts of chemical choices.
- Development of business cases and policy approaches supporting safer, more circular, and resource-efficient construction systems.
- Promotion of safer material selection, material efficiency, design-for-deconstruction approaches, and strategies that support material longevity and safe reuse, recovery, and recycling.
- Development of protocols and approaches to prevent hazardous substances from re-entering material loops through recycling and reuse processes.
- Support for safer construction and demolition waste (CDW) management practices, including segregation, hazard identification, and information transfer.
- Pilot projects demonstrating safe reuse and circularity approaches for construction materials and products.
- Promotion of innovation in green and sustainable chemistry, low-toxicity materials, and safer construction technologies and processes.
- Promote procurement approaches that incorporate chemical safety, lifecycle impacts, circularity, and safer material selection criteria within public and private construction projects.

v. Sustainable Chemicals and Waste Strategies, Inclusive Implementation Approaches, and Policy Alignment

Illustrative activities may include:

- Development of sustainable chemicals and waste management strategies aligned with GFC Target D6 at organizational, project, sectoral, or national levels.
- Integration of chemical considerations into sustainability, circularity, procurement, and infrastructure policies and frameworks.
- Promotion of gender-responsive and inclusive implementation approaches, including consideration of vulnerable and highly exposed groups across the construction value chain.
- Development of construction-sector chemical management plans and guidance at building, portfolio, corporate, or public-sector levels.
- Collaboration with financial institutions, insurers, developers, and procurement bodies to incentivize safer and more sustainable chemical management practices.
- Facilitation of alignment and coordination between existing sector initiatives, standards, voluntary frameworks, and public policy approaches.
- Support context-appropriate implementation approaches in developing and emerging economies, taking into account differing regulatory capacities, market conditions, technical infrastructure, and access to information.
- Promote coordination, interoperability, and mutual learning across existing initiatives, standards, certification systems, and policy frameworks relevant to chemicals and sustainability in the construction sector.

vi. Protection of Human Health and the Environment Across the Construction Life Cycle

Illustrative activities may include:

- Development of sector-specific guidance to reduce chemical exposures in manufacturing, construction, indoor environments, demolition, recycling, and waste management activities.
- Support for monitoring and assessment of occupational exposures, indoor air pollutants, dust emissions, leaching, runoff, and contamination associated with construction activities and materials.
- Promotion of chemical safety considerations within building codes, procurement criteria, certification schemes, technical standards, and voluntary frameworks.
- Support for implementation, compliance, monitoring, testing, enforcement, and capacity-building related to chemicals and waste management measures, particularly in resource-constrained contexts.
- Development of indicators, metrics, reporting approaches, benchmarking methodologies, and assessment tools to evaluate, track, and reduce chemical impacts across construction value chains and support progress toward safer and more sustainable chemicals and waste management practices.
- Promotion of preventive and safer-by-design approaches, including safer installation methods, improved handling practices, and reduction of hazardous exposures for workers and surrounding communities.