



**MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF CHEMICAL  
SAFETY AND SECURITY PROGRAMME**

**BY**

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## BACKGROUND

1. As you may be aware, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) materials are indispensable in many economic activities and are a vital part of everyday life. They provide society with a wide range of benefits, particularly in agriculture (e.g. fertilizers), industry (e.g. industrial chemicals for manufacturing) and health sectors (e.g. diagnosis and treatment of diseases).
2. However, CBRNE materials if misused or failure to follow best practice from production, transportation, use and disposal have potential to cause high risk to the safety and health of the citizens. The risks range from accidental spillages to intentional use by terrorist for the production of weapons of mass destruction.
3. Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has embarked on implementing the Chemical Safety and security Project (CHESASE), which is aimed at strengthening institutional technical and operational capabilities in (CBRNE) safety and security measures at workplaces.
4. The CHESASE Project has two important aspects that need to be clarified right from the on-set. That is;

**Safety:** This refers to the measures to prevent non-deliberate releases of CBRNE materials to the environment and to mitigate the impact if such events occur.

**Security.** Measures to prevent deliberate release of CBRNE materials and to mitigate the impact if such events occur. In a wider context, it also includes policies to prevent attempts to acquire precursors to weapons of mass destruction.

5. The Programme is expected to contribute to enhancement of Uganda's ability to mitigate and prevent CBRNE safety and security risks/incidents from occurring through: -
  - i. strengthening effective detection, prevention and response of CBRNE Security and Security measures at workplaces;
  - ii. promoting education and awareness to the MDAs and general public on CBRNE Safety and Security at workplaces;

- iii. promoting civil-military coordination in the CBRNE emergency response planning and management.
6. The effects of the CBRNE incident are multi-dimensional in nature and impact the development of the country negatively. They require multi-sectoral approach. Therefore, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs (UPDF), Ministry of Internal Affairs (Uganda Police Force), Uganda Revenue Authority and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development **are in the forefront of the implementation of this project.**
7. The Action Plan of the CHESASE Project is based on four thematic areas of emergency management, which include;

i. **Prevention**

These are actions undertaken in advance. Sometimes this is referred to as mitigation. Prevention activities should be happening all the time. These activities include providing funding, technical and legal assistance, information as well as training on CBRNE management.

ii. **Preparedness**

Making arrangements, creating and testing plans, training, educating and sharing information to prepare the general public should an emergency occur. These are also ACTIONS and they are happening all the time.

Government intends to work with partners to develop combined response plans, training protocols, detection equipment and interoperability standards, mutual aid agreements, conduct exercises, share intelligence and threat information.

iii. **Response**

The assistance and intervention during or immediately after an emergency. Focus is on saving lives and protecting community assets (buildings, roads, animals, crops, infrastructure). This will involve enhancing national operational response capabilities for CBRNE incidents within the National Emergency Response System

#### iv. **Recovery**

The coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in reconstruction of physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.

Recovering from a CBRNE incident poses significant challenges. The Government of Uganda will continue to develop national recovery mechanisms for major emergencies, including those with CBRNE elements.

### **PROGRESS ON THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

The Chemical Safety and Security Project has so far achieved the following under each component.

#### **Component 1: CBRNE Detection, Prevention and Response**

- i. Acquisition of Equipment and Tools. So far Aerosal monitor, Handheld Compound-Specific VOC Monitor and Personal Protective Equipment have been secured. Handheld Compound-Specific VOC Monitor is used to monitor benzene and total volatile organic compound while Aerosal monitor specifically measures aerosol contaminants such as dust, smoke, fumes, and mists, indoor air quality.
- ii. Draft National Emergency and Response Plan is in place;
- iii. Draft National CBRNE Safety Policy is in place;
- iv. Technical Administrative Procedures and Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health are in Place (Workplace Registration, Architectural Approvals, Plant & Equipment Certification, Inspection and Accident Investigation);
- v. Action Plan for removal of Asbestos roofing materials from public structures has been developed;
- vi. CHESASE Information Management System is being developed;
- vii. Technical Regulations on Toxic Chemicals and Prohibition have been finalized;
- viii. CBRNE Emergency Command Centre is being established
- ix. Draft National Civil-Military Coordination Framework is in place
- x. Terms of Reference for conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a CBRNE Center of Excellence Academy have been developed.

## **Component 2: Information, Education and Awareness**

- xi. 70 employers and 150 employees from the central and western Uganda have been trained and sensitized on CBRNE safety and security management
- xii. 50 OSH inspectors have been trained on pesticide handling. This training was aimed at imparting skills for investigation for chemical related accidents and incidents in the agricultural sector and also to provide knowledge on the different types of chemicals used in agriculture.
- xiii. 2 EAC Sub-regional trainings on Assistance and Protection in Chemical weapons have been undertaken at Uganda Rapid Deployment Capability Centre, Kimaka with participants from Rwanda, Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda.
- xiv. The Ministry with support from the Organisation of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and United Kingdom trained officers from Uganda Police Force and Uganda Peoples Defence Forces on Assistance and Protection against Chemical incidents and accidents

## **Component 3: Project Management Component**

- xvi. The Project Management Unit is in place. Project Steering Committee has been constituted as well as Technical Working Committees on Chemical, Radiation, Nuclear, Biological, Explosives.
- xvii. The Project has acquired both transport and office equipment (computers, furniture, motor vehicles).

## **NEXT STEPS OCTOBER 2018 TO JULY 2019**

- i. Acquisition of more equipment and tools for detection, sampling, response, decontamination and medical counter measures;
- ii. Finalise the National Chemicals Profile;
- iii. Finalise the National Emergency and Response Plan;
- iv. Finalise the Uganda National CBRNE Safety Policy;

- v. Embark on the process of formulation Uganda National CBRNE Safety Bill;
- vi. Embark on the process establishment of National CBRNE Centre of Excellence Academy
- vii. Hold a National Private Sector Forum on CBRNE
- viii. Finalise the CHESASE Information Management System
- ix. In collaboration with Ministry of Education and Sports mainstream CBRNE in Educational Institutions
- x. Finalise the CBRNE Emergency Command Centre
- xi. Finalise the National Civil-Military Coordination Framework
- xii. Sectoral/Industry specific sensitization and training programmes developed

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