



OPCW

Technical Secretariat

International Cooperation and Assistance Division

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NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

LABORATORY-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Purpose

1. The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) wishes to inform Member States of the existence of its Laboratory-Assistance Programme, which is aimed at improving the technical competence of laboratories in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition. The programme is implemented by the International Cooperation and Assistance Division and is essentially based on the need to strengthen national capacities for chemical analysis and monitoring, as an important element in enabling Member States to implement Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”).

Scope of the programme

2. In the context of economic and technological development, Article XI of the Convention emphasises the right of Member States to engage in development and application of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under the Convention which include industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical, and other peaceful purposes. In order to meaningfully engage in such activities, as well to fulfil the various other obligations imposed by the Convention, it is necessary for each Member State to have a sound technical base for management of chemicals for which adequate capacities for analysis and monitoring have to be set up.
3. Under the Laboratory-Assistance Programme, analytical and testing laboratories that have already an adequate infrastructure, but which could benefit from an increased level of technical competence to promote economic and technological development, may apply for support from the OPCW. Projects that involve regional cooperation and networking among laboratories or those that promote “twinning” between laboratories at the international or regional level would be considered particularly worthy of support. In addition, the programme renders assistance to laboratories that may wish to seek OPCW designation for off-site analysis of authentic samples.



4. Without precluding any other forms of assistance, the specific type(s) of activities that may be considered for support may include any or a combination of the following:
 - (a) conduct of technical evaluation or audit of the laboratory by an expert(s) so as to improve its level of competence;
 - (b) preparation for gaining accreditation from recognised international, regional or national bodies, e.g. preparation of quality manual, guidelines and standard operating procedures, synthesis or preparation of reference materials etc;
 - (c) training of technical personnel at an advanced laboratory/institution for development of skills;
 - (d) participation of key staff in relevant scientific seminars or conferences that may relate to laboratory quality management, technical competence, etc.;
 - (e) internship at an accredited laboratory for skills development, method development research, validation of analytical techniques with reference to international or national standards, etc.;
 - (f) participating in or organising national or regional courses or specialised seminars at the laboratory with the help of an accredited laboratory, accreditation body, expert, etc; and
 - (g) conduct of small-scale research projects relating to method development, validation etc. which can lead to the strengthening of the technical competence of the laboratory.

Nature of assistance

5. The assistance to be provided under the programme will be basically in the form of financial support for the activities mentioned in the preceding paragraph, including travel grants, as per OPCW norms. Proposals for support under the programme should, therefore, clearly indicate the institution/laboratory from which the expert technical assistance/training, including placement programmes, will be made available for undertaking the proposed activities. A copy of the letter of acceptance from the concerned institution/laboratory in this regard should be enclosed with the proposal.

Funding

6. Funding under the programme may be provided either exclusively by the OPCW, or jointly by the OPCW and another donor/funding organisation. However, the OPCW will not fund any acquisition of hardware or other forms of investment costs. Where grants are to be paid to the applicant institution, the same will be done in two instalments. The first instalment will be paid at the beginning of the project, and the second and final instalment on completion of the project, upon receipt of a report, including a financial statement of expenses.

Eligibility

7. Recognised laboratories that are publicly funded in the Member States would be eligible for seeking support under the programme. These laboratories could be engaged in the application of chemistry in any area relevant to the Convention, including health, medicine, environment, food, agriculture, forensic science, customs, or research.

Criteria for selection

8. The laboratory should demonstrate that it has an adequate infrastructure for the particular area of chemical analysis it wishes to benefit from an increased level of technical competence. All prospective applicants are requested to complete the attached form, annexed hereto. The form is divided into three parts. The first part is essentially a self-assessment of the needs and an analysis of available capacities and resources. This will enable the Secretariat to evaluate the laboratory vis-à-vis its role in the national development context, its specific functions, its level of expertise, the level of support that would be most suitable and the problems it faces in upgrading itself. The second part requires the laboratory to specify the support it needs from the OPCW, along with a time frame and a budgetary breakdown, as well as a summary of the relevance of the request to the country's development goals and to the Convention. The Secretariat will not support the acquisition of laboratory equipment or hardware, or other forms of investment. The third part is to be completed by the National Authority/Permanent Representation to the OPCW only.

Application procedure

9. Applications may be submitted at any time. Laboratories that are interested in availing themselves of this programme are requested to complete the attached application form, and forward it to either the National Authority of the Member State in question or their Permanent Representation to the OPCW. The National Authority/Permanent Representation is expected to indicate its support for the proposal and, in particular, to confirm that the proposed project is in line with national objectives and priorities for the peaceful applications of chemistry. The National Authority/Permanent Representation should forward the completed application form to the International Cooperation and Assistance Division, International Cooperation Branch.
10. In the case of regional cooperation or twinning projects, each participating laboratory is requested to complete a separate application form and forward the same through their National Authority/Permanent Representation.
11. Further information may be obtained from the International Cooperation and Assistance Division, OPCW, Johan de Wittlaan 32, 2517 JR The Hague, the Netherlands; telephone: +31 (0)70 416 3843; fax: +31 (0)70 416 3279 or +31 (0)70 306 3535; e-mail: icb@opcw.org.

Annex: Laboratory-Assistance Programme Application Form

Annex**LABORATORY-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME
APPLICATION FORM**

- (a) Applications for support from the OPCW are to be made on this form. Before completing the form, please read the guidelines presented in the accompanying Note by the Secretariat to confirm your eligibility for financial support under the programme.
- (b) Applications may be made at any time.
- (c) The applicant institution should complete this form, and send it to either the appropriate **National Authority**, or the **Permanent Representation to the OPCW** requesting that section 13 be completed.
- (d) The National Authority, or the Permanent Representation to the OPCW, should then submit the completed form to the International Cooperation Branch, International Cooperation and Assistance Division, OPCW, Johan de Wittlaan 32, 2517 JR, The Hague, the Netherlands.

PART I	
1. The laboratory	
Name of laboratory	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
E-mail	
Normal functions or mandate of the laboratory (what is its role?)	
Is the laboratory operated independently?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If part of another establishment (e.g. government department, research centre, hospital, university, municipality, etc.), please specify
Size of the laboratory (in square metres)	
Source of financing of the laboratory	<input type="checkbox"/> Public funding <input type="checkbox"/> Private funding <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
How long has the laboratory been operational? (number of years)	

Are there any formal relationships or agreements with equipment suppliers for maintenance and training?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes", give details
5. Reagents and reference materials	
Source of reagents	
Any problems in availability	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Source of reference materials	
Any problems in availability	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Comments	
6. Research experience	
Does the laboratory conduct research (e.g. method development and validation, preparation of reference materials with reference to national or international standards, etc.)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please describe (e.g. list recent publications on the subject)	
7. Quality assurance programmes	
Does the laboratory have a formal quality system?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the laboratory have an internal quality assurance programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the laboratory take part in an external quality assurance programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes", please describe
Does the laboratory take part in any type of inter-laboratory testing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes", please describe with results achieved
Comments	
8. Accreditation	
Is the laboratory formally accredited?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes", by which body?
If "Yes", describe the scope of accreditation and to which standard (e.g. ISO). If not, describe the type of activities for which accreditation is desired:	

Indicate the relevance of the proposed request to the Chemical Weapons Convention:	
PART III (for National Authority/Permanent Representation use only)	
14. Comments/recommendation of the National Authority/Permanent Representation to the OPCW (to be signed with the seal/stamp of the designated authority)	
Signature, with seal or stamp, of an authorised representative of the National Authority or of the Permanent Representation to the OPCW	Date: _____
_____	_____