

The IUPAC-UNESCO-UNIDO Safety Training Program

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While industries in developed countries are introducing sophisticated safety measures covering operational, health and environmental aspects in close interaction with governments and the public, there is a gap between developed and developing countries in safety education, research and implementation of technical measures. The increase in chemical production and consumption in the developing world makes it essential to promote interactions to disseminate state-of-the-art knowledge on safety and environmental protection in chemical production. The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations International Development Organization (UNIDO) have implemented a joint training program for safety and environmental protection in chemical, pharmaceutical and biotechnological research and production. The IUPAC-UNESCO-UNIDO Safety Training Program allows safety training experts from developing countries to learn about safety and environmental protective measures by visiting and working in plants of IUPAC Company Associates in the industrialized world. The Program is part of a broadly based safety initiative by the IUPAC Committee on Chemistry and Industry that also includes sponsorship of Workshops on Safety in Chemical Production.

Safety Training Program Fellows are professional scientists and engineers who are currently involved at a supervisory or managerial level in chemical companies, government institutions or scientific institutions; engaged in aspects of safety and environmental protection in chemical, pharmaceutical, or biotechnological production or in the teaching of these fields; and have the ability to influence safety practices in their places of employment and elsewhere within their home country. Since 2000, eight Fellows from China, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Turkey, and Uruguay have received training in areas such as process safety management, environmental protection, HAZOP/HAZAN analysis, Responsible Care, ISO 9000 and 14000 series initiatives, and Legislative measures and interaction between industry, universities, government and the public. Fellows are required to submit a detailed report on their training and are then expected to disseminate and implement their learnings in their home countries. Our recent trainees have an impressive record of success in effecting positive change in health, safety and environmental quality, and the Safety Training Program looks forward to continuing to contribute to capacity building in the developing world.