Developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the BTWC

Some Insights from the OPCW Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO)

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International Workshop on Cooperation and Assistance under Article X of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
Organised by the BTWC Implementation Support Unit and the Government of Norway
Geneva, 22 June 2018
Establishment of ABEO

• **Decision by the OPCW Executive Council (8 October 2015)**
  • Document EC-80/DEC.5
  • Confirmed at the 20th Session of the Conference of States Parties (December 2015)

• **Mandate**
  • Advice to the Director-General
  • On matters relating to education, outreach and awareness-raising, and public diplomacy
  • Concerning the CWC and its (domestic) implementation
  • In relation to States Parties and key stakeholder communities

• **Scope**
  • Deepening the involvement of the stakeholder community in the prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons
  • Current and planned activities that fall under education, outreach and awareness-raising, and public diplomacy
Composition of ABEO

- **15 Nationalities**
  - Africa
    - Kenya, Morocco, South Africa
  - Asia
    - China, India, Iraq, Japan
  - Eastern Europe
    - Poland, Russian Federation
  - Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC)
    - Argentina, Mexico
  - Western Europe and Other States (WEOG)
    - Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom, United States

- **Appointment**
  - 3 Years (once renewable)
  - However, no limitation on duration of ABEO

- **Observers**
  - 2 permanent observers:
    - International Union for Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)
    - International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA)
  - Non-permanent observers
Some core points for consideration

• **Need for common understandings**
  • Terminological clarity for future discussions
  • Identification of potential stakeholder communities
  • Differentiation between ‘targets’ and ‘partners’ among the stakeholders
    • The same stakeholder community may be partner under certain circumstance, while ‘target’ in other ones

• **Need for the ABEO to reach out to**
  • Stakeholder communities
  • State Parties
  • Constituencies within the Technical Secretariat
  • OPCW Scientific Advisory Board
  • Other international organisations with a view of identifying and developing possible synergies

• **Identification and clarification of strategic (longer-term) goals**
  • Evaluation of tasks and activities in function of changing circumstances
  • Development of multi- and cross-disciplinary approaches
  • Identification, elaboration and prioritisation of issue areas
Outline of stakeholder interactions (OPCW context)
2018 ABEO report on E&O

- Published in February 2018
- Contents:
  - Latest status educational theory & practice
  - Portfolio of recommended activities
  - Practical ‘How to ...?’ suggestions
- Recommendations on:
  - General approach (e.g. active learning)
  - Projects to be pursued
  - Concrete actions to be undertaken
  - Who should undertake the projects or activities
- Recommendations for:
  - OPCW Technical Secretariat
  - CWC States Parties (National Authorities)
  - Stakeholder communities (including scientists, academia & industry)
- Launch of a central organising theme for E&O: ‘preventing the re-emergence of Chemical Weapons’
  - Gives focus
  - Gives common purpose (recognition)
Common understandings

• **Education as a strategy**
  • Covers different goals & strategies
  • Formality and goal orientation
  • Builds on prior knowledge, expertise and skills
  • Context and setting will determine best methodology and degree of formality

• **Outreach as a strategy**
  • Supplements policies or activities by official bodies, and may rely on activities by other communities, such as civil society constituencies;
  • Seeks out potential target audiences and then reaches out to them;
  • Often aims to develop and nurture constituencies to sustain an entity’s goals;
  • Informs or assists rather than instructs target audiences.
• Importance of having a national focal point (NFP)
  • Implementation of the BTWC
  • Organisation of outreach to key stakeholders in a State Party

• Potential educational needs:
  • Have officials discover why it is important to them to have maximal BTWC implementation?
  • Have officials discover why it is important to them to engage with stakeholders?
  • Build up knowledge for officials: Do they know what is necessary? How can they know?

• Potential benefits from educational strategy:
  • Enhanced domestic appreciation of importance of full BTWC implementation
  • Articulation of Article XI expectations
  • Improved 2-way communication of Article X needs and opportunities between capitals and delegations

• Requires a longer-term strategic approach
  • Will create an enabling platform for international cooperation and BTWC implementation
E&O relevant to Article X and in support of BTWC - 2

- **Possible concrete actions through E&O**
  - Connect NFPs with relevant national and international networks: discover *why* and *how*?
  - Like key stakeholder communities to those networks: let them discover *why* and *how*?
  - Raise awareness of dual-use risks, regulations, norms and (international) obligations to enhance integration in those networks
  - Let stakeholders identify their concrete expectations/requests from international cooperation

- **Roles for the BTWC Implementation Support Unit?**
  - Have offers and options for E&O included in the Article X database
  - Have ISU staff trained in E&O practices (*active learning*)
    - *Engage* participants in the discovery process during workshops
    - Communication of facts and BTWC status *can be done* via factsheets
    - In events, foresee at least *one major interactive session* where participants from different (national and/or professional) backgrounds actively engage with each other *to share insights, expectations and experiences*
Thank you

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