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A UWI/ICGEB Biosafety Training Workshop on "Risk Communication for GMOs"

24-26 October 2016, Magdalena Grand Beach Resort, Tobago



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Background

Formalised frameworks for biotechnology regulation afford structured, reasoned approaches to assess, manage, and communicate knowledge in ways that build trust in judgements of the acceptability of risk. Trust and knowledge accrue when regulatory frameworks are transparent and risk communication ensures that stakeholders, including government officials, researchers, industry and the public, are informed and engaged as part of the regulatory process. This workshop seeks to enhance the skills, knowledge and capacity to communicate effectively about the potential risks from GMOs. The key issues and challenges to risk communication in selected countries and how these are being addressed in a cost effective but efficient manner will be discussed. Participants will be exposed to the principles of risk communication, including the concept of stakeholder analysis which is used to target and shape stakeholder engagement. In addition, the importance of simple, clear language will be demonstrated in the formulation of fact sheets to address common misconceptions about GMOs. Finally workshop participants will take part in a practical session to develop a biosafety communication strategy to support national regulatory goals. The workshop will be highly interactive in nature with the primary mechanism of learning based on the use of hands-on exercises in breakout groups to develop the relevant materials through the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

Final Programme

Tuesday 25 October

09:00	Registration	Participants
09:15	Welcome address	Prof. Pathmanathan Umaharan University of West Indies (TTO)
09:30	Introduction to Caribbean biosafety enhancement activities	Michelle John University of West Indies (TTO)
09:40	Introduction to the Activities of the ICGEB Biosafety Group & Introduction to Workshop Format	Wendy Craig ICGEB (ITA)
10:00	Participant self-presentations	
10:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:00	Does the lack of GMO/Biosafety regulation prevent biotechnology R&D in the Caribbean Region?	Prof. Pathmanathan Umaharan
11:30	Principles of risk communication <i>Identifying and understanding your audience, and developing messages</i>	Mike Wach Michael Wach Consultancy (USA)
12:15	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to identify typical community attitudes in the region towards GMOs	All Resource Team
13:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	

14:00	Report back to plenary	Participants
15:00	Introduction to stakeholder mapping	Barbara M Zawedde Uganda Biosciences Information Center (UGA)
16:00	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to identify critical stakeholders	All Resource Team
17:00	<i>End of the day</i>	

Wednesday 26 October

09:00	Report back to plenary	Participants
09:30	Introduction to message packaging	Barbara M Zawedde
10:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:00	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to develop message-map for the different concerns identified on Day one	All Resource Team
13:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
14:00	Report back to plenary	Participants
14:30	Identifying effective channels of communication	Mike Wach
15:30	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to identify most effective channels for communicating with the key stakeholders mapped on Day One	All Resource Team
16:30	Report back to plenary	Participants
17:00	<i>End of the day</i>	

Thursday 27 October

09:00	Introduction to effective media relations	Barbara M Zawedde
10:00	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to provide a list of typical difficult or trick questions used by reporters, and discuss positive responses that the participants can put to memory	All Resource Team
11:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:30	Mock Media Interviews based on role play, with comments from Groups	Participants
13:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
14:00	Introduction to adapting the regional communication strategy document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do risk communication? • What are the key objectives? • How will objectives be achieved? • How can success be measured? 	Wendy Craig ICGEB
14:30	Break-out groups Participants split into groups and tasked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft a national communication strategy, based on the regional strategy document • Incorporate the stakeholder map, the example message and communication channel • Indicate how success will be measured 	
15:30	Report back to plenary	Participants
16:00	<i>Closure of the workshop</i>	