Institutional Strengthening is defined as enhancing the sustainable institutional capacity of Governments to develop, adopt, monitor and enforce policy, legislation and regulation. The Special Programme helps Governments gain access to financial and other resources for effective frameworks for the implementation of tools for the sound management of chemicals and wastes throughout their life cycle. The Special Programme supports institutional strengthening by providing funds for countries to focus on improving:

**Technically Driven Components**

**Policy, legislation and regulation:** Developing and monitoring the implementation of national policies, strategies, programmes and legislation.

**Financial and other resources:** Working in a multi-sectoral and transparent manner over a long-term period to integrate an effective financing mechanism or plan for ensuring long-term financial sustainability of mechanisms that support the work of relevant institutional structures.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Facilitating multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation at the national level while promoting private sector responsibility, accountability and involvement.

**Organizational Structure:** Promoting the effective implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

**Monitoring and Enforcement:** Promoting the adoption, monitoring and enforcement of legislation and regulatory frameworks for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

**National Priority components**

Assessing National priorities facilitates the mainstreaming of the sound management of chemicals and waste into national development plans, budgets, policies, legislation and implementation frameworks across all levels. This also includes addressing gaps and avoiding duplication. These can also be informed by the country’s obligations towards the chemicals and waste related MEAs and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Chemicals are integral to almost all sectors of society, such as medicine and agriculture. However, if not managed properly, chemicals and waste can pose risks to our health and ecosystems—resulting in substantial costs to national economies and even human life. The Special Programme, also known as the Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, aims to support eligible countries in strengthening their institutions. This enables them to soundly manage their chemicals and waste, and to meet their international obligations—through the development and implementation of policies, legislation, and regulation at the national level.
Impact/Key results to date (March 2020)

Contributions are encouraged from all signatories and Parties to the Conventions. Governments in a position to do so, as well as the private sector and other stakeholders, are also encouraged to mobilize the financial resources for the effective establishment and implementation of the Special Programme.

Long term outlook

The Special Programme is currently funding 42 active projects.

The funded projects address a wide range of national priorities such as:

- Establishing mechanisms to better engage the private sector in the field of the sound management of chemicals and waste in Argentina.
- Updating and improving national chemicals and waste related regulation in Palau.
- Implementing effective monitoring and enforcement protocols in Eswatini through effective capacity building.
- Improving the Republic of Moldova’s reporting under the chemicals and waste under the Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

As projects come to and end in the coming years, a deeper assessment of impact of these projects at the national level will take place with the view to establish best practice and lessons learned as a model for other countries wishing to implement similar projects.

About United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UNEP works with governments, the private sector, civil society and with other UN entities and international organizations around the world.

About the Chemicals and Waste Programme

The Special Programme, also known as the Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, provides support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to enhance their sustainable institutional capacity to develop, adopt, monitor and enforce policy, legislation and regulation for effective frameworks for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM.