



a toxics-free future

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International SAICM Implementation Project (ISIP)

In 2010, in an effort to demonstrate SAICM implementation via IPEN Participating Organizations, IPEN launched an International SAICM Implementation Project, also known as ISIP. ISIP aims to mobilize resources for initial enabling activities pertaining to national priorities, in keeping with the work areas set out in the strategic objectives of section IV of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy.

In particular, the ISIP supports the Governance objective of SAICM's Overarching Policy Strategy paragraph 26, which calls for enhanced "cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels."

In addition, ISIP builds on the 2008-2009 Global SAICM Outreach Campaign to raise awareness about SAICM and strengthen collaboration among the public interest, health and labor sectors.

ISIP Objectives

ISIP's four objectives include:

- Promoting the need for sound chemicals management
- Advancing National SAICM Implementation
- Promoting global SAICM implementation by global civil society
- Building capacity among NGOs developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Title of activity: Strengthening Community Participation for Safety against Chemical Pollution

NGO: Cavite Green Coalition

Country: Philippines

Date: December 2010

Elements of SAICM Covered:

Include civil society representatives in Government committees formulating, carrying out and monitoring SAICM implementation plans, or useful inputs into the process where NGOs encounter barriers to their substantive direct participation, broad and meaningful participation of stakeholders, including women, at all levels in devising responses to chemicals management challenges and in regulatory and decision-making processes that relate to chemical safety (164, 206)

Project Outcomes:

Description of the activity conducted or type of participation that was organized:

The project is part of a citizen campaign to close the operations of Cleanway Technology Corporation (CTC), a toxic and hazardous waste treatment facility in Barangay Maguyam,

Silang, Cavite. Sixty-seven men, women and children were hospitalized in October 2009 due to toxic fumes allegedly emanating from the facility, prompting the citizens to launch their campaign. Responding to community pressure, the local government stopped the operations of CTC, but it was reopened in December 2009. Project activities will strengthen the campaign and influence local governmental policy on chemical safety. The community requested assistance from Cavite Green and project activities were designed and planned together with the community members during their campaign planning.

Activities:

Conducted an orientation seminar on Chemical Safety - This gave awareness to 40 men and women about the characteristics of chemicals of concern, their health impacts and emergency first aid procedures in case of pollution. The seminar included residents and village officials.

Documentation and collation of cases of victims of pollution - With the assistance of a lawyer, sworn statements of 29 men, women and children who experienced health issues as result of discharges from the toxic waste facility were documented.

Medical examination and testing of selected residents for presence of heavy metals - Ten individuals were brought to the National Poison Management and Control Center of the University of the Philippines – Philippine General Hospital for medical examination, and five patients were selected for testing for heavy metal poisoning/contamination.

Preparation and submission of a position paper and policy recommendations on Chemical Safety – The paper and recommendations were submitted to the Provincial Government of Cavite and the Municipal Government of Silang.

Impact on target groups:

The project helped meet the long term objective of increasing the capacity of community residents and local authorities to assess chemical safety issues and to make informed decisions regarding chemical safety.

Forty-four participants attended the Chemical Safety Seminar. In addition, Attorney Candelaria, Dean of the College of Law, conducted a paralegal seminar workshop for 31 community members on February 7, 2010. Selected community leaders also attended the seminars held by Ecowaste Coalition about Chemical Safety and Precautionary Principles.

Deliverables, outputs and/or products:

- Basic Chemical Safety Orientation Seminar Agenda and Participant List
- Sworn legal statements of 47 residents about their experiences resulting from the emissions and discharges from CTC
- Position Paper on Chemical Safety

Description of communication efforts:

Letters of complaint were sent to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Laguna Lake Development Authority, Municipal Mayor of Silang, Cavite and Department of Health,

Information and media campaigns on the issue resulted in television coverage and presentation of the issue to various parishes in the province.