



**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:** Advancing the SAICM Mission: Convening Multi-Sectoral National Nepalese SAICM Implementation Forums

**NGO:** Forum for Justice

**Country:** Nepal

**Date:** December 2012

### **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)

### **Description of Stockholm Convention or SAICM implementation-related policy processes that you have participated in or contributed to:**

Forum for Justice participated in creating a platform that provided opportunities to share information and provide detailed information about the SAICM. This has also enhanced the

realisation to work together among policy makers, civil society and corporate sectors to address the issues of chemical safety and make a firm dedication to contribute to achieve SAICM 2020 objectives. The process included participatory discussion and proactive sharing of information related mainly to POPs, lead, mercury and e-waste areas.

### **Description of NGO positions, priorities and concerns with the process:**

Forum for Justice has long been doing advocacy for environmental justice and equity in Nepal at the policy level. Every environmental issue that concerns the environment and public health is obviously the concern for FFJ.

It was essential to participate in the NGO participation element of SAICM for some credible reasons. First, there was little awareness among the policy makers, industrialists and other governmental line agencies about what exactly SAICM was and what it covers under its broader framework. It was therefore necessary to discuss this issue beyond the focal ministry and raise awareness about the international conventions and programmes for which other particular line ministries are directly responsible to implement the convention and thus to achieve SAICM objective.

### **Project Outcomes:**

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

**A. Round Table Meetings (RTMs):** All together 4 RTMs were organised each on POPs, Lead (Pb, Mercury (Hg) and E-waste. In each RTM, an introduction to the ISIP Project and SAICM was given in detail. Likewise few theme specific slides were also included during the presentation. A brief discussion and outcome of each RTM are given below under the respective theme. After the presentation, following three key questions were shared for brainstorm

- What are the opportunities to harmonize national policies?
- What are the emerging issues?
- Targets in the run up to SAICM 2020 (multi-phases targets- (2012, 2015 and 2020)

**(i) RTM on POPs:** In POPs RTM, there were 7 participants representing key ministries, organizations and specific background in relation to POPs in total. The RTM on POPs was organised on 11 February 2011. Following major thoughts were shared during the meeting:

- Government of Nepal has to immediately list nasty nine as prohibited chemical substance;
- National Implementation Plan (NIP) should be fully operationalised;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives needs to harmonize its old Pesticides Act sooner;
- Ministry of Environment and Nepal Electricity Authority need to collect PCB contained transformer oil in a single place from various points for safe disposal;
- A time-bound and multi phases dedicated plan should be prepared in the lead up to SAICM 2020 objectives;
- Ministry of Environment should create a SAICM platform and national chemical profile without any delay.
- Ministry of Environment should coordinate for immediate return of obsolete pesticides from Nepal

Importantly, following decisions made at the POPs RTM:

- A National SAICM Platform will be proposed as an agenda item in all RTM and seek to gain endorse on it from National workshop. Forum for Justice will host the national platform.
- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives will embark upon amending Pesticides Act. Forum for Justice will provide legal support during the amendment or draft of new bill.
- A national SAICM implementation roadmap will be prepared and shared ;

**(ii) RTM on Lead (Pb):** RTM on Lead was held on 20 February 2011 at the Forum office. Mr. Narayan Belbase welcomed the participants and provided a brief background about Forum for Justice its endeavor to promote environmental justice in Nepal since its establishment. Mr. Keshav Sharma gave a detailed presentation on SAICM, lead and its environmental and health impacts, needs of national efforts. At the end of the presentation three questions were shared to shape the discussions.

Major discussions included:

- Lead in Paints in Nepal has found much higher;
- Government standards are voluntary and not mandatory;
- There are no updated information available on use and quantity of lead;
- Private companies and paint industries are completely free rider and not controlled by any agencies;
- Currently because of prolonged load-shedding of electricity, there are massive supplies of lead contained batteries in the market. This has continuously adding lead in the environment and society

Major consent and decisions of the meeting:

- There is a need of separate Standards Enforcing and Monitoring Institution as NBSM's role is to propose standards which are volunteer and can not enforce standards implementation;
- Government needs to undertake a comprehensive study on current status of Lead in the market;
- Endorse the formation of National SAICM Platform proposed by FORJUST.

**(iii) RTM on Mercury (Hg):** RTM on Mercury was held on 20 April 2011 at the Forum office.

Major discussions included:

- Use of mercury contained equipment is increasing mainly due to CFL;
- Medical system can be a point from where government can start with controlling mercury;
- There are information that Brick Klin used coals also generate Mercury as it has contained the same;
- Types, source and use of Hg in the society and market need to be studied in detail;
- Custom data are not complete enough to provide list.
- Level of awareness about the health impact is very low among public.
- Government itself is promoting the use of mercury by offering one free CFL free while purchasing one.
- Alternate to mercury contained to be identified

Major consent and decisions of the meeting:

- MoHP and MoE need to formulate Hazardous Waste Guidelines to regulate the use of ha ;
- Government needs to undertake a comprehensive study on current status of Hg in the market;
- Endorse the formation of National SAICM Platform proposed by FORJUST.
- Government to encourage and collaborate academic institutions and research organisations to undertake study to find the exact contain of Hg in imported vegetables, products and fruits.

**(iv) RTM on E-waste:** RTM on e-waste was held on 30 April 2011 at the Forum office. It was participated by 6 participants from MoE and MoLD.

Major discussions included:

- E-waste is a serious growing problem in urban, peri urban towns and growing areas;
- E-waste is disposed together with domestic waste and dumped in a same place which is extremely dangerous in terms of environmental health;
- No updated database of major electronic equipment being imported in the country;
- There is no legislations and regulations to deal with it;
- MoE has prepared a report on quantification of electronic wastes from major cities. One study has been undertaken by CEPHED for Nepalgunj and Pokhara city. More studies are needed to be done for supporting policy formulation.

Major decisions of the meeting:

- Ministry of Environment needs to formulate a strong legislation and a policy to tackle the problem of e-waste;
- Government needs to undertake a comprehensive study on current status of Lead in the market;
- Endorsed the formation of National SAICM Platform proposed by FORJUST.

### ***B. National Stakeholders Workshop on SAICM 2020 Roadmap:***

National Stakeholders Workshop on SAICM 2020 Roadmap was organized on 30 May 2011 in Kathmandu. The workshop was participated by 25 participants including those participated in RTM and others. The main objective of the workshop was to discuss the draft SAICM Roadmap 2020 with wider stakeholders and solicit their suggestions.

Three presentations were shared during the workshop one is on draft SAICM Roadmap, the second was on progress on SAICM Implementation by Mr. Rishi Raj Koirala, Under Secretary and SAICM Focal Person at the Ministry of Environment. The third presentation was given by Mr. Ram Charitra Shah, CEPEHED. Mr. Shah presented a gist of major researches undertaken by the CEPHED with the support from IPEN and Toxics Link.

The presentation was followed by rich discussions concentrating on the issues and demanded the government to endorse the SAICM Roadmap with full commitment to implement it.

### ***C. Preparation of SAICM 2020 Roadmap***

The draft SAICM 2020 Roadmap is ideally a guiding document for all stakeholders directly and indirectly related to the issue of chemical safety. It is a synthesized product of participatory discussion and brainstorming by policy makers, academicians, industrialists, rights activists and civil society organisations. It will be used as an advocacy tool subject to review the progress and amend to include new issues. A draft SAICM 2020 Roadmap is attached separately.

#### **Impact on target groups:**

With this participation, FFJ has been able to draft a national SAICM Roadmap 2020 for POPs, Lead, Mercury and Electronic Waste by integrating the ideas and suggestions from the most relevant stakeholders. To some extent, policy makers, civil society members and corporate sectors are aware of and realised a need to work under SAICM objective.

#### **Impact on target policies:**

FFJ generated new and strengthened existing relationships with Nepalese authorities working on the various chemical safety issues, and elevated the public discussions about SAICM and the need for the 2020 SAICM Goal.

#### **NGO Recommendations to achieve desired NGO participation:**

As the project is concluded now, it has opened up new avenues to work and concentrate on SAICM implementation from national level. It has also served knowledge about the SAICM and its objectives. It has also flagged the gaps where stakeholders can contribute and bring in synergy in their work. Some initiatives have started recently in Nepal in line to SAICM 2020. Ministry of Health and Population has undertaken initiative to develop hazardous waste guidelines and Ministry of Environment has prepared National Chemicals Profile. These

initiatives are appreciative yet the government and civil society need to strengthen their functional collaboration over issues, generating evidence and testing new approach.

Knowledge and information gap still prevails at policy level due to limited resource and incompetent strategic approach to address them. To overcome this, a sharing culture of information by creating a hub or platform is urgently required. Often, government agencies have also felt that their advocacy works and arguments have not been strong enough in international negotiation due to lack of evidence, full range of information in particular topics and negotiation skills. Therefore, creation of National Platform will credibly fulfill the objective of sharing knowledge and promoting advocacy to some extent.