



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:** Information booklet on POPs for greater community participation in the issues in India.

**NGO:** Toxics Link

**Country:** India

**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:

Toxics Link is one of the forefront organizations in South Asia to raise the issues of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in India. Toxics Link participated in Stockholm Convention process.

Followed by the adoption of Stockholm Convention, Toxics Link was designated as coordinator of regional hub of IPEN, South Asia and successfully implemented International POPs Elimination Project for South Asia. Subsequently Toxics Link has conducted regional survey and drafted the Regional Action Plan on chemical safety issues for South Asia. Toxics Link is also involved in issues like electronic waste management, lead in paints and chemical safety issues to address the concerns of SAICM. Recently Toxics Link also participated in ICCM-III in Nairobi and contributed to the ICCM-III of SAICM process.

In this project Toxics Link has tried to address the issues of Stockholm Convention. Though Stockholm Convention was exclusively meant for POPs, SAICM has also developed in a way that deals with POPs issues.

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

In India, Toxics Link is a focal NGO on the issues of Stockholm Convention and SAICM. It has participated in the international deliberations and conversations on these issues. Further, Toxics Link is raising the issues at the national level and playing an important role in bringing significant changes at the policy level and ground level interventions.

Incidentally, very few NGOs in India are engaging these issues persistently due to limited funding opportunities available. The effort of IPEN, through ISIP projects, has led to new interventions on chemical safety issues. Moreover, Toxics Link is also putting forward its best efforts to engage and build the capacity of the NGOs in India on these upcoming issues so that they can play an important role at the regional and local level. In the coming years India may witness changes of priorities of NGOS on these upcoming chemical safety and POPs issues.

### **Project Outcomes:**

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

In 2011, the government of India submitted the National Implementation Plan for persistent organic pollutants. To supplement the efforts and initiatives at the government level, Toxics Link has prepared a series of responses to FAQs on the Stockholm Convention, dioxins-furans and DDT, from a public awareness perspective. Toxics Link has also planned a series of meetings on dioxins and furans across the country (Guwahati, Nagpur and some place in Southern India), where the representative of the important agencies like National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (focal point for Asia Pacific on POPs), pollution Control Boards, dioxins lab, government of India, state government officials and NGOs will participate. During these meetings the information materials (FAQs) will be disseminated.

Also the strategies have been developed to send these information materials to the NGOs, government agencies, schools and colleges, judiciary and legal fraternity, farmers group separately.

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

The information on some of the issues, like dioxins- furans and DDT, is very low among the general masses of the country. The information materials that we have prepared on these issues were kept very simple to target the common masses of the country. Toxics Link is putting efforts into conducting a series of awareness and capacity building meetings to upscale the understanding on these issues among the civil societies groups across the country. Gradually the informed groups will help to disseminate information to common masses. These groups can also play an important and critical role by doing interventions and policy changes at the regional and local level. The strategy is being adopted in the line with the government's plan of actions in the National Implementation Plan for mitigation and reduction of POPs in India.

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

There wasn't any specific policy targeted in this project.

The information materials have been planned to flag the Stockholm Convention and related issues. The government, through its National Implementation Plan, is looking forward to the policy changes for reduction/minimization/elimination of POPs in India. However, in these policy deliberations, the NGOs, mostly working at the grass root level, are not able to play the critical role, due to limited information and understandings. Hence the proposed efforts were to bridge the information gaps at the community level and NGOs, so that in the in the long run they can emerge as important players at the local and regional level on these policy deliberations and interventions.

The mass awareness will help for an effective monitoring of the activities undertaken by the government agencies to implement the National Implementation Plan in India.

**Outreach to stakeholders:**

We have planned to engage various stakeholders during the ongoing campaign. The DDT- FAQ will help to sort out the misconceptions among the farmers and NGOs as there are reports of seepage of DDT into agriculture in spite of the ban. Further, all the relevant stakeholders have been targeted on Dioxins-Furans issues. The FAQs on Stockholm Convention will cater to policy makers, students, legal fraternity and industries.

**Deliverables, outputs and/or products:**

During the project, the FAQs have been developed, taking India's perspective into the consideration for general communities of the country and the relevant stakeholders. These FAQs will be disseminated during forthcoming awareness-raising meetings on the issues. Further, these FAQs will be sent to all relevant stakeholders across the country as part of a strategy of wider dissemination.

**Description of communication efforts:**

At present no effort has been made to communicate with media. However, during the proposed awareness-raising meetings, media will also be sensitised. The meetings will also be attended by the stakeholders and general public.

**SAICM National Focal Point:**

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

There are certain levels of understanding on POPs issues among the NGOs in India, however the issues are more restricted to the pesticides. Thus the ongoing efforts will help to reach more numbers of NGOs across the country on issues related to the Stockholm Convention, and build the capacity of the NGOs and other stakeholders to monitor the government's efforts in implementing the national implementation plan on POPs in India.

