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International POPs Elimination Project

*Fostering Active and Efficient Civil Society Participation in
Preparation for Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*

Participation in the Argentina National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention: Focusing on Children's Chemical Safety

**Asociación Argentina de Médicos por el Medio Ambiente
(AAMMA)**

**Argentina
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About the International POPs Elimination Project

On May 1, 2004, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN <http://www.ipen.org>) began a global NGO project called the International POPs Elimination Project (IPEP) in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provided core funding for the project.

IPEP has three principal objectives:

- Encourage and enable NGOs in 40 developing and transitional countries to engage in activities that provide concrete and immediate contributions to country efforts in preparing for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention;
- Enhance the skills and knowledge of NGOs to help build their capacity as effective stakeholders in the Convention implementation process;
- Help establish regional and national NGO coordination and capacity in all regions of the world in support of longer term efforts to achieve chemical safety.

IPEP will support preparation of reports on country situation, hotspots, policy briefs, and regional activities. Three principal types of activities will be supported by IPEP: participation in the National Implementation Plan, training and awareness workshops, and public information and awareness campaigns.

For more information, please see <http://www.ipen.org>

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Participation in the Argentina National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention: Focusing on Children's Chemical Safety

Under the premise that governments and stakeholders have the responsibility to take action in cooperative projects to reduce chemical risks and prevent childhood exposure, the project "*Participation in the Argentina National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention focusing on Children's Chemical Safety*" concentrated on bringing AAMMA's scientific knowledge on environmental health impacts and promotion of protective measures on children's health into its participation in the NIP process/

This project allowed the participation of AAMMA, expert and scientific NGO, into the process of elaboration, application and further follow-up of the Argentine National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention. The activity also provided the opportunity to provide substantive and useful informative inputs related to health impacts and actions of prevention into the process with an emphasis on vulnerable populations and promotion of communities' interventions.

AAMMA's experts on health impacts for harmful chemical exposure, children's chemical safety, and environmental education to professionals and the general public have been participating with the NIP focal point, Chemical Substance Unit at the National Secretary of Environment, in the NIP process and have applied to the NIP Public Awareness Plan and for training professionals in these issues.

Through this project activity, AAMMA has developed several dissemination tools on a specific section "POPs and Children" at the AAMMA web site (www.aamma.org). Documents, reports, current situation and relevant news were posted to follow-up on the Argentine National Implementation Plan (NIP) and the Stockholm Convention.

All the meeting reports were distributed in AAMMA's bulletins issued in two languages (Spanish and English) through the different networks. The AAMMA's bulletin is bimonthly and was sent to more than 1,500 people: including experts, pediatricians, government and non governmental representatives and organizations, universities and the general public. The bulletin was also distributed to all the existent networks and NGOs interested in POPs issues; such as, RAPAL, GAIA, and HCWH among others, to particularly inform them on the NIP, Stockholm Convention and AAMMA's contributions to these processes. Moreover, all the documents about the NIP such as meeting reports are available at AAMMA's web site under the special section, "POPs and Children".

This methodology of dissemination encouraged the intersectoral and multi-participative participation of other stakeholders, to follow the processes and start concrete measures of dissemination of the obtained results.

Through this project activity, AAMMA worked to include in the NIP the following topics: education, training and dissemination concepts on children's chemical safety to other NGOs, general public professionals and decision makers; risks and opportunities of preventive actions; the inclusion of decision makers, NGOs, academia, scientific organizations, and industries to work on prevention or reduce exposures; the identification of the most vulnerable groups exposed; and harmonized data collection and research: promoting a normative framework and considering the use of indicators of children's environmental safety and children's chemical safety; sharing information; and developing options for taking effective protective actions from established chemical threats and from chemical risks where there is a degree of uncertainty.

AAMMA has worked constantly on the effective implementation of the Stockholm Convention, consistent with the IPEN Stockholm Declaration in its participation in the NIP. AAMMA strongly supported the process of the NIP and the requests of open participation of different stakeholders through consultative mechanisms in collaborative relationships. The project achieved its goal which was to assure a fair balance between the entire NIPs' representatives, and that the product obtained reflected the national stakeholders' capacity, needs and wishes; assuring not only a space of participation but also the access to information, training and awareness opportunities.