



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: Introducing the Code of Conduct In Order To Reduce the Environmental and Health Risks from Pesticides

NGO: Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment

Country: Armenia

Date: February, 2011

Elements of SAICM Covered:

Promote substitution for highly toxic pesticides including effective non-chemical alternatives (27); Provide training in alternative and ecological agricultural practices, including non-chemical alternatives (51); Encourage industry to extend product stewardship and to voluntarily withdraw highly toxic pesticides which are hazardous and cannot be used safely under prevalent conditions (30); Promote integrated pest and integrated vector management (29); Establish programmes for monitoring chemicals and pesticides to assess exposure (66)

Description of:

The highly hazardous pesticide(s) registered/sold and/or in use in your country:

According to the List of Chemical and Biological Control for Plants Permitted to Use in the Republic of Armenia, 341 pesticides are registered, out of which about 50 pesticides are included in the List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides accepted by PAN International.

Alternatives and/or bio pesticides available, if any:

Separate lists providing information on the trade names of certain non-chemical alternatives are not available. There exists only the list "On the Law of the RA government on the substances permitted to use or restricted for use in organic farming, including the nominal list of fertilizers, means of land-reclamation and productivity raising, disinfectants, and the procedure of application of these means." This document provides information about the origin of the substances permitted to use in organic agriculture. AWHHE was informed by the RA Ministry of Agriculture that a list of alternative pest control measures will be developed in the near future.

Health and environmental effects of the pesticides:

According to the information provided by the Head of the Statistics Department of the National Health Institute of the RA Ministry of Health, the cases of poisoning are not separately recorded in the statistic reports. These cases are generally recorded as cases of common poisoning. According to the data of the State Hygiene and Anti-epidemic Inspectorate during the last years no cases of poisoning have been recorded.

The "ArmEcomonitoring" SNCO keeps a record of data on the air and water basin pollution but it is being done only for a limited number of pollutants. Monitoring is being conducted only in the areas close to the sources of pollution and is limited to a number of pollutants. The "ArmEcomonitoring" SNCO does not conduct monitoring of emissions of all registered pollutants and does not carry out studies on environmental effects (air-water-soil close system).

The "ArmEcomonitoring" SNCO implements monitoring of the content of DDT, DDE, HCH, Lindane, and Heptachlorine in some rivers in Armenia. The studies showed that the levels are almost within the allowable limits. Monitoring of DDT and HCH in the air was conducted jointly with the Czech Republic.

Information on pesticide levels in the environment, in food, or in people:

There is no coordinated mechanism in Armenia aimed at conducting research and collecting information on pesticide levels in food or in people. Such research is carried out by different organizations on a temporary basis. For instance, AWHHE has conducted studies on the content of DDT, DDE and DDD in breast milk among women living in the villages of Ararat region of Armenia. The results of the studies indicated a permanent contamination of the environment in the targeted villages. The content of DDT and its metabolites vary from 0,05 mg/kg to 0,3 mg/kg. The residues in the samples were 60 fold higher than the background level.

Existing pesticide legislation in your country:

Below are listed the legal norms and deeds on pesticides in Armenia:

- The Order of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia on Approval of Sanitary Regulations and Norms "On Storage, Transportation, Use and Sale of Pesticides"

- The Decree of the Government of Armenia “On Determination of Peculiarities of Sale of Pesticides and Fertilizers”
- The Decree of the Government of Armenia “On Approval of the List of the Banned Chemical Substances and Pesticides”
- List of Chemical and Biological Control for Plants Permitted to Use in the Republic of Armenia

Use of IPM and ecological agriculture:

According to the data provided by the RA Ministry of Agriculture:

- The Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides as adopted in 2002 is not translated into Armenian, which is the official language of our country.
- According to Article 3.9 of the Code of Conduct, the government of Armenia does not support non-chemical pest management practices.
- There are not any crop-specific IPM (Integrated Pest Management) standards for the main crops.
- The government does not invest in training programs on non-chemical pest management.
- The government does not implement financial public support programs to promote non-chemical agriculture.
- The current percentage of the agricultural area used for certified organic production in our country is below 1%.
- Professorship for organic or non-chemical agriculture or pest management in our country is not available.

It is obvious that programs on promotion of IPM and ecological agriculture are not implemented officially by governmental institutions. At the same time, different NGOs, including AWHHE, take active part in this field; particularly AWHHE has created numerous information materials on this issue, to mention a few: brochures “Alternative to Pesticides” in the Armenian and English languages, and “Farmer Field Schools on IPM” and “Good Advice to Farmers” - a booklet on organic agriculture. The FAO Code of Conduct on Distribution and Use of Pesticides was translated into Armenian language, designed and handed over to printing. All information materials were disseminated among targeted groups at different events.

As a result, during the last year:

- Awareness on the safe use of pesticides has increased by app. 60%.
- Noticeable changes are observed in perception towards pesticide use (34 % of the respondents have reduced the use of pesticides this year) and acquaintance with IPM (3,5 fold increase as compared with the results of the first survey), and various methods of the sound agriculture and IPM approach have been practiced in 38 farms of targeted communities.
- The capacity of 419 villagers has been strengthened due to training organized by trainers on sound management of pesticides and prevention of health and environmental risks.

Project Outcomes:

Description of the activity conducted to reduce the threat posed by highly hazardous pesticides and advance this SAICM aim.

All the activities carried out during the implementation of the project were focused on the reduction of harm to human health and the environment posed by pesticide use. A

special attention was paid to the promotion of alternative pest control measures and introduction of IPM approach.

The project is focused on the following work areas of the SAICM Action Plan:

- a) highly toxic pesticides risk management and reduction (activities 23, 24, 27 and 29)
- b) life-cycle (activities 119 and 121).

Impact on target groups:

Target group of the project are:

- Farmers

4 seminars for this target group were conducted.

- Rural women

Meetings with the mayors of the villages and the citizens were held in the targeted villages.

- Young specialists from ASAU

A Youth Group representing students from the Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU) was formed. To form this group, meetings were organized with the magistrates and bachelors of ASAU.

- Representatives of local governing bodies and Agriculture Support Centers of 2 target marzes

During the implementation of the project it was planned to engage the local governing bodies and the management of Agriculture Support Centers. AWHHE has already had meetings with the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, municipality of the regions, mayors of target villages and the directors of the target Province Centers of Agriculture Support.

Impact on target policies:

The project aims to contribute to the implementation of the SAICM at the national level. The recommendations adopted by the Agriculture Support Centers of Ararat and Armavir provinces will start a continuous process of awareness-raising on Code of Conduct and issues concerning pesticide safety, and will be considered as the best alternative for ensuring the dissemination of information and replication of the successful practice by other Province Centers of Agriculture Support.

Outreach to stakeholders:

All the above mentioned target groups are engaged in this project as stakeholders. The project communities are considered to be the beneficiaries and active participants of the project. About 300 inhabitants of 4 communities and 15 young specialists from ASAU will participate in different training courses and will become the bearers and spreaders of the gained knowledge in the future.

Communication Efforts:

Articles will be published in local magazine and one radio program will be broadcasted.



Survey of villagers



Meeting in village Ditak with village mayor and director of the school

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NGO Recommendations for next steps:

AWHHE is planning to continue working on raising awareness of agricultural communities on the Code of Conduct by involving other villages throughout the country. Training for trainers and trainings for women and youth groups are suggested to proceed further with raising public awareness on sustainable and pesticide-free agricultural practices.

AWHHE is going to engage national media more into activities aimed at popularizing sustainable agriculture in Armenia.