



# PROMOTING CHEMICAL SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AT WORK IN RURAL AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN UGANDA

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## Introduction and Background

Child labour exists in Uganda . One countrywide form of child labour is the use of children in agriculture . In this sector, children are involved in application of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals, an aspect of the worst forms of child labour as far as Uganda is concerned.



Children spraying cabbages without protective gear- Probicou

## QSP objective and strategic priorities

The activities of the project are relevant to priority B and C of QSP strategic priorities. The project activities are building and strengthening the capacity of workers unions, as well as district technical teams in agriculture and health. It is also complementing to the existing efforts of chemicals management initiatives in Uganda, such as the National Profile to assess the chemical infrastructure in Uganda (2003) by NEMA, National Implementation plan for POPs (NIP, 2007), the National Situation Analysis on sound management of chemicals for Uganda (2008).

The project also addresses recommendations of 1 and 2 of the National Profile's priority assessment as:-

- (i) Improvement in capacity to collect, collate and disseminate information on chemicals management in order to facilitate informed decision making,
- (ii) Intensification of efforts for education, awareness and training of all relevant stakeholders



A training workshop for Trade Union officials - probicou

The outputs of the project include:-

- (1) Leaders of trade Unions, Employers and Government officials aware of chemical safety issues,
- (2) An inventory of dangerous chemicals, dangerous processes and endpoint discharges produced,
- (3) Institutional capacity built in form of developed technical capabilities of existing institutions to implement chemical safety program,
- (4) Increased awareness of workers, workers leaders, employers communities and government officers on the safety measures in the use of chemicals.

- 1. Mwaka V. M. and Tumushabe, J.
- 2. The state of Child Labour in Uganda (1996).
- 3. Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Report



A man whose hands were burnt by herbicides. Source PROBICOU



women spraying tea with pesticides without protective equipment. probicou

## Summary of Project status and results

•40% of targeted leaders of trade Unions, enterprise plantation workers employers, and government officials were reached and their competence in chemical safety issues developed.

•2 of the 5 trade unions under the project are currently developing an internal training program for staff on safe use of chemicals in workplaces

•Built capacity and technical competence of two line departments of: - Labor, and Occupation Health and safety in the Ministry of Gender Labour and social Development. The Ministry of gender Labor and Social Development has begun on the process of reviewing Labor Inspection Guidelines to include issues of chemical safety.

•Generated data to inform policy Making processes and awareness raising programs. The data generated, has fed into the process of developing factsheets produced by the ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development.

•4 Trade unions are domesticating training manuals for staff and internal chemical safety and management units. They are also developing internal guidelines and bylaws for safe use of chemicals.

•The project has facilitated the review and harmonization of different existing training manuals available for chemical safety education and, 4 of the 5 trade unions under the project, are currently developing an internal training program for staff on safe use of chemicals in work places. The National Union of Plantation Agriculture workers has already developed a framework for practical field based training for workers at estate level.

A Total of 80, representatives from Educational departments of Trade Unions, had their capacity built and these contributed to the development of the training manual.

•The meetings harmonized priorities and input in the ongoing process of developing a chemical safety program at the Ministry. Contributed to the formulation of the National action plan on child labor in Uganda

•Trained and raised awareness of a total of 160, district leaders and agricultural extension workers on chemical safety issues. Built technical capacity and ability of district and local council leaders to be able to incorporate chemical safety issues in district planning process and local government development priorities

## Key Lessons learnt

- The capacity of District local governments to implement chemical safety programs is still lacking.
- There is still less attention on chemical safety issues at district local government level with related interventions still mixed under different departments such as - Agriculture, probation office, Community Development Office, District Labor office. These offices lack defined segregation of duties and roles towards chemical safety.