Workshop Report

Outreach and Awareness-raising on POPs for the General Public and Private Sector

19 May 2026

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Introduction

The Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP), under Component 4 (Knowledge Management and Information Sharing) of the GEF-funded, UNEP-led project (ID 10785) *Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)*, organized an outreach and awareness-raising workshop on 19 May 2026.

In practice, effective NIP development and implementation depend on meaningful engagement beyond government institutions, particularly with the private sector and the general public. The private sector is often a primary user, importer, producer, recycler or handler of POPs-containing materials and products, and it holds critical information needed for national inventories and action plans. Yet small and medium-sized enterprises frequently have limited awareness of the Stockholm Convention and may not understand why collaboration with public authorities, especially sharing operational data, matters for regulatory compliance, risk reduction and market credibility. At the same time, public awareness is essential to reduce exposure and support safer behaviors and consumer choices, but many countries lack dedicated communications and outreach personnel to translate technical NIP priorities into accessible messages for communities.

This workshop responded to these needs by introducing two practical outreach and awareness-raising materials: one tailored to the private sector and one designed for the general public, together with guidance on how Parties can adapt and apply these materials in different national contexts to support inventory data collection, stakeholder cooperation and sustained risk communication throughout the NIP update and implementation cycle. The event also featured country experiences, sharing practical approaches on POPs outreach and awareness-raising activities.

TIME (CEST)		Description
14:00	Welcome and opening remarks	Moderator: Elena Chernysheva (GGKP)
14:05	POPs outreach and awareness-raising materials for the private sector and the general public	Melina Džajić–Valjevac (GGKP / ENOVA)
14:45	How to adapt and use the POPs outreach materials in practice	Soomin Bae (GGKP)
15:00	Country experiences	Representatives of project countries
15:20	Q&A session	All
15:30	Closing remarks	

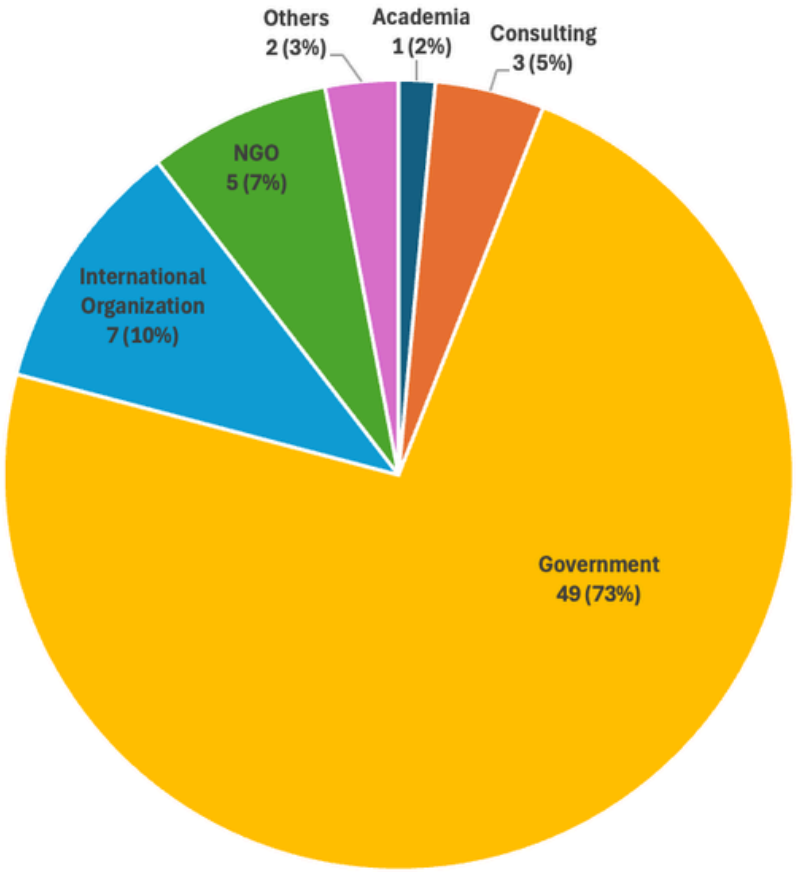
Registration and attendance

Number of registrants: 84 / Total attendance: 67
(Approx. 52% female and 48% male)

Participants by country

Country	Attendees	Country	Attendees	Country	Attendees
South Africa	5	Seychelles	2	Morocco	1
Suriname	4	Saudi Arabia	2	Mexico	1
Cameroon	4	Dominican Republic	2	Maldives	1
Botswana	4	Armenia	2	Kenya	1
Bolivia	4	Zimbabwe	1	Ghana	1
Bahamas	4	Trinidad and Tobago	1	Ethiopia	1
Senegal	3	Togo	1	Czechia	1
France	3	Switzerland	1	China	1
Zambia	2	Norway	1	Chile	1
Viet Nam	2	North Macedonia	1	Brazil	1
Uruguay	2	Nigeria	1	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Sierra Leone	2	Niger	1	Argentina	1

Participants by sector



Key highlights

The workshop focused on a practical challenge many NIP teams face: how to effectively engage the private sector and the general public on POPs issues. It introduced two ready-to-use outreach and awareness-raising materials, one for each audience, together with guidance on how to adapt them to the national context.

POPs outreach and awareness-raising materials for the private sector and the general public

Melina Džajić–Valjevac, Outreach Consultant, GGKP and Sustainable Water and Chemical Management Expert, ENOVA, explained that the outreach materials were developed to translate the technical and regulatory content around POPs into practical, accessible and audience-appropriate communication material. For the private sector, companies often need short, practical, sector-specific guidance that connects POPs obligations with everyday operational decisions. For the general public, existing information is often not clear enough to encourage understanding and motivate action.

The private sector materials focused on encouraging reporting and cooperation aligned with the Stockholm Convention. They were designed to promote safe practices and environmentally sound chemical management, and to provide sector-specific guidance on POPs, phase-out and alternatives. They were structured around sectors so that stakeholder groups could identify their specific interests, exposures, decision points and potential contribution to risk reduction.

POPs management was also presented as an opportunity for innovation, improved competitiveness and long-term sustainability. Priority sectors included textile, pesticides, metal processing, plastic and rubber, electrical and electronic equipment, construction and demolition, transport, airports and fire brigades, waste and recycling, and farming associations and small agribusinesses.

The materials answer four core questions: which POPs chemicals are used in the sector and why it matters; where POPs have historically been used and how legacy contamination can occur; why restricted or banned chemicals can still be found on the market and what makes identification and control difficult; and what responsibility the sector has in reducing POP-related risks.

For the general public, the materials were designed to raise awareness with a focus on vulnerable and economically disadvantaged communities. They were intended to be clear, accessible and gender-sensitive, with practical tips, checklists and behaviour-oriented guidance. Priority groups included households, farmers, workers in the informal sector, healthcare professionals, media actors, environmental activists, NGOs, educational centres and academia. The guiding idea was that communication should be relevant, inclusive and practical for the people receiving it.

For households, for instance, the message should show that electronics, textiles, pesticides and similar products can contain hazardous chemicals, and that safe disposal and safer alternatives matter. For farming, the focus should be on the risk of banned or unregulated pesticides. For informal sector workers, the materials can be more effective when simple and action-oriented. Healthcare professionals were highlighted as trusted sources of advice, while media actors were considered important because they can translate technical content into public stories.

Melina Džajić–Valjevac also highlighted the importance of using the right channel and format. For the private sector, channels such as sector-specific associations and chambers of commerce were considered especially effective, while different dissemination pathways would be needed for the general public. Countries were advised to review the full package, identify national priorities, select the most relevant materials and formats, and adapt the materials to the national context. This includes replacing generic references with relevant national institutions and contact points, aligning terminology with the national legal framework, validating adapted content with relevant stakeholders, and choosing appropriate dissemination channels and timing. The package also included checklists and a comprehensive outreach matrix suggesting formats and channels for different stakeholder groups.

How to adapt and use the POPs outreach materials in practice

Soomin Bae, Project Management Support Consultant, GGKP, UNEP, highlighted that the private sector and general public outreach materials were designed to be practical, editable and ready to use, and showed how countries can apply them in practice. The materials were prepared in Word and editable PowerPoint formats so they could be easily translated and adapted to national needs. Visual elements such as icons and photo stocks were also prepared so countries could replace images and modify the look and feel of the materials. The same content could be used in different forms, including social media cards, brochures and workshop materials. The materials were also prepared in Canva, giving countries another option to edit, redesign and export them. Canva was presented as especially useful because it can help with layout flexibility, visual elements and automatic translation into many languages, which countries can use with review and adjustment.

Seychelles experience: stakeholder engagement in the NIP review

Cliff Gonzalves, National Consultant for the NIP Review, Seychelles, highlighted the importance of stakeholder engagement in the NIP review process. In Seychelles, four working groups were established on pesticides, industrial POPs, unintentional POPs, and institutional and legal issues, bringing together government offices, private sector actors, customs, environmental agencies, fire and rescue services, the Department of Agriculture, academia, tourism representatives and private consultants. This helped stakeholders become more aware of POPs issues while strengthening their understanding of their role in implementation.

Key highlights

The Seychelles experience also showed that customs and similar actors do not need detailed knowledge of all chemicals, but they do need to be aware of potential risks and know who to contact if they encounter suspicious cargo. Training and inventory work were also highlighted as useful opportunities for awareness raising. In a small island context, person-to-person communication and site visits were seen as highly effective, even as digital means are becoming increasingly important.

Eulalie Sabury, Registrar of Pesticides and Public Health Officer, Seychelles, further shared field-level experience on pesticide regulation and site visits. She explained that many importers had limited understanding of registration requirements, were more familiar with product trade names than active ingredients, and had limited awareness of international restrictions and banned products. In response, guidance was provided on registration, safety, documentation requirements and compliance with legal obligations.

She also noted the need for more technical guidance on pesticide management and safer alternatives, as well as challenges among backyard farmers and end users, including traditional practices, limited understanding of labels, low use of protective equipment, and the fact that those applying pesticides were often not the ones attending the required training.

The entry of inappropriate chemicals through informal channels was also referred as another challenge. Site visits showed that stakeholders were often receptive to on-site guidance, especially when discussions focused on practical issues identified during inspection. These included improper storage of pesticides, inadequate labeling, expired and unidentified products, limited awareness of banned or restricted chemicals, weak record keeping and traceability.

Resources

- **The concept note and video recording in English, Spanish, French and Russian are available on the Global NIP Update platform:** https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/event/outreach-and-awareness-raising-pops-general-public-and-private-sector

Spanish | **French** | **Russian**

- **Outreach and engagement with major stakeholder groups for developing NIPs**
  - Group 1: https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/webinar/outreach-and-engagement-major-stakeholder-groups-developing-national-implementation-plans
  - Group 2: https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/webinar/outreach-and-engagement-major-stakeholder-groups-developing-national-implementation-plans-0
  - Group 3: https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/webinar/outreach-and-engagement-major-stakeholder-groups-developing-national-implementation-plans-1

- **Useful links**
  - Engaging Communities, Strengthening POPs Safety: Lessons from Seychelles

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the GGKP team.

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