

Mainstreaming Gender in National Implementation Plans under the Stockholm Convention

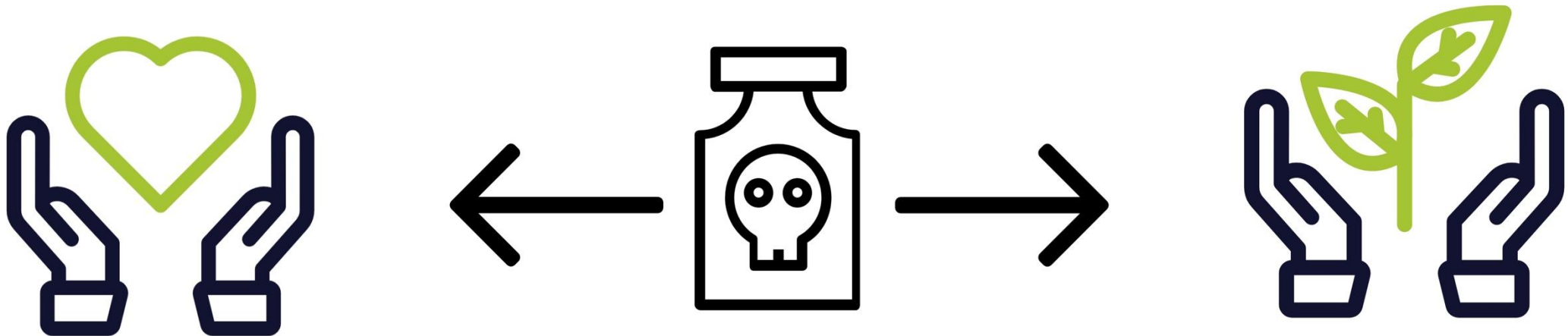
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Focus: Gendered Impact of Highly Hazardous Pesticide [HHPs] Suicide Poisoning



What are Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs)?

“ present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to human health or the environment ”



a small minority of
pesticides

Types of Pesticide Poisoning

Based on Duration of Exposure

- Acute Exposure (short-term exposure)
- Chronic Exposure (long-term exposure)

Based on Intent

- Occupational²
- Accidental^{1,2}
- Intentional poisoning³.

Based on the Source of Exposure

- Inhalation
- Dermal (skin) Poisoning
- Oral Poisoning

¹Pesticides were identified as the leading cause, accounting for 39.5% of all poisoning cases, followed by medicines (26.1%) and household products (22.1%).

²A 2013 study indicated that children under the age of one had the highest rates of fatal accidental poisoning, with mortality rates decreasing with age until 14 years

³Between 1995 and 2015, India recorded 441,918 suicides due to pesticide poisoning, accounting for 18% of all suicides during that period.

A 2020 study estimated approximately 740,000 annual cases of unintentional acute pesticide poisoning worldwide, resulting in 7,446 fatalities. South Asia, particularly India, was identified as having a high incidence of these cases.



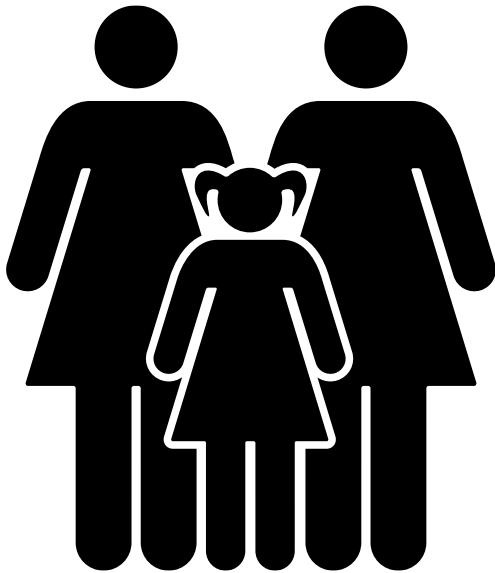
Causes and Risk Factors

Easy accessibility to lethal means of self-harm during moments of crisis determines fatality.



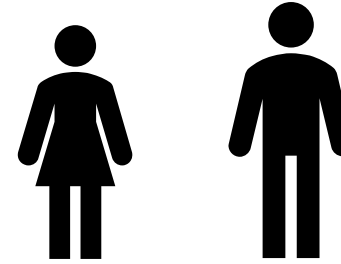
Who Is Most at Risk?

- Farmers, agricultural workers
- Children in farming areas
- Pregnant women
- Rural populations with poor healthcare



Why is the topic of gender in chemicals important?

Make up
40%-50% of
agricultural
labour in
LMICS



- ✓ Biological factors
- ✓ Social Roles: Unequal power and opportunity

Biological factors

- HHPs are endocrine disruptors: Exposure during pregnancy and lactation can impact the child health.
- Women have a higher **body-fat composition** means they can store lipophilic POPs (like dioxins, PCBs, pesticides) for longer.
- POPs linked to **breast cancer, endocrine disruption, reproductive issues**



Social roles: Unequal power and opportunity



- Training, protective equipment, or decision-making power
- Rate of suicides amongst women has increased and is higher globally.
- Impact on a family is different when a woman dies by suicide, as women shoulder the prime responsibility of care.
- When a man dies by suicide, a woman has to now act as both a caregiver and financial provider.
- In LMICs, a huge stigma is attached to widows. Women often do not have the right or access to her home after the death of the husband in a joint family home.

Main Challenges

- Data: Lack of data by gender [Foreg countries report accidental or intentional poisoning amongst farmers, however not by gender]
- Institutional Barriers: Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development is rarely included/represented or consulted in chemicals governance. Chemicals, health, gender agencies not coordinating
- Women are under-represented in agricultural forums and committees in LMICs, at local-district level and policy stakeholder meetings.

Recommendations for Stronger Gender Integration

- **Data & Evidence:** Collect sex-disaggregated monitoring & exposure data.
- **Inclusive Participation:** Ensure women's voices in NIP committees and decision forums.
- **Cross-sectoral Coordination:** Link health, agriculture, labor, and women's affairs ministries.
- **Accountability:** Use UNEPs gender checklists & include gender indicators in NIP reporting.

Key Messages

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- Mainstreaming gender in NIPs should not be optional, it is critical for effective, equitable chemicals management.

- Call to action: *“Let’s ensure women’s realities are visible in national strategies.”*