

# Addressing Social Injustice in international chemicals management

How is the exposure to chemicals and waste is interconnected with colonialism?

*International Civil Society Conference on  
Chemicals*

*“Tomorrow without Toxics”*

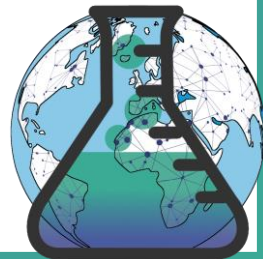
*22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021*

*Griffins Ochieng  
Executive Director, Centre for  
Environment Justice and  
Development (CEJAD)*

# About CEJAD



- A public interest Non-Governmental Organization in Kenya.
- Mission is to promote sound management of chemicals and waste in order to protect the natural environment and wellbeing of the Kenyan people, the especially vulnerable populations.
- Accredited to UNEP and member of a number of international networks (IPEN, GAIA, ZMWG and Break free from plastics)
- <https://cejadkenya.org/>



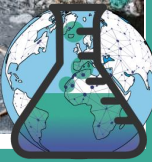
# CEJAD's Programs/Campaign areas

- POPs Elimination
- Lead in Paint Elimination
- Ban of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs)
- Plastics and Waste Management
- Mercury and Minamata Convention on mercury
  - ASGM
  - Dental Amalgam Phase down
  - Mercury added products phase out



# Colonialism and Interconnectedness to chemicals exposure

- “Africa has rejected all forms of external domination...we do not want external domination to come in through the back door in the form of ‘garbage imperialism.’” Former Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi.
- **Advent:** in 1989 at the United Nations Environment Programme Basel Convention working group - African nations raised concerns about the disposal of hazardous chemicals and wastes by high GDP countries into low GDP countries.
- The need for FDI/industrialization by the developing Countries has led to a new export market - toxic garbage. Industrialized countries are exporting their waste to emerging nations, capitalizing on less expensive disposal cost.
- Transboundary disposal of a various hazardous and toxic waste containing chemicals, including e-waste, POPs, Plastic waste, industrial waste, decommissioned ships, products containing chemicals and other toxic waste
- Hazardous waste or transboundary imported in the guise for potential value as secondary raw materials to be recovered, reused, or recycled – they are near end of life products



# Colonialism and Interconnectedness to chemicals exposure

- **Waste:** Dumping of plastic waste...Kenya, Tunisia, Liberia case examples

*“There is more evidence of illegal toxic waste dumping today than at any time in the past...Ironically today we have the international rules to control or prohibit such global dumping but we are lacking in the diligent enforcement and implementation of these hard won law and unfortunately if it’s easy to poison the poor for profit, unscrupulous operators and businesses will do it”*

-Jim Puckett, BAN



Thousands of tonnes of banned pesticides shipped to poorer countries from British and European factories

Weedkiller is sprayed on a soybean field in the Cerrado plains near Campo Verde, Mato Grosso state. Brazil is one of the top destinations for the EU's banned pesticide exports. Photo: Yasuyoshi Chiba / AFP / Getty

Year long investigation reveals full scale of Europe's 'abhorrent' trade in pesticides banned from its own farms - and the UK's leading role

<https://unearthed.greenpeace.org/2020/09/10/banned-pesticides-eu-export-poor-countries/>

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26063&LangID=E>

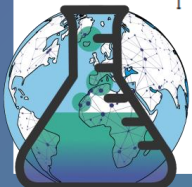
# Colonialism and Interconnectedness to chemicals exposure

The New York Times



*Big Oil Is in Trouble. Its Plan: Flood Africa With Plastic.*

Faced with plunging profits and a climate crisis that threatens



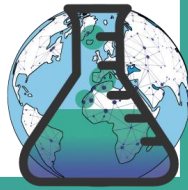
SOCIAL JUSTICE | WASTE

Africa is not a dumpster

<https://earthbound.report/2020/10/01/africa-is-not-a-dumpster/>

# **Post-colonial perspective on the management of chemicals and waste.**

- **Strengthening corporate accountability** for example, access to information - access to information is key instrument to access all rights
- **Communities have rights to clean and healthy environment** -governments must ensure strict compliance to set laws –by ensuring communities' rights are given priority.
- **Provide democratic space** for communities to voice their concerns either through setting up community channels
- **Ensure public participation and involvement** – of the communities (i.e. **waste pickers, miners**) in plans, strategies and decision making on matters directly impacting on their lives
- **Protection of vulnerable populations such as women and children**
- **Ban in international trade in hazardous chemicals** – eliminate the double standards in export of hazardous waste and chemicals



# Thank you for your attention

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**Web: [www.cejadkenya.org](http://www.cejadkenya.org)**





# "Tomorrow without Toxics"

**Presentation by: Rochelle Diver  
(*Anishinaabe*)  
International Indian Treaty Council**

**22 November 2021**



# Great Lakes Watershed





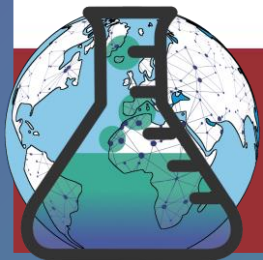
# This is a matter of Life and Death for Indigenous Peoples around the world



Cristian Molina age 13,  
Passed 2008.  
Shown with his mother in Potam  
Pueblo Sonora Mexico 2006



Juan Antonio Rodriguez,  
age 2, Passed 2013.  
Shown his grandmother in Vicam  
Rio Yaqui Sonora Mexico 2013



**International Indian Treaty Council**

*Working for the Rights and Recognition of Indigenous Peoples*

**Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios**

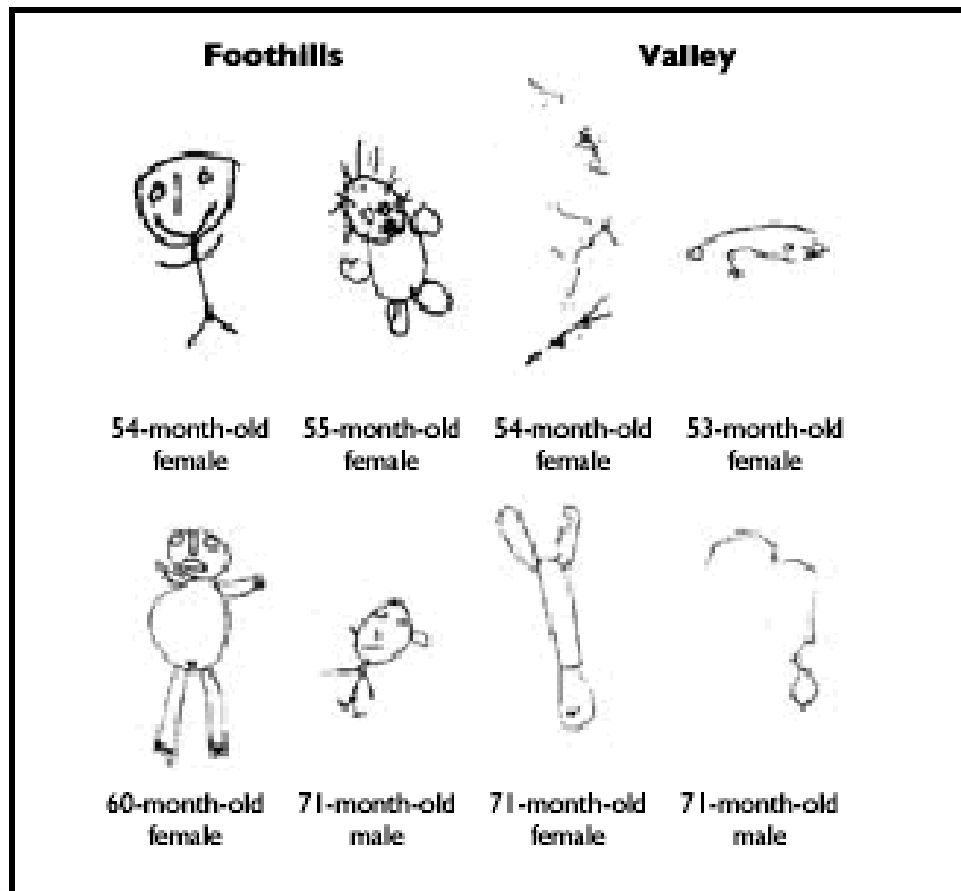
*Trabajando por el reconocimiento y los derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas*



# Permanent Damage to Maternal Health and Development of Infants and Children



Rio Yaqui, Sonora Mexico



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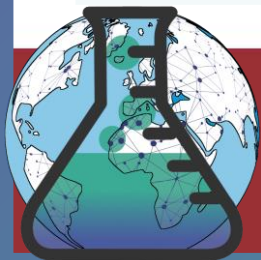
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# Prenatal Exposure Linked to Abnormal Breast Development in Indigenous girls

Pesticide	Cord Blood (ppm)	Milk (ppm corrected for fat)
<b>N</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
a-HCH	0.030 ± 0.03	0.8599 ± 2.75
b-HCH	0	0.3791 ± 1.08
Lindane	0.084 ± 0.06	0.6710 ± 0.59*
D-HCH	0.0039 ± 0.1	0.4432 ± 0.84
Heptachlor	0	1.269 ± 1.65*
BHC	0.003 ± 0.002	0.6270 ± 0.66*
Aldrin	0	0.2363 ± 0.59*
Dieldrin	0.159 ± 0.12	0.0487 ± 0.08
Endrin	0.022 ± 0.02	0.5238 ± 1.1*
p,p'-DDE	0.03 ± 0.03	6.31 ± 5.9
∑DDE	0.0434	6.52*



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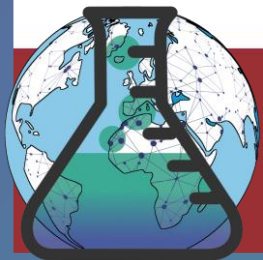
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# FILM CLIP: “Circle of Poison”

## The Impacts of Pesticides on the Yaqui Community in Sonora, Mexico



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# Indigenous Women & Girls are Disproportionately Impacted

- Indigenous women's central role in traditional food gathering/ preparation and cultural practices
- Indigenous lands targeted
- POPs stored in fatty tissue, fat cells are endocrine disruptors, impact reproductive capacity



**Indigenous Women and girls gather Tule (reeds) for basket making in Northern California**



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**“Indigenous women are life givers, life sustainers and culture holders. Our bodies are sacred places that must be protected, honored and kept free of harmful contaminants in order for the new generations of our Nations to be born strong and healthy.”**



**-- 1<sup>st</sup> INTERNATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS  
WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL & REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH SYMPOSIUM, A  
lamo, California, 2010**



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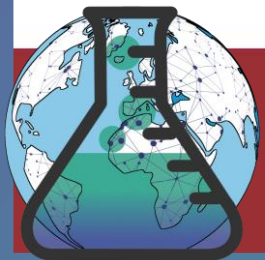
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# Health Impacts in Indigenous Women & Girls

- Early puberty, abnormal breast development
- Sterility, miscarriages, birth defects, low birth weight babies
- Reproductive system cancers and breast cancers
- Uterine fibroids
- Toxins in breast milk, tissues fatty cord and cord blood
- Premature ovarian failure
- Damage to fetal reproductive organs, overall development
- Premature menopause



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**2007, 2008, 2012, 2014: UN CERD called  
on the US to prevent Human Rights  
Violations in other countries by their  
corporations**

In February 2008, CERD called upon the US to take appropriate legislative and administrative measures to prevent transnationals it registers “from negatively impacting **on the enjoyment of rights of indigenous peoples in territories outside the United States.**”

[CERD/C/USA/CO/6]

***“Exports included 27 million pounds of pesticides per year  
whose use is forbidden in the US”***

**-- Pesticide Exports from U.S. Ports, 2001–2003**



# United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Report on 13<sup>th</sup> Session

16. Considering their impact on the sexual health and reproductive rights of indigenous peoples, the Permanent Forum calls...for a **legal review of United Nations chemical conventions, in particular the Rotterdam Convention**, to ensure that they are in conformity with **international human rights standards**, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



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# In June 2015, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recognized “Environmental Health” as a new human rights category for the protection of children’s and maternal health



**IITC’s delegation to the CRC country review of Mexico, May 2015, Geneva**



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## The CRC recommended that Mexico:

(a) Assess the impact of air, water, soil and electromagnetic pollution on children and maternal health as a basis to design a well-resourced strategy at federal, state and local levels, **in consultation with all communities and especially indigenous peoples, to remedy the situation and drastically decrease the exposure to pollutants;**

(b) **Prohibit the import and use of any pesticides or chemicals that have been banned or restricted for use in exporting countries;**

(c) Further examine and adapt its legislative framework to **ensure the legal accountability of business enterprises** involved in activities having a negative impact on the environment, in the light of its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights.



# The UN General Assembly Adopts the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, September 2007



Geneva, 1977



UN General Assembly  
13 September 2007



Chi  
Miigwech  
-  
Many  
Thanks!

*Gitichi Gummee - Lake Superior*



# Rochelle Diver



Environmental Health Program  
Coordinator

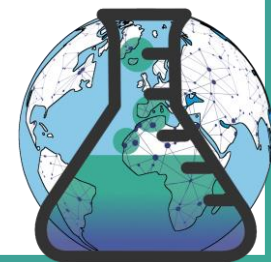
[rochelle@treatycouncil.org](mailto:rochelle@treatycouncil.org)





# **Toxic Chemicals & Gender Challenges**

**Piyush Mohapatra  
Toxics Link  
November 22, 2021**



# About Toxics Link

- Not for profit, non government organisation
- Engaged on environmental issues relating to toxic chemicals and waste management for over 20 years
- Hazardous, Biomedical, Municipal waste, E - waste, Waste trade, Food safety & Chemicals management ( Lead in Paints, POPs, Mercury, EDCs)
- Work on reducing heavy metals toxicity from our lives
- Active member of civil society international networks IPEN, Zero Mercury, World Alliance Mercury Free Dentistry



# Toxics Link Interventions

CONTAMINANTS  
POLLUTANTS  
HAZARDOUS  
RECYCLING  
MERCURY  
LANDFILL  
BIOMED  
TOXINS  
WASTE  
EPR  
EARTH  
POLY  
ALL  
NET  
INDIA  
M  
S



Toxics Link  
toxics-free world



The Dark End  
CFL NEED BETTER MANAGEMENT



FACTSHEET NUMBER 57 / MARCH 2018

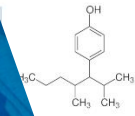


Toxics Link  
for a toxics-free world

**NONYLPHENOL (NP)**

**INTRODUCTION**

- Discovered in...
- is a...
- Not...
- proce...



Toxic Sessions  
journal paper



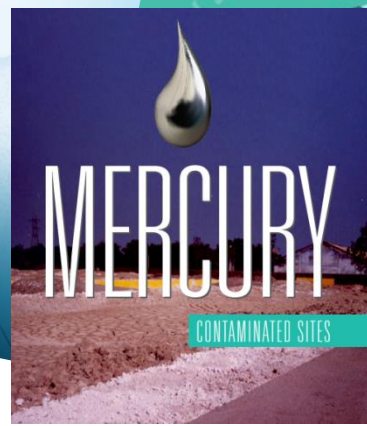
PERSONAL  
**ECO CARE  
PRODUCT**  
Microplastics in cosmetics



Persistent  
Organic  
Pollutants  
(POPs) in India



**Endocrine  
disruptor**  
REVIEW OF  
INDIAN  
RESEARCH



**MERCURY**  
CONTAMINATED SITES



**CLEANING  
CLOTHES?**  
But what about  
environment  
and health!



An Investigative Study  
On Bisphenol-A (BPA) in  
Feeding Bottles in India



# Globalization of Chemicals



- The chemical industry is the fifth-largest global manufacturing sector
- Contributes \$5.7tn to global GDP

Source : <https://www.chemicals-technology.com/news/study-report-says-chemical-industry-contributes-5-7tn-to-global-gdp/>

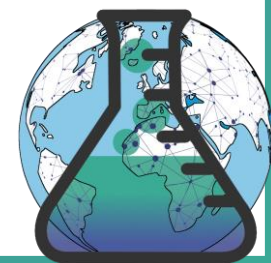




# Costs of Inaction

on the  
Sound Management  
of Chemicals

United Nations Environment Programme



# Chemicals and its Impacts

## On Human

### SYSTEMIC EFFECTS

### LOCAL EFFECTS

#### SKIN

acrylis  
epoxy resins  
nickel  
coal tar  
benzene

#### LUNG

asbestos  
silica  
cotton dust TDI  
cadmium  
diesel emissions  
bagasse dust  
bauxite dust

#### GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT

asbestos  
nitrosamines  
welding fumes  
lead

#### BRAIN AND NERVOUS SYSTEM

organophosphorus pesticides  
lead  
mercury  
manganese  
arsenic

#### CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

carbon monoxide  
vinyl chloride  
trichloroethylene  
benzene  
toluene

#### LIVER

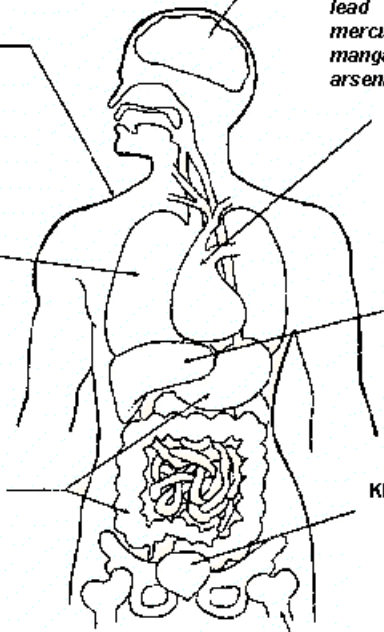
carbon tetrachloride  
vinyl chloride  
trichloroethylene

#### KIDNEYS AND BLADDER

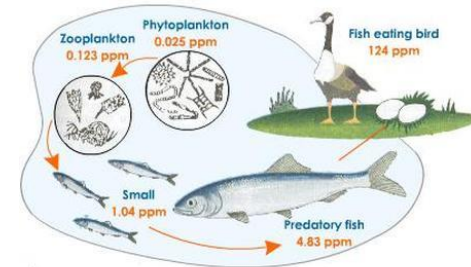
benzidine dyes  
betanaphthylamine  
coke oven emissions  
mercury

#### BONES

lead



## On Environment



Process of Biological Magnification;  
DDT concentrations increase in organisms along the food chain

- Hazardous to the Aquatic Environment
- Acute aquatic toxicity
- Chronic aquatic toxicity
- Bioaccumulation potential  Rapid degradability

### Sources

<https://metaphysicsspeaks.com/harmful-impact-chemicals-american-worker-chemical-company-efforts-keep-secret/>

<https://www.hydroviva.com/blogs/water-smarts/bioaccumulation>



# Impact of Chemicals

*Few available figures for the impacts of chemicals*

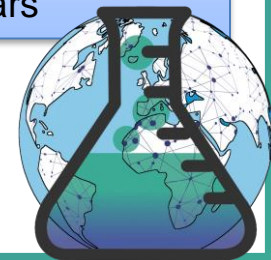
**4.9**  
**MILLION**  
DEATHS WORLDWIDE

**86**  
**MILLION**  
Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)

**240,000**  
**Annual Death**  
Due to **Chemicals** involved in  
acute poisoning

**186,000**  
**Annual Death**  
Due to **Pesticides** involved in self  
poisoning

**375,000**  
**Annual Death**  
Due to Occupational  
Particulars



# Categorization of Chemicals ( Toxicity)

- Persistent Organic Pollutants ( POPs)
- Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals ( EDCs)
- REACH
- SIN (Substitute it Now) list
- Restriction of Hazardous Substances ( RHOs)





# Classifications of Chemicals

Chemicals are being classified on the basis of its, structure, physical, chemicals properties and its use

Radioactive

Carcinogens

Narcotics or Anaesthetics

Teratogens/ Reproductive Toxins

Mutagens

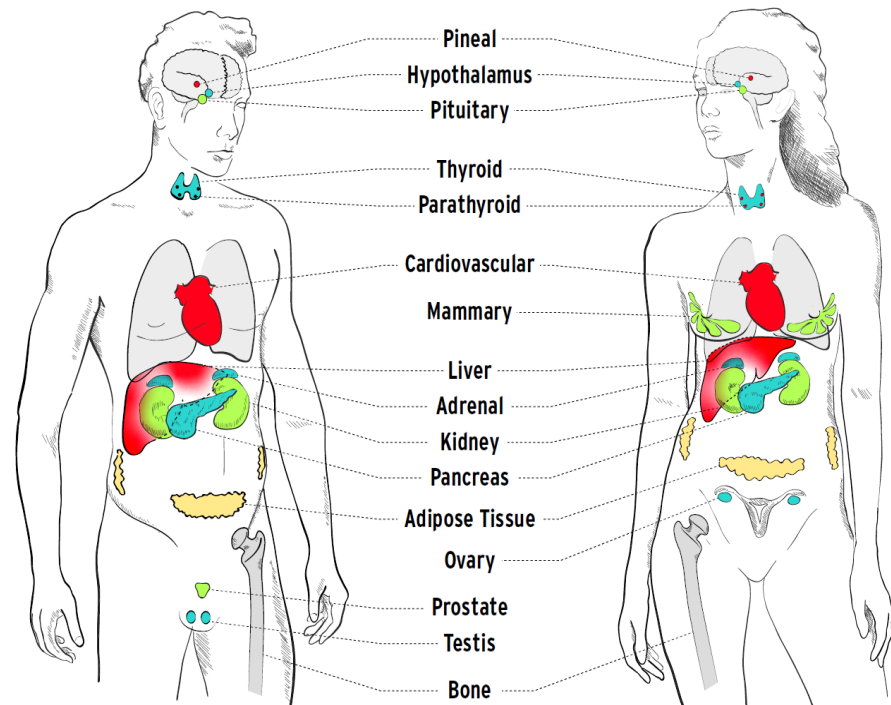
Neurotoxics and Nephrotoxic



# Chemical Toxicity and Gender

## *Sex-differentiated effects of exposure*

- Higher susceptibility of women of exposure to toxic chemicals
- Health effects vary because of size, body fat, hormonal levels, and differences in enzyme levels and activity
- Relatively higher proportion of body fat in women; therefore, more bioaccumulation of chemicals
- More physiological changes in women
- Some chemicals impact pregnancies, harm fetuses and are transferred during breastfeeding that have implications especially for women
- Differences in endocrine systems between women and men



# Exposure to Chemicals

## *Sex-differentiated effects of exposure*

- Occupational exposure varied with men and women
- Women in developing countries/countries in transition are more impacted due to nature of job (Manual in nature)
- Cosmetics and household chemicals have a direct bearing on women

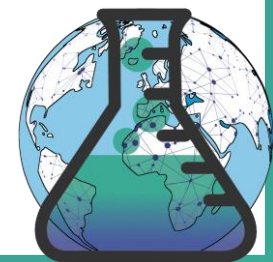
*The WHO notes that many studies of exposure to hazardous chemicals are conducted either without women or that the gender of the participants is not recorded at all. It also notes that studies are prone to correct for gender rather than to consider gender- and sex-specific factors in the design and evaluation of studies”*

“



## Emerging Policy Issues (EPIs) in SAICM

- Lead in paints
- Chemicals in products
- Hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products
- Nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials
- Endocrine-disrupting chemicals
- Environmentally persistent pharmaceutical pollutants
- Perfluorinated chemicals and the transition to safer alternatives
- Highly hazardous pesticides



# Sound Chemicals Management

- Substitution and cleaner alternatives
- Life cycle approach
- Information, transparency and labeling
- Infrastructure for disposal
- Transparent documentation
- Registration / deregistration systems
- Minimization of hazard



# SAICM

## 2020

SAICM 2020

Enhance the **responsibility** of stakeholders

Establish and strengthen national **legislative and regulatory frameworks** for chemicals and waste

Mainstream **the sound management of chemicals and waste** in the **sustainable development** agenda

**Increase risk reduction and information sharing efforts** on **emerging policy** issues

Promote **information access**

Assess progress towards the 2020 goal of minimizing the adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment



## Gender and Chemicals: SAICM need to address

- Ensure greater participation of women representative in national level decision-making at all levels related to chemicals management
- Include women and chemicals as a funding priority issue in relation to SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste.
- Need to prioritize the protection of women as a group highly susceptible to adverse effects from chemical exposure
- Create information and public availability of sex-disaggregated data on effects of chemicals and waste, in particular from developing countries and countries in transition.



# Thank You

## **For more Information**

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