

## Elimination of acute risks of obsolete pesticides in Moldova, Armenia and Georgia



<b>geographic scope:</b>	Moldova, Armenia, Georgia
<b>period:</b>	Jan 1st, 2005 - Dec 31st, 2007
<b>funder:</b>	TMF programme (Thematische Mede Financiering) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dutch Foundation Doen PSO Capacity Building in Developing Countries
<b>partners:</b>	Tauw bv, international environmental consultancy firm (originally: Technical Advicebureau of the Union of district Waterboards, founded in 1928) IHPA, independent and non-political network (International HCH & Pesticides Association) SNM, the Netherlands Society for Nature and Environment
<b>themes:</b>	obsolete pesticides, public-private partnerships, awareness raising, human health, capacity building, (inter)national network development

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### Introduction

The World Health Organisation estimated (WHO, 1986) that one million people are affected by insecticide poisoning every year and that 20 000 die as a result of being unaware of the risks involved in handling insecticides.

Initially arranged as a short-term, but then turned to be the long-term storage of obsolete pesticides (OP) result in deterioration of packaging, loss of labels and storage documentation, spillages, re-packaging, mixing of the pesticides, possible chemical reactions with unknown results. The stockpiled chemicals may affect the environment in various ways, like soil and groundwater, surface water and air. Most pesticides are extremely stable substances. In many environmental studies the presence of DDT and HCH was used as a general indicator of pollution. DDT, Aldrin, heptachlor, HCH were detected in soil 8-12 years after their application.

### Storage

There is a general recommendation to locate stocks of obsolete pesticides in areas with large depths to the groundwater level. However, it was observed frequently in several countries, especially when the chemical waste was dumped just in pits or on soil surface, that the quantities were dumped without a liner and in areas with very shallow groundwater level. But even if the stores originally were protected, the liners, floors and pavements in many cases were not maintained properly and thus lost their protective qualities. Inappropriate storage, handling and transportation of obsolete pesticides may result in spreading of pesticide dust over considerable areas. Obsolete pesticides poses not only a local but also a global environmental risk.



### Common concern, common attack

To be effective and have a sustainable impact on the elimination of acute risks it is essential that all stakeholders are involved in the process. Obsolete pesticides should be considered as a common threat and a common responsibility. Another

important factor for sustainability is raising awareness of the risks and the solutions of the problem of obsolete pesticides. Citizens may have them at home and do not know what to do with them. Others may be tempted to take from the storage facilities hazardous chemicals to use them in their own garden. Knowledge about the risks of pesticides will help to prevent these situations. A process to involve stakeholders and citizens is in other words essential for the solution of this problem. This process offers also an excellent opportunity to develop a (network of) NGOs concerned with environmental issues in the regions. And their relations with the government and other parties.

#### **Aim**

The project aims at storing and eliminating the pesticides in partner countries in the Dutch development aid programme. In each of the countries the programme will be adapted to the local situation.

#### **In general the project aims at the following results:**

- Local structure of stakeholders is established and running
- Risks are identified and inventarised
- Local Action Plans are developed
- Risks of dissemination of obsolete pesticides are eliminated in a specific country or region through proper storage
- Personnel is trained in stock taking, risk assessment and packaging of obsolete pesticides
- Internet forum and Network on

Obsolete pesticides are established and running

- Project results are brought to the attention of international Fora, national governments and funders.

