



## **The International POPs Elimination Project (IPEP)**

*Fostering Active and Effective Civil Society Participation in Preparations for Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*

# **PROJECT OF RAISING AWARENESS AND INFORMATION OF THE TOGOLESE NGOs AND CSOs ON THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION AND POPs**

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**Togo  
April 2006**

## About the International POPs Elimination Project

On May 1, 2004, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN <http://www.ipen.org>) began a global NGO project called the International POPs Elimination Project (IPEP) in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provided core funding for the project.

IPEP has three principal objectives:

- Encourage and enable NGOs in 40 developing and transitional countries to engage in activities that provide concrete and immediate contributions to country efforts in preparing for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention;
- Enhance the skills and knowledge of NGOs to help build their capacity as effective stakeholders in the Convention implementation process;
- Help establish regional and national NGO coordination and capacity in all regions of the world in support of longer term efforts to achieve chemical safety.

IPEP will support preparation of reports on country situation, hotspots, policy briefs, and regional activities. Three principal types of activities will be supported by IPEP: participation in the National Implementation Plan, training and awareness workshops, and public information and awareness campaigns.

For more information, please see <http://www.ipen.org>

IPEN gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Global Environment Facility, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swiss Agency for the Environment Forests and Landscape, the Canada POPs Fund, the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Mitchell Kapor Foundation, Sigrid Rausing Trust, New York Community Trust and others.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not necessarily the views of the institutions providing management and/or financial support.

This report is available in the following languages: summary in English and full report in French

# **PROJECT OF RAISING-AWARENESS AND INFORMATION OF THE TOGOLESE NGOs AND CSOs ON THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION AND POPs**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to promote an effective participation of NGOs in developing and transitional countries in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention, the International POPs Elimination Project have been created and implemented by the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN).

This project aims at preparing activities such as informing and raising awareness on POPs through NGOs in order to allow them to fully act in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention.

Conscious of the scale of the harmful consequences of POPs on human health and environment and the necessity of fighting them worldwide, Togo is part of the Stockholm Convention on POPs since the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2004.

The problem of chemical safety in the management of POPs is not yet dealt with in Togo on a wide scale because of its narrow link with populations' health. Yet, the issue of POPs still relatively new or not well understood in Togo both on the deciding side, workers and NGO that the population itself.

To face the population's lack of information, the Consortium of NGOs and Associations in Terms of Environment in Togo (COMET), member of the National Steering Committee of POPs project requested and obtained financial support from IPEP to organise a workshop of increasing awareness and informing Togolese NGOs and CSOs on the Stockholm Convention and POPs,

The workshop was actually organised on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2006 in Lome, we present herewith the general report of these works.

### **I. REMINDER OF THE EXPECTED OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS OF THE PROJECT**

Our country Togo is part of the Stockholm Convention on POPs since the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2004.

With that in mind, it undertook activities in the implementation of the given Convention. The action of NGOs and development Associations and mainly those involved in the management of dangerous chemical products in order to preserve people's health and the environment becomes a necessity.

#### **1.1 Aim and objectives of the project**

The aim of the project is to increase awareness and to inform Togolese NGOs, Associations and Civil Societies groups about the Stockholm Convention and the POPs for them to participate actively and fully in the national policy in term of implementation of the given Convention.

The objectives followed by the project are:

- Reinforce the capacities of the NGOs and other Togolese civil society's organisations on POPs and the risks related to them.
- Reinforce the capacities of Togolese NGOs and CSOs on the Stockholm Convention and the national rules it abides with.
- Inform the actors on the alternatives to POPs and the Best Available Techniques and the Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP).
- Increase the interest of NGOs and CSOs on the problem of POPs and the Stockholm Convention so that they initiate activities contributing to their management in the country.

### **1.2 Expected results**

The expected results of the project are:

- Around 70 Togolese NGOs, Associations and Civil organisations are become aware and informed on the Stockholm Convention and POPs
- Sanitary and environmental implications related to POPs are known by participants.
- The participants are informed about the alternatives of POPs and the Best Available Techniques and the Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP) regarding POPs.
- The capacities of NGOs and CSOs are strengthened making them able of reinforcing the other actors.
- Change of behaviour towards POPs products.
- The participants are informed of the juridical texts related to the Stockholm Convention, phytosanitary products and the sound management of environment.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The methodology relies on a strategy of active participation. Therefore the choice of participants demanded a diversity of actors. The strategy consisted in giving communications followed by debates the conclusions of which were enriched by answers on clarifying points. Reflections through work of the committee allowed evaluation of the degree of comprehension of POPs problems.

## **II. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES TO THE PREPARATION OF WORKSHOP**

The preliminary activities consisted of:

- Consultation for the definition of the strategies implemented
- Preparation of workshop

## **III. WORKSHOP OF RAISING AWARENESS OF TOGOLESE NGOs AND CSOs ON THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION AND POPs**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2006 the Lome National Workshop of increasing awareness of Togolese NGOs and CSOs on the Stockholm Convention and POPs was held in the big meeting room CESAL, Tokoin Seminar. This workshop was presided over by Mr. AKAKPO-GUETOU Makuza, President of the Board of Directors of COMET. NGOs and Associations, journalists, unions and other actors of the Togolese Civil Societies participated in the workshop. In total 59 representatives were present.

The list of participants as well as the workshop program is annexed to the present document.

### **3.1 Opening ceremony**

The opening ceremony had two addresses. That of Mr. AKAKPO-GUETOU Makuza, President of the Board of Directors of COMET welcoming the participants and that of the Office Director of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Resources, representing his guardianship Minister in delivering the official opening speech of the workshop.

According to Mr. Essowè OURO-DJERI, the initiative of such a national workshop deserves to be praised because it draws attention to the problems of POPs. The Office Director after reminding the audience of process that led our country Togo to develop a National Implementation Plan of the Stockholm Convention on POPs (NIP), explained the role of NGOs and Civil Societies in increasing the awareness of the public on the dangers related to POPs, the provisions of the Convention and the enhanced prestige of ancestral know-how to meet the alternatives of POPs and the Best Available Techniques and/or the Best Environmental Practices (BAT / BEP).

The Office Director in other respects thanked the development partners for their support to our country and particularly, the GEF, UNIDO and the UNEP for accepting to finance the organisation of this workshop.

#### **3.2.1.1 Participants**

The participants in this workshop were invited because of their implication in the management of the different aspects of the cycle of life of chemical, including POPs; they are NGOs and Associations, Unions, journalists, traditional chiefs, farmers, consumers associations and resource persons.

#### **3.2.1.2 Moderators**

Two moderators made the work easier in the workshop.

- ❖ Mr. GOGOVOR Yawo Sèfe, Agronomist, Chief of the Phytosanitary Control Division at the Agriculture Head office.
- ❖ Mr. AKAKPO Koffi Justin, Coordinator of the NGOs and Associations of the Maritime Region (CONGREMA).

#### **3.2.1.3 Communicators**

Two lecturers conversed with the participants on three themes:

- ❖ Professor SANDA Komla, University of Lome, International Consultant on POPs, Technical Director of POPs Project in Togo.
- ❖ Mr. Komi K. ELEMAWUGBO, Biologist, Secretary Executive of COMET, Member of POPs National Committee in Togo.

#### **3.2.1.4 Themes developed**

The themes developed are related to the diverse implications of the Stockholm Convention in the sectors of activities; to the process of implementation of this Convention in Togo and to the implication of NGOs and Civil Society Organisations.

These themes are:

- Some implications in Agriculture and the Agro industry in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organics Pollutants (POPs)
- Status of the preparations for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Togo.
- Place of NGOs and CSOs in the management of POPs in Togo.

After the communications followed by debates, the work continued in committee.

### **3.2.2 Committee work**

After the three communications and general debates, the participants divided themselves into committees.

In total four committees were formed. Each committee had to elect within it an office composed of a President and a reporter; analyse the theme they are given and make written propositions to the workshop office.

- **Committee 1**

Strategy of NGOs and CSOs in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Togo

- **Committee 2**

Capacities to strengthen within populations

- **Committee 3**

Indigenous practices as alternatives to POPs

- **Committee 4**

Sources of possible financing

### **3.2.4 Results of committee work**

The results of the committee work were subject of plenary debate.

The following propositions were made:

#### Committee 1

- Identify the actors of NGOs and CSOs
- Reinforce the capacities of these actors regarding POPs
- Identify the indigenous actors and train them.
- Integrate the management of POPs in the development projects and programs
- Make a participative diagnosis to identify POPs problems in each environment
- Mobilize financial, human and material resources at both national and international level.
- Reinforce the capacities of CVD (Villager Committee for Development), CDQ (District Committee for Development) and CCD (Coordination Committee for Village Development) in terms of POPs
- Put in place a partnership NGO/CSO; Government and private sector on POPs.

#### Committee 2

- Identify the IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) towards the different category of actors.

These social categories are manual workers, the rural world, the households, the doctors, the researchers, the laboratory assistants, the road sweepers, the children and others.

- Train the rural world on individual and collective protections against POPs. Inform these people on the harmfulness of POPs, on the techniques of manipulation and on the measures of protection.
- Categorise the manual workers and propose a specific training on POPs.

### Committee 3

- The enhanced prestige of indigenous practices of fighting pests.
  - \* in gardening: use of ashes, of bio pesticides
  - \* in agriculture: use of “neems” leaf and bio pesticides for the protection of young plants and the conservation of harvest
  - \* in animal health: use of medicinal plants
  - \* in human health: use of medicinal plants
- The enhanced prestige of all indigenous practices that can be considered as alternatives to POPs.

### Committee 4

- Mobilise local environmental funds. This can be done approaching the companies generating products suspected to contain POPs for their contribution; we can also increase the taxes on all polluting products such as plastics; by putting fines on the rubbish dump.
- Approach the official partners of the Stockholm Convention in order to mobilise funds for the implementation of the different parties of PNM.
- Request all the financing related to POPs. Example of the IPEP support.
- Approach of bilateral partners taking into consideration the management of POPs. (Example CARE England, FAO, FFEM, WFP, WHO, Canadian POPs Fund, PAN, UNIDO, UNEP)

## **IV – THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKSHOP**

The workshop formulated six recommendations which can help reach the objectives of the Convention.

- Intensification of awareness-raising activities for the different social groups concerned by the POPs problem in order to raise a collective and effective fight against POPs.
- Training of NGOs and CSOs who constitute the platform on POPs in order to maximize their actions in the execution of the National implementation Plan of the Stockholm Convention.
- Building capacities of the peasants, the farmers, the consumers groups and the craftsmen who are more exposed to the toxic effects of POPs.
- Training of journalists on POPs so that they diffuse the appropriate messages to the public.
- Continuous financial support to NGOs and CSOs in all the stages of execution of the National implementation Plan of the Stockholm Convention on POPs.



- Institution of teaching a course on POPs in the faculties and specialized schools.

## **V- Conclusion and closing ceremony**

The organisation of the workshop for raising awareness and information of the Togolese NGOs and CSOs on the Stockholm Convention and POPs is highly saluted by the implicated actors.

From the policy makers to the direct beneficiary of the workshop, the reaction is the same: these actions should be continued in order to reach an effective implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Togo.

Efforts should still be done to support these initiatives and the work should begin in order to meet the objectives aimed at in the financing of the NGOs regarding the increase of awareness on the Convention and the POPs.

Let this first inaugurate a real partnership between us and the institutions that have given us the necessary means for the organisation of the workshop.

A sustainable development happens through this direct and profitable partnership.

The closing ceremony was presided over by M. AKAKPO-GUETOU Makouza President of the Board of Directors of COMET.

After the word of thank of the Secretary Executive of COMET to the participants M. AKAKPO-GUETOU gave his closing speech of the workshop.

The speaker was very pleased for the work accomplished; for the quality of communications and debates; for the obvious interest shown to POPs problems and for the seriousness of the participants.

The President of COMET said that he is certain that the participants are conscious of the danger of Persistent Organic Pollutants on human health and environment. Also he invites each one to diffuse continuously the message of the workshop around them and everywhere so that a large number of persons are informed.

While renewing his hope of seeing our environment managed rationally towards POPs, he declared the national workshop activities for raising awareness and information of the Togolese NGOs and CSOs on the Stockholm Convention and POPs closed

## **VI – PERSPECTIVES**

Many are the perspectives offered after this first concrete action in raising awareness on the Stockholm Convention and POPs. We can retain:

- The organisation of other raising awareness workshops in other regions of the country.
- The reinforcement of NGO/CSO involved by this workshop of information and which constitutes a way of entrance of actions towards a larger public.
- The participation of our network in the regional and continental works in terms of POPs for a better result at and a better visibility of the actions taken.

The mobilisation of other funds to execute the NIP in Togo especially in the domain related to Civil Societies Organisations and Non Governmental Organisations. NGOs and CSOs role in NIPs are: to popularize the Convention; to help the achievement of the



objectives of the Convention, to play an intermediate role between the NIP and the population we have underlined.

The expected results of the NGOs and CSOs action are: all the concerned actors are informed; use by populations of POPs alternatives; the adoption in the country of the Best Available Techniques and the Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP)

To finish we call all the participants to attain the objectives of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Togo.