

Date: December 4<sup>th</sup>

Time: 15:30-16:15

Room: Press Conference Room

### **Action on Women & Chemicals**

Reducing and eliminating women's toxic chemical exposures is key to the health of women and future generations and is fundamental to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights and achieve gender equity and environmental health. Women's chemical safety is key to economic growth without harm to people and the planet—to sustainable development and fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### **Speakers:**

##### **Ms. Imogen Ingram, Island Sustainability Alliance, Cook Islands**

Island Nations depend on fish for diet (food), native culture and economic revenue. Women in the Pacific Islands are exposed to mercury pollution from coal thousands of miles away, threatening their health and their children. Ms. Ingram has traveled to several Island Nations in a UNEP-IPEN mission to monitor mercury levels in women of child-bearing age and elevate attention to mercury threats to women.

##### **Ms. Eunice Atieno Juma, MOKAN Women's Group, Kenya**

Small scale gold mining is linked to severe poverty and involves high levels of mercury exposure in women and children. Ms. Atieno Jume is one of 32 women tested for mercury in her community for mercury levels in her body for an IPEN international study. The results were communicated back to the community, who reacted by forming a women's group (MOKAN) to bring women together and discuss how they can empower each other.

##### **Minster Karolina Skog, Minister of Environment, Sweden**

From the local to the international level, Sweden has been and will continue to be a major contributor and actor promoting women's equality. Linking the Sustainable Development Goals and international chemical policies are essential actions that are beginning to emerge.

##### **Dr. Olga Speranskaya, IPEN Co-Chair**

IPEN's global network of nearly 600 public interest organizations in over 100 countries has worked on women and chemical safety issues for several years, but had not formalized this effort until last year. The Partnership with UNEP will enable both a global NGO network and an intergovernmental organization (UNEP) to scale-up activities and elevate the profile of this important issue.

##### **Dr. Ligia Noronha, Director of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, UNEP**

UNEP is the leading organization within the United Nations system in the field of the environment. Mainstreaming work on Gender and Chemicals has been an emerging topic. The partnership between the two global institutions, UNEP & IPEN, should advance chemical safety & health and help advance the connections between chemical safety and Sustainable Development Goal #5 on Gender Equity.

**Facilitator:** Shradha Shreejaya (Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law & Development)

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## IPEN-UNEP Partnership:

### **Areas of Cooperation**

The overall theme of the IPEN - UNEP Partnership is to contribute to the work on Gender and Chemicals, through a focus on women in the following areas:

- Raising awareness of the health effects and other impacts to women and children as vulnerable populations from chemical exposures, including by creating opportunities for training and experience-sharing and collecting relevant sex-disaggregated data;
  - Promoting women's engagement and leadership in decision-making processes at national and global levels; and
  - Implementing and contributing to activities related to SAICM Emerging Policy Issues and other Issues of Concern as well as related chemicals conventions and relevant Sustainable Development Goals.
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### Background documents of relevance to the session:

**UNEP-IPEN Mercury Monitoring of Women of Child-bearing Age in the Asia and Pacific Region Report**

<http://ipen.org/Mercury-Monitoring-in-Women>

**IPEN Mercury in Women of Child-bearing Age in 25 Countries Report**

<http://ipen.org/mercury-and-women>

### **Kenya ASGM Report**

**Inventory and mapping of mercury use in Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sites in Migori South Western Kenya**

**Report:** <http://ipen.org/sites/default/files/documents/CEJAD%20IMEAP%20report%20final%20.pdf>

### **Images:**

<http://ipen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Figure%201%20Pictures%20illustrating%20gold%20mining%20process%20in%20Migori.pdf>

### **Video:**

<http://ipen.org/project-reports/inventory-and-mapping-mercury-use-artisanal-small-scale-gold-mining-asgm-sites>