

2011

A Rotterdam Convention

Side Event

Wednesday 22 June
13h - 15h

Centre International de
Conférences

Genève, 17 rue de Varembe

Vulnerable groups and pesticides exposure

Joining forces to reduce hazardous child labour in agriculture



ILO

International Programme
on the Elimination of Child
Labour (IPEC)



FAO

Gender, Equity and Rural
Employment (ESW)



Rotterdam Convention
Secretariat of the
Rotterdam Convention

Chair: Peter Hurst

VULNERABILITY

Men's, women's and children's responses to pesticides exposure can vary considerably.

Children are particularly vulnerable to the risks posed by pesticides:

- Children have a higher capacity to absorb toxic substances as they breathe, eat and drink more in proportion to their body weight;
- Children's ability to successfully detoxify and excrete toxins differs from adults;
- Children have a lower capacity to assess risks;
- Children might play in or close to pesticide-treated areas;
- Children often cannot read warning labels on pesticides.

EXPOSURE TO PESTICIDES

Children and women can be exposed to pesticides as consumers, bystanders but also as workers since they constitute

a significant rural labour force in particular in developing countries and countries with an economy in transition. The **objectives** of this side event are to

- raise awareness on exposure to hazardous pesticides of vulnerable groups and on hazardous child labour in agriculture;
- make proposals on how to collect data on exposure to hazardous chemicals and its use for policy making;
- identify synergies between initiatives tackling hazardous child labour and the Rotterdam Convention's severely hazardous pesticide formulation (SHPF) programme.

JOINING FORCES

Further cooperation is needed among Designated National Authorities, policy makers, Pesticide Registrars, farmers, social partners and NGOs including the private sector such as manufacturing and trading companies.