

together these sugar mills, the State Government, local NGOs and the farming community to impress upon them the harmful effects of these toxic pesticides and eliminate them from the region and introduce organic farming as the suitable alternative.

This project was initiated on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 and since then, to propagate this project, Janhit Foundation arranged 8 interactive meetings with the farmers and 4 meetings with the management of the sugar mills. The meetings with the farmers were conducted to educate them about the ill effects of use of Lindane and Endosulphan and to provide them with an alternative. They were introduced to organic farming as the only means to sustainable agriculture. They were assured that the experts from the organization would provide them with demonstrations and training to counter this grave threat by developing their own bio-pesticides and manures. Post meeting 400 farmers were identified who were keen to make a shift to organic farming.

The meetings conducted with the sugar mills were to convince the



managements to take the necessary action and terminate the distribution of these chemicals to the farmers. The objective of these discussions was to create awareness amongst the farmers, who constitute the major supply chain of the mill, about the ill effects of pesticides and to persuade them to adopt organic farming methods. In the discussions held, Janhit Foundation put forth an humble suggestion before the management of the mills to come forward themselves to change the mental perspective of the farmers as they are in constant contact with the mill and are dealing with them on a regular basis.

After the initial activities, the organization now aims to move on to the next phase of the project. Researches have been conducted to ascertain the quantum of pesticides used by the farmers over the crops and vegetables grown by them. The registration of the farmers has also been initiated.



UNDP (CEE)

The ongoing project called “Elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) namely Lindane and Endosulphan through promotion of the use of bio-pesticides and organic manures through sustainable agricultural practices in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar districts of Uttar Pradesh” is being supported by UNDP (CEE)



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## ELIMINATING LINDANE AND ENDOSULPHAN IN WESTERN U.P.



Issues,  
Challenges  
and the  
Way out



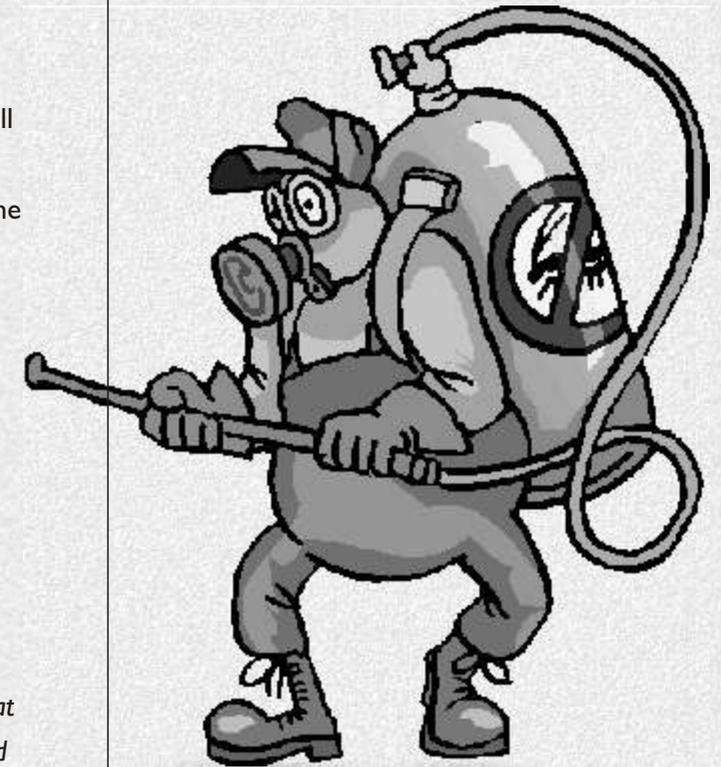
Agriculture dominates the livelihood opportunities in western Uttar Pradesh, with sugarcane being the primary crop. For many years the farmers who have been cultivating sugarcane have been using deadly pesticides like Lindane and Endosulphan extensively. These chemicals are stable and persist in the environment in some form or the other for years and evaporate and travel long distances through air and water. These pesticides can kill people, damage the nervous system, cause cancer and reproductive disorders and interfere with normal infant and child development. They even bio-accumulate in the fatty tissues of humans and wildlife thus endangering their lives. Therefore, the extensive utilization of these pesticides is a matter of concern. In view of their extremely toxic nature and their detrimental impact on human and animal health, these chemicals are considered as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Many countries including Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden have already banned Lindane. A European Union report has recommended a total ban. Again, for Endosulphan, a number of countries have regulations against it or have severely restricted its use. Those who have banned it

include Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belize, Singapore and the Brazilian state of Rondonia. Columbia and Indonesia have been preparing for a ban. Its use is disallowed in rice fields in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Korea and Thailand. Use is restricted or severely restricted in Canada, Finland, Great Britain, Kuwait, the Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Madagascar. Campaigns have been going on worldwide for several years to ban Endosulphan.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to POPs. The problem has been lack of public awareness and the absence of appropriate infrastructure or technology which has often prevented the adoption of alternatives. Solutions must be tailor made to the specific properties of each chemical and to specific areas. Unfortunately, understanding of POPs and POP-like chemicals is extremely

poor amongst sugarcane farmers as well as sugar mills. It is crucial that the sugarcane farmers be made aware of the deleterious effects of pesticides, particularly Lindane and Endosulphan which they use extensively for sugarcane cultivation. Lindane and Endosulphan have been identified as Persistent Toxic Substances having the potential to bio-accumulate in living organisms. While some will be eventually added to the list of POPs, others continue to be used and their traces are found in everyday products. These pose a real threat to human health and the environment and form the chemical legacy that we pass on to future generations. Hence, the need of the hour is to phase out Lindane and Endosulphan and embrace sustainable farming practices like organic farming. In this context, sugar mills play a crucial role since they can spread the knowledge of deleterious effects of these pesticides amongst the farmers and encourage them to use alternatives.

Against this backdrop, Janhit Foundation has initiated the current project wherein it is focusing on the elimination of the use of Lindane and Endosulphan from agricultural practices. This project would further advocate that the use of these pesticides be stopped for any other purpose and they should be included in the list of the banned POPs.



The project is being implemented in Meerut as well as Muzaffarnagar districts. Four blocks have been selected from each district. The activities are evenly spread across the eight blocks. These districts have been selected on the basis of previous researches conducted by Janhit Foundation which indicated the excessive use of Lindane and Endosulphan in agricultural practices and their traces present in water.

The area of western Uttar Pradesh has a large number of sugar mills and it is a common practice that the sugar mills also distribute certain deadly pesticides including Lindane and Endosulphan. Efforts have been made to bring

