toxicslink

annual report

2014-15

We are working together for environmental justice and freedom from toxics

Toxics Link

for a toxics-free world

FOREWORD

Toxics Link has completed almost twenty years of its existence. It began as a need to address issues of waste and toxicity from the perspective of creating information which could be used by citizens to help participate in ways to deal with them. Waste, came to the fore as a major urban issue around the early nineties, and since then it has only become all the more important. New urbanizations have led to intensive and haphazard growth in cities and towns, and the municipalities do not have the structure or the capacity to deal with it properly. Toxicity issues are still being understood, as new understandings of products emerge. For example, though lead was stopped from being used in paint in the developed world since the early fifties, in India, it continues to be used with no mandatory law preventing its addition.

Toxic's Link approach is to create a knowledge based understanding of the issues, and to find on the ground sustainable solutions for them. We attempt to place at the fore, the impact of waste and toxicity on the most vulnerable citizens, and to find solutions which will benefit all. Hence issues of waste invariably also include issues of sustainable disposal technologies, livelihoods of waste pickers and toxic impacts on people living near waste dumps. Toxicity problems which impact women and children most, such as lead and mercury, or emissions of dioxins and furans, are on our radar.

Over the years we have attempted to inform policy on several waste streams, their on the ground impacts and processes, and to think of systemic solutions for them. Today there is a battery of legislations and policies which deal with waste streams, and toxics materials. These include biomedical waste, municipal waste, lead acid battery waste, hazardous waste, plastic wastes, e-waste, mercury in products in processes, lead in paints, persistent organic pollutants, waste technologies standards, landfill standards, etc. Our science based approach, and systems oriented thinking has helped us create and inform new frameworks of understandings.

Subsequently, even after new policies and legislations have been made, we stay involved in helping create awareness, implement new systems and make them sustainable. For example though we started working on bio-medial waste in 1994, we continue to work on it even today, even though the national legislation came out in 1998. Each such issue takes years of involvement for the ground reality to start changing, and we try and be persistent on the issue till it does.

Internationally too, since we started, a new regime of international policy and multilateral legally binding conventions dealing with waste and chemicals have emerged. These include several UN and other initiatives. Our work and participation has informed almost all of them, and we have also seen the emergence of international civil society networks in this area, in which we play a key role.

Today sustainable systems and products include not only safer materials, but also lower carbon footprints. Toxics Link has linked its work to the idea of energy efficiency as well, starting with the health care sector, where we have initiated work to think of overall sustainability.

In effect, Toxics Link is committed to changing the way we deal with sustainability, waste and toxicity issues. The problems are not only technical, but of public awareness, public policy, industrial substitutions for safer materials, finding appropriate and innovative solutions, creating safer livelihoods, and creating a new circular economy of resource use.

Ravi Agarwal
Director, Toxics Link

A TOXIC FREE WORLD: NEED AND RELEVANCE

In today's technology driven world we are consistently exposed to toxic materials and harmful chemicals that have direct and indirect impacts on environment, health and society as a whole. A wide variety of waste, including industrial wastes, medical waste, e-waste, chemicals, pesticides, organic/inorganic toxics have the capacity to not just cause physical damage to a person's health, but also damage reproduction, cause genetic disorders, and damage the endocrine system and even cause impairments based on the toxicity of their elements/components. Besides, they also impact socially which includes adverse effects on wellbeing, longevity, livelihoods, poverty, inclusiveness and access to basic rights.

Waste and toxicity is intrinsically connected to health and body burdens of chemicals. Waste is the outcome of consumption and growth. New urbanizations have made the problem worse, since there is a lack of systems and the mindset to deal with it. Toxics Link's realm of work encompasses impacting consumer behavior, awareness, innovation in techniques and safe technologies, recycling, and systems, which involve product life cycle approaches and sustainable packaging. It is almost like reinventing the production and consumption systems we use today, since they cannot deal with new growing economies, new materials and new urbanizations.

Also today each of us is carrying a load of chemicals, which our grandparents did not have. Through the omnipresent use of chemicals, we also imbibe them – often in miniscule quantities on an ongoing basis. Many of these chemicals have never been tested for their adverse impacts, and others like lead and mercury, whose impacts are well documented and known, are still used, a carryover from the past. Their impacts are across class and nationality, however the poorest and the most vulnerable populations are the most exposed and impacted. Working for a toxics free world also means focusing on the most vulnerable populations as well as ecosystems.

The lack of understanding and awareness on chemicals contained in products and high risks thereof, are matters of concern. Impacts of organic and inorganic toxics like HCB, PCB, BPA, DDT, Mercury, Lead, Cadmium, Chromium, etc, are a threat. Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) are found in significant proportion in infant feeding bottles.

E-wastes are distressing. After a long campaign the government came out with Rules for E-waste disposal and management (2011), yet stringent norms or deadlines for extended producer responsibility and take back systems remain absent. India also is a victim of E-waste crime. Approximately 40 million tons of electronic waste produced around the world finds its way illegally to Asia and Africa every year.

Another looming concern is that of bio-medical waste. In spite of Government of India's Bio-medical Waste Management Act, Rules & Regulations, there have been loopholes in enforcement and monitoring of legislations, giving enough space to many private and public sector medical institutions for non-compliance. In addition, there is non-adherence and lack of enforcements of environmental policies and laws. Environmental justice is diluted. Absence of stakeholder consultations, inclusion and lack of expression of concerns at the grass roots exists. Multiple impacts on health and wellbeing and adverse impacts on environment because of toxics can't be denied.

The need for having a toxic free world given the harm they can cause to environment, health and social wellbeing in the Indian context is of great concern and well established. In this complex scenario, which is adverse to life and environment equally, Toxics Link is a catalyst of change. With a research backbone, expertise, experience of over a decade of providing deep insights and solutions, Toxics Link has addressed concerns around toxics and pollutants nationally and internationally in the ambit of environmental justice. Toxic Link's journey and achievements in the year 2014-15 are documented here in this annual report.

TOXICS LINK ABOUT US

A toxics free world with environmental justice for all.

"We are a group of people working together for environmental justice and freedom from toxics. We have taken it upon ourselves to collect and share information about the sources and dangers of poisons in our environment and bodies, as well as about clean and sustainable alternatives for India and the rest of the world."

Toxics Link is a Non-Government Organization, registered under the Societies Act of 1860 in the year 1996. The Founder Director of this dynamic institution is Mr. Ravi Agarwal, an environmentalist of international repute. The Board of Directors include- Mr. Sanjay Parikh (Sr. Advocate, Supreme Court), Mr. Ashok Khetan (Sr. Chartered Accountant, Khetan and Company and Ms. Nanni Singh (Social Activist). Mr. Satish Sinha is Associate Director at Toxics Link and is a well-known environmentalist.

Unlike many non-profit organisations that work on a project to project basis, Toxics Link works in a programme mode on subjects relating to 'toxicity' and how it can be minimized. The key focus is to involve people in toxicity and waste issues, and to find such solutions which are appropriate and safe. Starting from research and lab work to influencing policies and facilitating in compliance, each subject relating to environment, toxicity and solutions, is a programme by itself.

Programmes are initiated with a need and situation analysis bringing out issues and concerns on toxics, pollutants, municipal and hazardous waste management, food safety, etc. This is done using participatory methods and state of art research to establish facts. These facts are then brought into the public domain by advocacy and campaigning, community level outreach, training and capacity building, information communication technology, policy analysis, environment friendly policy designing, programme development, providing solutions platform and influencing change. Thus Toxics Link programmes are people driven, need based and implementable.

Toxics related information is brought to the public domain through qualified team of experts and staff, who undertake exhaustive research studies based on scientific testing and standard research tools, undertake the challenges of policy advocacy, and provide their expertise in an endeavour to build capacities of stakeholders around such issues for better compliance on the ground.

The operational area of Toxics Link although is the entire country, it is also a part of international forums as change makers. Its head office is in Delhi (India) with a nodal office in Kolkata (West Bengal, India). It has a network of over 5000 members from different streams from across the nation. In the coming years, Toxics Link plans to expand activities by also including measures, solutions and frameworks for ensuring producer responsibility and compliance, leverage Corporate Social Responsibility for minimizing risk from toxics, for a safer environment, and for influencing society at large to be more responsible, aware and participative.

TOXICS LINK TEAM

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Toxics Link primarily focuses upon action research, campaigning, policy, advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and facilitating in enforcement of rules/guidelines, on issues related to chemicals and waste. In order to be focused in meeting the objectives and long term goals, the organization divides its initiatives into four interrelated programmes namely: Chemicals and Health, Clean Industry, Toxics Free Health Care, and Information and Communication. Highlights of its activities and achievements under each segment in the financial year 2014-2015 are further presented in the report.

CHEMICALS AND HEALTH

The focus of Chemicals and Health Programme is to create information on the complete lifecycle of chemicals and its adverse impacts on human health and environment. This involves in-depth understanding of manufacturing processes, its storage and transportation, usages in products and processes, and disposal of waste. Some of our recent engagements have been on heavy metals in products such as lead in paints, mercury in lamps or in healthcare instruments and their long term environmental impacts. The organization has been extremely active in international conversation and global effort on chemicals including SAICM and the Minamata Convention. Being the South Asia hub of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), we catalyse the efforts of CSOs and have been successful in driving some key issues on chemicals in the region.

Following are some of the initiatives undertaken last year under Chemicals and Health programme:

Chemicals and Health Programme has been facilitating and catalyzing mechanisms to overcome poor regulations of products which may contain harmful heavy metals.

ADVOCACY ON BETTER MANAGEMENT OF MERCURY IN LIGHTING SECTOR

Mercury is extremely harmful to human health and environment and Toxics Link has been conducting series of studies on mercury present in CFL bulbs in India. The 2012 study found high contents of mercury in CFL bulbs, while the study in 2014 on the downstream management showed a complete negligence by the regulating agencies and the manufacturers. On the basis of the report Toxics Link moved a PIL in the "National Green Tribunal" for environmentally sound management of CFL bulbs. The court accepted the petition and issued an order to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to come up with solutions in consonance with Centre Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Board, ELCOMA and Toxics Link. The sustained campaign of Toxics Link led to issuance of standards of mercury content in CFL bulbs up to 26 watts. The report that was formally released in 2015 drew considerable attention in media, policymaking circles, and the report was also discussed by the parliament standing committee.

ELIMINATION OF LEAD IN PAINTS

Lead is a toxic heavy metal that causes irreversible damage to children's health. Though globally many countries have phased out lead from paints, in India lead is still being used as an ingredient in paints. Toxics Link initiated advocacy campaign to phase out lead from paints in 2007 and over the years has produced numerous reports indicating high lead content in Indian enamel paints. Our consistent advocacy initiatives, including dialogues with the BIS has led to the issuance of voluntary standard of 90ppm of lead in paints. Besides, as a result of our advocacy initiatives most of the big manufacturers that constitute 80% of the market share, have phased out lead from paints. Currently, Toxics Link is engaged with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, to convert the voluntary standard into mandatory standard so that lead free paints become a reality in India.

PHASING OUT BPA FROM BABY FEEDING BOTTLES

BPA found in baby feeding bottles play the role of Endocrine Disruptive Chemicals (EDCs) capable of harming infants and newborn babies. Many countries have banned BPA in baby feeding bottles as a precautionary measure. Toxics Link released a lab tested report titled "Bottles can Be Toxic" in its effort to generate policy dialogue for phasing out BPA. Besides receiving considerable media attention, the report was discussed during winter session of the Indian Parliament. Currently, Toxics Link is having a dialogue with Bureau of Indian Standards to completely phase out BPA from India.

ELIMINATION OF POPS FROM INDIA

Toxics Link is one of the few organizations working on elimination of POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) in India and in whole of South Asia region. For the past several years, it has been engaging stakeholders including NEERI (the South East Asia Regional Centre for Stockholm Convention) and sharing information to catalyze public discussion for the elimination of POPs as mandated in the Stockholm Convention.

Toxics Link also organized a multi stakeholder national conference on Waste to Energy for regulators from central and state agencies, Urban Ministry, Municipal Offices, Industries, Institutions, and National & International NGOs, to have better policies for the management of Dioxins and Furans in Waste to Energy plants.

REDUCING TOXICS IN YAMUNA RIVER

With the fast industrial growth in Delhi and its outskirts, the stretch of Yamuna flowing through the city has become extremely polluted. Toxics Link undertook water and sediment analysis of Yamuna River at different points to detect its toxicity load, and the results showed high level of heavy metals and turbidity. The resulting report "A Report on Toxicity Load of Yamuna River in Delhi" recommended the need of an urgent policy to check the flow of contaminated water into the river, and also warned the possible impact on vegetables grown on the river bed. The National Green Tribunal on the basis of the report has issued an order to prohibit cultivation of vegetables along the polluted stretch of Yamuna.

BPA in baby feeding bottles can be harmful for children

AT A GLANCE (2014-15)

Advocacy Initiatives

- Gazette Notification of the Bureau of Indian Standards on mercury content of 5 mg for CFLs of 0-26 watt.
- Decision of the Parliament Standing Committee to look into the downstream management of the CFLs.
- NGT decision to ban growing of vegetables along the polluted stretch of the Yamuna River in Delhi.
- National Draft Standard on Dioxins for the Waste to Energy Plants.

Publications

- "Bottles can Be Toxic: An Investigative Study on BPA in Baby Feeding Bottles"
- "The Dark End: CFL need better management"
- "A Report on Toxicity Load of Yamuna River in Delhi"
- Fact sheets on new POPs: Pentachlorophenol and Chlorinated Naphthalene

CLEAN INDUSTRY

Over the past decades India has seen an unprecedented growth in the industrial and corporate sector however, this growth has also led to generation of huge quantities and a wide variety of industrial waste. In addition, many Asian countries including India are among the largest importers of recyclable waste adding to the already existing challenges on waste management in the country. Though the Indian government has formulated rules on managing such waste, improvisation of the rules, accountability, and legislative enforcement has been minimal. For the past two decades, Toxics Link has been pushing for effective policies and monitoring mechanisms to catalyze enforcements on the ground. Its endeavors have not only resulted in amendments in government rules on electronic and other kinds of waste, but also to incorporation of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) as a core philosophy, and an overall paradigm shift in the waste management of the country.

Following are the highlights of the activities and achievement during 2014-15:

Toxics Link's efforts have led to amendments in government policies and in catalyzing monitoring mechanisms.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY ON WASTE

Research and advocacy are very intrinsically linked and Toxics Link has been using this synergy for influencing better government rules and their enforcements, help industries manage their waste, and also to influence International forums to make other countries understand the Indian scenario and take cognizance of their exporting rules especially on E-waste.

Toxics Link has been campaigning for the upstream and downstream management of e-waste for over a decade and its endeavors compelled the policy makers to come up with E-waste (Management and Handling) Rules 2011. The rule puts the onus of e-waste management onto the producers and also provides guidelines to the enforcement agencies for strict compliance. In order to evaluate the compliance of the rules, Clean Industry team conducted a study this year named "Time to Reboot", which ranked top 50 Indian and Multi-national brands that sell/manufacture electrical and electronic equipments. The study also examined actions taken by the enforcement agency - State Pollution Control Board, in monitoring the rules. The findings which showed gross negligence by the Producers and the enforcement agencies, was used to mobilize all stakeholders including mainstream media, and it ultimately forced many Producers improve upon their take back mechanism and adhere to EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility). The study was also used to file a Public Interest Litigation against the regulatory agencies. Based on its past experiences and also on the outcomes of the study, Toxics Link sent recommendations to the government on E-waste rules, most of which find mention in the new draft rules notified by the government.

Delhi with high pace of industrial development coupled with rapid urban growth has become one of the most polluted cities in the world. In order to identify the potentially hazardous industrial units in Delhi and assess their threats for future policy formulations, Toxics Link mapped and examined all the potential sites in Delhi and Kolakata, especially the hazardous ones that deal with lead acid batteries, plastics, pickling, e-waste, etc. The resulting study "On the Edge-Potential Hotspots in Delhi" found many hazardous industries to be located inside residential areas. They release large amount of toxic chemicals and acids that put residents at acute health risks and pose environmental challenges to the city. On the basis of this study, Toxics Link mobilized the stakeholders through media, conferences and workshops, which eventually forced the enforcement agency to visit those sites and issue notices to close down the "pickling" industries.

Plastics being recycled in informal sector

Plastic used in manufacturing bags is one of the most toxic pollutants of our times. They are composed of extremely harmful chemicals such as lead and cadmium pigments. Additionally, they are non-biodegradable and when dumped in open, severely impact soil and water quality; while when they are burnt they emit a number of poisonous chemicals including dioxins. Besides promulgating several mandatory provisions for plastic bag suppliers/manufacturers, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has banned manufacture and use of bags with certain specifications. Toxics Link conducted a study on plastic bags that provided new insights in understanding the reasons for its success/failure in Delhi, Chandigarh and Sikkim. Although the report showed high awareness level regarding the hazardous nature of plastics; it also showed complete violation of the ban by shopkeepers, besides revealing careless attitude among consumers and the lopsided approach of enforcement agencies, especially in Delhi and Chandigarh. In Sikkim there was better compliance of the rules and the consumers preferred using alternatives such as newspaper wrappings and paper bags. The report was an eye opener to the enforcement agencies who are now taking stricter actions on the ground.

Along with plastics, the team also undertook an advocacy campaign on Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) used in TV sets and computer monitors. The ground level research revealed that CRT is being recycled in Delhi without precautionary measures and are also imported into India from developed countries. Besides pressurizing the government agencies for stricter recycling laws, Toxics Link also shared the findings at international forums forcing many countries to scrutinize compliance of their exporting rules on e-waste.

CAPACITY BUILDING & AWARENESS PROGRAMS

Toxics Link regularly conducts workshops and seminars to catalyze ground level implementation processes. Towards this end it conducted capacity building workshop on e-waste in Assam for State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) officials. Toxics Link's experts were also invited as resource persons by various agencies for better understanding and management of e-waste.

Besides advocacy and capacity building, the team also engages students through teachers in its e-waste drive. The primary intention of the awareness drive is to empower students and help them become agents of change for the society. So far, Toxics Link has conducted awareness programs in about 2700 schools in 15 states across India. During the last financial year alone, it facilitated capacity building of teachers in 500 schools in 4 states of India through the "Create to Inspire" programme. It was not only successful in making students aware on issues such as e-waste, water, energy, significance of biodiversity; but also helped them participate in spreading messages and providing solutions to the local environmental challenges. As an outcome, students have started conducting energy and water audits in their schools. In many schools the use of by-cycles and car-pooling has gone up. Spreading messages and collection of e-waste, writing petitions, celebrating plantation week, reducing fancy plastic and aluminum packaging, and

composting, are some of other initiatives undertaken by the students through Toxics Link awareness drive. Owing to the success, Toxics Link recently launched a similar awareness drive in 100 schools of Kolkata.

Last year Toxics Link also conducted a video-filming competition for students in Delhi on plastic usage. There was an overwhelming participation by students and their films significantly added to Toxics Link's effort in spreading environmental messages among the general public. In addition, Toxics Link also launched an e-waste drive for residents and institutions in Kolkata and Delhi. It not only helped in building better understanding on the harmful effects among them, but also helped in streamlining the flow of e-waste in those areas.

AT A GLANCE (2014-15)

Advocacy Initiatives

- Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) exported into India for recycling by many countries is now under scanner, some of the international agencies have requested us for more information.
- The report 'Looking through the Glass' on CRT disposal, dumping and recycling in India, is being discussed at international forums by global agencies working to restrict dumping of hazardous waste. There was communication with Environmental Compliance Managers in US, who were shocked with some of Toxics Link's findings and also triggered action in their capacity.
- Our research and advocacy efforts on Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) led to notices issued by SPCBs against Producers for not implementation of EPR under the E-waste Rules, 2011.
- Producers started their take back programme after the release of the report "Time to Reboot" and SPCBs initiated the creation of State level Inventories.
- MoEFCC has begun the process of redrafting the Rules, many of our comments and suggestions have already been taken in.
- There have been visits of regulatory agencies to hazardous industrial sites and they have issued notices on closing down of pickling industries.
- Awareness programmes have increased participation of students on various environmental issues.

Publications

- "Time to Reboot"
- "On the Edge –Potential Hotspots in Delhi"
- "Looking through Glass-CRT Recycling in India"
- "Plastics and the Environment"
- Factsheet on SOLAR-Illustration

TOXICS FREE HEALTH CARE

For the past two decades Toxics Link has been generating public discussion and undertaking policy advocacy initiatives on the adverse impacts of bio-medical waste and its management. Such wastes emanate during diagnosis, treatment or immunization of human beings or animals or in research activities. The crux of Toxic Link endeavor is to bring to the forefront issues of mismanaged and mishandled bio-medical waste, which includes infectious as well as hazardous waste such as lead, mercury, cytotoxic drugs etc. Additionally, it facilitates in sensitizing health service providers and health care seekers for safe disposal to ensure environment, occupational and patient safety, all of which have become critical areas of concern worldwide. Last year Toxics Link focused upon: improving healthcare waste management system in rural and hilly regions across the country, optimizing resource (energy & waste) utilization in the healthcare sector across the country, and phasing out mercury from the healthcare sector of India. Currently Toxics Link team is exploring the possibility of linking up all the healthcare facilities to CBWTFs (Common Bio-medical Waste Treatment Facility) for better management of bio- medical waste.

Some of the key activities and results of our endeavors in 2014-15 are given below:

The crux of Toxics Link endeavor is to bring to the forefront issues of mismanaged and mishandled bio-medical waste.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY ON BIO-MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Toxics Link undertook studies and photo documentation to assess compliance of Bio-medical Waste Management Rules and its management in healthcare facilities including Sub-Centres, PHCs, CHCs & District hospitals across the states of West Bengal, Bihar and Uttarakhand. The study revealed lopsidedness in disposal practices and minimal compliance to the rules in health care facilities of West Bengal and Uttrakhand, while in Bihar the compliance was moderate. Findings were submitted to the respective State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), the state health departments and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), with the larger objective of initiating discussion on improvement of waste disposal practices in the country. As of now, CPCB has issued letter to Bihar SPCB to examine the ground situation and take action. During this financial year, Toxics Link also conducted primary and secondary research on the use of lead apron, its current disposal practices, and on exploring ideas of connecting this waste with lead acid battery recyclers. The research resulted in generating information on the use of non-lead apron and a comparative database of lead based and non-lead aprons has been made.

The team also came up with guidelines on overall management of cytotoxic drugs in India. On the basis of the guidelines, CPCB issued a letter to all the health care facilities across the country asking them not to handover cytotoxic drugs to the patients. The document was also sent to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), which has formed an expert committee with Toxics Link as one of the members. The team also quantified the usage of hazardous chemicals such as glutaraldehyde in the hospitals, and identified alternatives and explored the scope of substitution. It also examined the issues associated with lack of standardization in mercury free products and currently it is pushing the BIS and MoHFW for mandatory standards on such products.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CREATING MODEL HOSPITALS AND PHASING OUT MERCURY

Toxics Link conducted a series of capacity building exercises on bio-medical waste management and mercury toxicity for various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) based across the country. The effectiveness of the exercise can be understood from the fact that Toxics Link in association with

these organizations managed to create 5 model hospitals in Bihar and Uttrakhand. Our state partner in Bihar has started engaging media houses to bring out stories on ill-managed waste handling and disposal practices in the state. The partner organization has also started filing Right to Information (RTI) applications to extract data from the government facilities. Besides empowering the partner organizations, Toxics Link also facilitated in capacity building of staffs of 2 hospitals in Bihar and 4 healthcare facilities in Uttarakhand. These hospitals have started following best practices and serve as reference points for other healthcare facilities in the vicinity to improve upon their systems.

In addition, state level seminars were conducted in coordination with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and State Department of Health (DoH), which resulted in bringing together and generating discussions among various implementing agencies. As a result of these capacity building programmes and seminars, many hospitals across the country have streamlined their bio-medical waste management practices and shifted to mercury free alternatives. Acknowledging our impact in streamlining health care practices and enhancing ground level compliance of medical rules, Uttarakhand Department of Health has agreed on doing a joint Training of Trainers (ToT) for healthcare professionals in the state.

Mercury is still very commonly used in hospitals

ENERGY, WATER AND WASTE AUDIT FOR RESOURCE OPTIMIZATION

Toxics Link initiated a major step in the direction of optimizing energy, water usage and waste management in the healthcare sector of India. It conducted energy, water and waste audit in Holy Family hospital, a major tertiary health care facility in New Delhi. As a result, the hospital has completely shifted to LEDs and has also started generating solar energy to reduce dependence on the conventional energy. Currently, Toxics Link team is in the process of replicating similar approach in other hospitals across the country.

AT A GLANCE (2014-15)

Advocacy Initiatives

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare invited Toxics Link to provide guidance to three major public sector tertiary healthcare facilities to improve their bio-medical waste management practices.
- Notices have been issued by CPCB to Bihar & West Bengal SPCBs on non–compliance of BMW following which Bihar PCB initiated the process of closure of one CBWTF in the state.
- The Central Pollution Control Board issued letters asking hospitals to file details on handling and management of Cytotoxic drugs in their respective healthcare set up, and also ordered not to hand over carcinogenic drugs to patients/their families.
- An expert committee has been formed to deal with Cytotoxic drugs disposal under ICMR with Toxics Link as one of the members.
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare acknowledged the need of standardizing mercury free healthcare products and issued a letter to BIS for initiating the process.

Publications

- "Mercury Free India-Right Choices"
- Handbook "Lessons in Bio-medical Waste Management" developed for WHO

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Information and Communication programme at Toxics Link acts as a connecting bridge between people, environment, industries and the government. Over the past years our endeavors in creating simple media products out of complex studies and awareness drives on critical environmental issues, have helped in enriching policy level debates and in enhancing awareness of general public, leading to their active participation in facing local environmental challenges.

Some of our activities and achievements in 2014-15 are mentioned below:

Toxics Link translates technical results into tangible and creative materials to engage stakeholders and enhance public awareness.

FILM FESTIVAL- "QUOTES FROM THE EARTH"

In order to build a pro-environment agenda among the stakeholders including the general public, Toxics Link with India International Centre (IIC) has been organizing film festival called "Quotes from the Earth" every two years since 2004. Last year it was held on 5 and 6 December 2014 at IIC, New Delhi. Films made by seasoned directors and also the newcomers from around the globe were shown during the festival. Besides, selected videos of school students on plastics were also screened. The festival drew audience of over 300, much beyond the seating capacity. The chief guest was none other than Padmshree and Kathak Guru, Smt. Shovana Narayan. During the festival a panel discussion was also conducted on "Shaping environmental discourse-the role of media" with eminent personalities. The discussion brought to the fore several issues such as the need of media joining hands with the civil society organizations and other stakeholders, importance of local issues in the national media, prominence of in-depth stories, and the need of more platforms for screening documentaries and films on environment.

NEWSLETTERS – TOXICS DISPATCH & TOXICS ALERT

In order to build capacities of stakeholders and shape public discussion on environmental issues Toxics Link publishes a quarterly newsletter named "Toxics Dispatch". It comprises of opinion on policies, simplified versions of technical research and their applications, narration of ground level implementation challenges, along with the latest events and developments from around the world. The newsletter is circulated among thousands of stakeholders across the country. Toxics Link also publishes a monthly e-newsletter called "Toxics Alert", which is a compilation of significant national and international news and feature stories, to keep the readers updated on environmental issues.

PUBLIC LECTURES

Toxics Link regularly organizes public lectures on environmental issues at India International Centre, New Delhi. Besides enhancing knowledge of the participants, the public lectures also provide a platform for the listeners to raise questions and discuss with eminent speakers drawn from a variety of fields. Last year two public lectures were conducted; one on "Waste to Energy" and the other on "Swachh Bharat Mission". The lecture on "Waste to Energy" helped the participants understand the technology options, their scope, and implementation challenges; while the lecture on "Swachh Bharat Mission" helped them in understanding the progress and the ground level challenges. Key out-

Kathak exponent Padamshri Shovana Narayan inaugurating the film festival

Audience engrossed in watching environmental films

comes of the public lectures were made available through social media, which further helped in disseminating information and generating public discussion.

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK

Toxics Link's website is regularly visited by a variety of stakeholders for credible information on latest research and developments at the national and global level. The website is regularly updated with latest publications and significant events, and during the last financial year around 68,000 hits were recorded and around 2,800 viewers downloaded our documents/reports. Toxics Link also shares information to individuals and environmental groups through Facebook to further disseminate information and create a platform for debates and discussions.

TOXICS RESOURCE CENTRE

Toxics Link has an automated in-house library that helps in sharing knowledge among the readers drawn from a variety of background viz. researchers, academicians, experts, civil society professionals, among others, who play a vital role in shaping public opinion and influencing policy change. Currently, the library houses over 4,900 books/reports and about 460 video films on a variety of issues concerning environment. Besides, it maintains large database of stakeholders, and has photo-bank comprising transparencies, slides and digital pictures on all the issues Toxics Link is associated with. A first-hand compilation of all questions and answers raised on environmental issues in both the Houses of Parliament is also available in the library.

AT A GLANCE (2014-15)

- Film festival "Quotes from the Earth" held in 2014 was well received by the audience.
- Issues promoted by Toxics Link are in news every 3-4 days in prominent newspapers and television channels.
- There is a consistent demand for Toxics Link newsletter from various quarters.
- Last year 68,000 hits were recorded on Toxics Link website and over 2,800 viewers downloaded reports and documents.
- Every post on Facebook is liked and shared by friends and groups thus increasing the reach significantly.
- Library consists of over 4900 books and 460 films on environmental issues.

FINANCIAL

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED ON 31ST MARCH, 2015

Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Expenditure	Current Year Amount (Rs.)	Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Income	Current Year Amount (Rs.)
29,168,934.00	To Total Expenditure (Annexure A)	24,380,954.40			
			17,737,556.82	By Opening Unutilised Funds b/f	13,491,942.00
			26,337,172.24	Add:- Received during the year	18,974,844.20
			44,074,729.06		32,466,786.20
			13,491,942.00	Less: Unutilised Funds c/f (Annexure A)	8,085,834.80
			30,582,787.06		24,380,951.40
4,642.00	To Depreciation	–			
3,095,00	To TDS Interest	1,782.00	42,727.00	By Donation	124,604.00
	To Conveyance	5,000.00	7,112.00	By Interest on IT Refund	–
	To Photostat	29,720.00	23,436.00	By Interest From Bank (SB A/c)	25,327.00
	To Postage	3,110,00	2,053,792.00	By Interest on FDR's (FC)	2,281,270.00
1.360.00	To Professional Charges	51,373.00	172,371.00	By Interest on FDR's (Local)	214,442.00
	To Misc Expenses	9,375.00	5,747.67	By Profit on sale of Car	–
3,709,941.73	To Expenses incurred on Medical assistance	24,031.00			
	To Excess of Income Over Exp. transferred to Balance Sheet	2,521,249.00			
32,887,972.73	**Total**	**27,026,594.40**	**32,887,972.73**	**Total**	**27,026,594.40**

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts- Annexure -I

As per our audit report of even date attached.

For **DEEP GARG & CO.**
Chartered Accountants
FR No. 00705 C

For **THE JUST ENVIRONMENT CHARITABLE TRUST**

C.A. D.C. GARG
Partner
F. C. A.

RAVI AGARWAL
Trustee

C.A. ASHOK KHETAN
Trustee

Place: New Delhi
Date: 16th September. 2015

BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31ST MARCH, 2015

Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Liabilities	Current Year Amount (Rs.)
	Corpus Fund	
257,206.90	Opening Balance	257,206.90
	Income and Expenditure Account	
19,927,682.38	Opening Balance	23,637,624.11
	Add:-	
3,709,941.73	Excess of Income Over Expenditure	2,521,249 00
23,894,831.01	**Fixed Asset Equilisation Reserve**	26,416,080.01
437,108.00	Opening Balance	1,136,154.29
965,159.00	Add:- Addition to Fixed Assets	12,100.00
1,402,267.00		1,148,254.29
(266,112.71)	Less Depreciation	259,357.70
1,136,154.29		888,896.59
	Current Liabilities	
4,144,764.00	Interest on Revolving Funds	3,495,286.00
13,491,942.00	Unutilised Grant (Annexure A)	8,085,834.80
1,565,155.00	Expenses payable (Annexure B)	29,948.00
44,232,846.30	**Total**	**38,916,045.40**

Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Assets	Current Year Amount (Rs.)
	Fixed Assets (Annexure C)	
499,002.34	Opening Balance: :-	1,136,154.30
965,159.00	Add:- Additions	12,100.00
(57,252.34)	**Less:** Deletion	-
(270,754.70)	Less:- Depreciations	259 357.70
1,136,154.30		888,896.60
	Investments	
1,853,826.00	Accrued **Interest on** FDR's	7,405.00
36,038,234.00	Fixed Deposit- Bank (FC)	31,541,835.00
2,879,964.00	Fixed Deposit- Bank (Local)	2,150,031.00
	Current **Assets Loan & Advances**	
	Sundry Advance.;	
920,470,00	S. Advances (Annexure D)	982,846.80
583,798.00	TDS Recoverable (Annexure F)	670,300.00
4,213.00	Amount Receivable (Annexure F)	1,664,855.00
	Cash in Bank	
780,647.00	Central Bank of India (Annexure G)	956,435.00
35,540.00	**Cash in Hand**	
	Cash in Hand (Annexure H)	53,441.00
44,232,846.30	**Total**	**38,916,045.40**

For **THE JUST ENVIRONMENT CHARITABLE TRUST**

RAVI AGARWAL
Trustee

C.A. ASHOK KHETAN
Trustee

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts- Annexure -I

As per our audit report of even date attached.

For **DEEP GARG & CO.**
Chartered Accountants
FR No. 00705 C

Place: New Delhi
Date: 16th September. 2015

C.A. D.C. GARG
Partner
F. C. A.

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