




Petition to Participate in the #PesticidesFreeSchools Initiative

To whom it may concern,

In 2021, UNICEF estimated that 108 million children are engaged in agricultural work globally, exposing them to toxic pesticides. The use of and exposure to pesticides impact children's health and many are bombarded with toxic chemicals through the air they breathe, the water they drink and the food they eat. Early life exposure to pesticides can damage their still-developing brain and nervous system, disrupting mental and physiological growth. This jeopardizes their right to a healthy environment and is a violation of the child's right to survival and development. Schools should be a safe environment for children to learn and grow. However, many schoolchildren are exposed to pesticides, especially in Asia (both rural and urban areas).

 <p>In 2019, <u>24 schoolchildren in Malaysia</u> were reported to have fallen ill due to pesticide drift from the area surrounding the school</p>	 <p>In Vietnam, <u>98.6% of students</u> were exposed to the pesticides in their homes and schools</p>	 <p><u>Children involved in floriculture in India</u> suffer headaches, skin rashes, vomiting, fatigue, sleeplessness, tremors, dizziness, fever, and body pain</p>
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PAN Asia Pacific (PANAP) has been working hard towards protecting children from these toxic pesticides through the "Protect Our Children from Toxic Pesticides" campaign, which has garnered attention from many organisations across the globe. PANAP is currently embarking on a Pesticides-Free Schools Initiative to raise awareness among the public, especially parents, children, educators, and policymakers on the impacts of harmful pesticides on children. The Pesticides-Free Schools Initiative aims to mobilize schools all over the world to act for the protection of schoolchildren from toxic pesticides and to create awareness of the importance of agroecology as a viable option to replace the use of pesticides.

We call on you to join the #PesticidesFreeSchools initiative, in an effort to #ProtectOurChildren. By joining us, you will take action on:

1. Raising awareness of the harm caused by pesticides to children and the environment.
2. Ending pesticide use in schools/campuses.
3. Initiating collaborative actions in schools/campuses to prevent pesticides exposure at the local and regional level.
4. Creating an awareness and support of agroecology in schools/campuses (including as part of the curriculum and in food preparations in schools) and in the farms surrounding the schools/campuses.

Together, let's provide a safer school environment for our future generations!

Sincerely,

Sarojeni Rengam

Executive Director

Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PANAP)

I Pledge to Participate in the #PesticidesFreeSchools Initiative!

Name:

Position:

School/Institution:

Address:

Email:

Phone: