

Preventing Illegal Importation of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) in Lao PDR

Experience from Lao PDR – GEF 10785 Global NIP Update Workshop



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Agriculture and Livelihood in Lao PDR



Key Facts

- Over **77% of the population** depends on **agriculture** for livelihood and employment.
- Production is mainly **rainfed** and focuses on **vegetable crops** for domestic markets.
- **⚠️ Current Challenges**
- **Seasonal limitations:** Vegetable production during the **rainy season** remains low.
- **Market gap:** Current supply **does not meet market demand** for fresh vegetables.
- **Small-scale operations:** Most farmers produce on a **small scale**, facing **high production and labor costs**.
- **Competitiveness issues:** Local vegetables are **more expensive** and **less competitive** than imports from neighboring countries.
- **Limited market access:** Farmers have **restricted access to market information**, and **many vegetables are still imported** to meet demand



Situation on Pesticide Use Illegal Controls in Lao PDR



Current Practices

- Farmers continue to use **highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs)** with **little or no protective equipment**.
- Some pesticides, such as **paraquat** and **methomyl**, have already been **banned** in the country.



Pesticide Sources

- Lao PDR does **not produce** any **active ingredients** or **pesticide formulations**.
- Nearly all pesticides sold and used in Lao PDR are **imported**, mainly from **Thailand** and **China**, and to a lesser extent from **Vietnam**.



Regulatory and Technical Challenges

- The country **lacks technology** and facilities to **safely dispose of hazardous pesticides**.
- **Confiscation and enforcement** of illegal pesticides are difficult without proper disposal systems.



Need for Regional Cooperation

- Strong **collaboration with neighboring and manufacturing countries** is essential.
- Joint efforts are needed to **protect communities from toxic chemicals** and **strengthen enforcement of national pesticide laws**

Strategic Direction: Reducing Harmful Agrochemical Use in Lao PDR



Goal

- To reduce the use of harmful agrochemicals by **incentivizing farmers** to adopt **sustainable crop management practices**, and by **improving access** to low or non-chemical pest control methods, as well as ensuring **sound management of hazardous pesticides and agricultural wastes**, including plastics.



Regulatory and Policy Measures

- Regulatory frameworks strengthened to promote safe and environmentally sound management of agricultural chemicals.
- Agrochemical waste streams identified and monitored to reduce environmental and health risks.
- Access to finance improved to support farmers in transitioning to sustainable and eco-friendly production systems.



Innovation and Sustainable Alternatives

- Innovative and safer alternatives to harmful agrochemicals piloted through demonstration farms and field testing.
- Promotion of sustainable agricultural practices that increase farmers' income while reducing dependency on chemical inputs.
- Financial incentives and support mechanisms introduced to unlock investment in green agriculture and reduce demand for agrochemicals.

5. Key Challenges



The Lao PDR shares borders with many countries, and cross-border trade is a difficult issue to manage especially the illegal import of pesticides



Classification of HHPs according to the HS Code system is very difficult for agricultural and customs officials

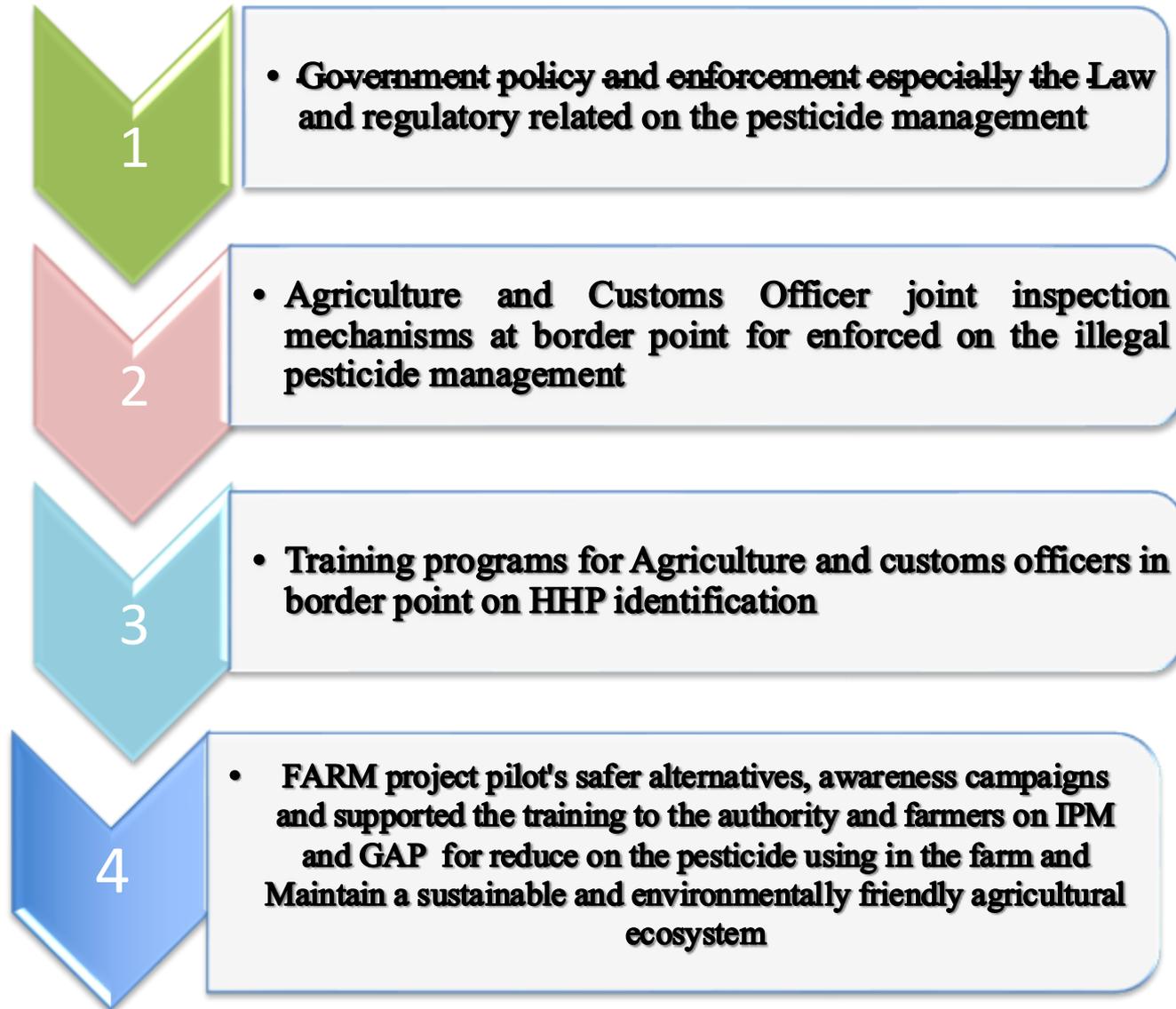


Coordination and exchange of experiences between agricultural and customs officials at border checkpoints is still limited.

- ❑ The country lacks technology and facilities to safely dispose of hazardous pesticides

Challenges in Disposal of Hazardous Pesticides
⚠ Limited Disposal Capacity
The country lacks proper technology and facilities to safely dispose of hazardous pesticides. No centralized hazardous waste treatment or incineration facilities are available for pesticide waste. Improper storage or burial of confiscated or expired pesticides poses environmental and health risks. Limited technical expertise and budget constraints hinder the development of safe disposal systems. Dependence on regional cooperation is required for the safe destruction of hazardous chemical waste.

4. FARM Project Practices & Experiences in 2025



6. Lessons Learned

Multi section-
Coordination

Registering pesticides according to the HS code system is very important for border import management and to reduce illegal pesticide imports.

Support the awareness raising to the authorities and Facilities on the training to the farmer and provide options to reduce chemical use in agriculture production areas integrated Women and Youth

Promoting Clean agriculture farming reducing chemical dependence

Regional Information sharing
Improve enforcement

Enforcing laws and regulations in border trade to stop illegal pesticide imports and illegal smuggling

7. Conclusion & Way Forward

**Strengthen regional
cooperation and
knowledge sharing**

**Enhance technical
support for HHPs**

**Provide practical
detection tools for
Agriculture and
customs officers**

**Continue FARM
project approach:
linking border
enforcement with
safer alternatives**



Thank you

