

Multi-country meeting on Enhancing Monitoring of Trade and Elimination of Mercury Skin Lightening Products

Workshop

5-6 June 2025 – Colombo, Sri Lanka

Presentations at the workshop – **Day 2**



Workshop page:

<https://www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/events/workshop/multi-country-meeting-enhancing-monitoring-trade-and-elimination-mercury-skin>



Supply chain - skin lightening products

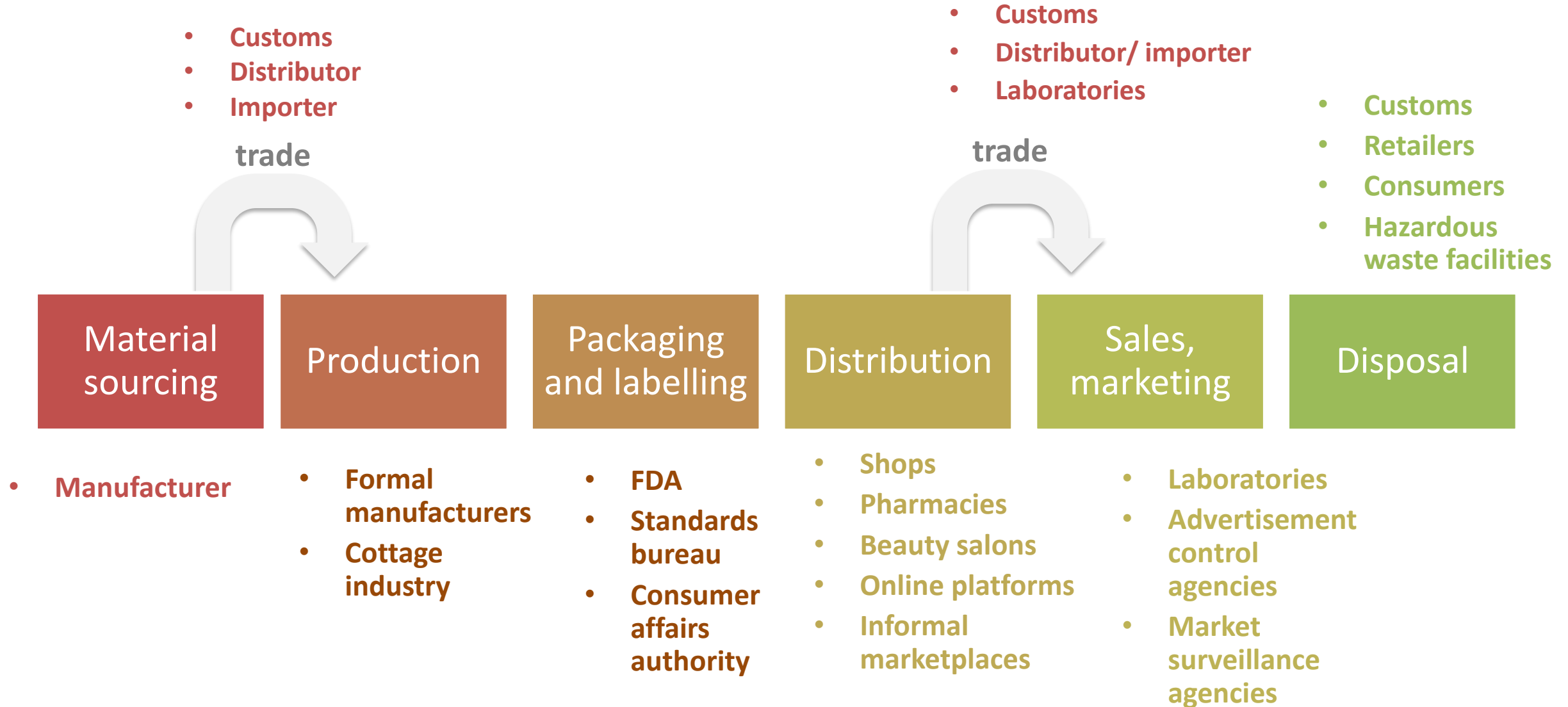
Malgorzata Stylo, UNEP

Malgorzata.stylo@un.org



Supply chain actors and channels

examples



Supply chain challenges

Informal Markets: Most mercury-added SLPs are sold in street markets, beauty shops, and social media platforms, sometimes outside formal regulatory channels.



Illegal Imports: Products are frequently imported without following the standards and regulations, including parts of Asia and the Middle East.



Online Sales: E-commerce platforms (local and international) are a growing channel for unregulated products.



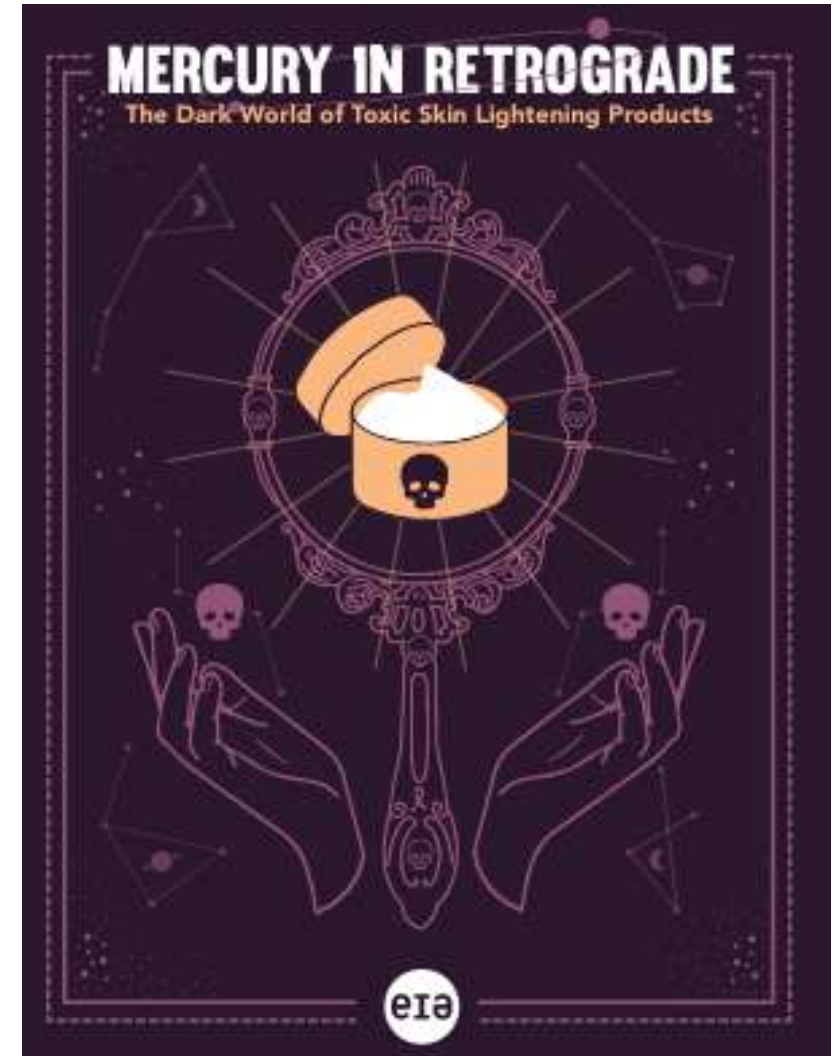
Weak Enforcement: Customs and drug regulatory agencies often lack resources or training to detect banned and/or hazardous SLPs

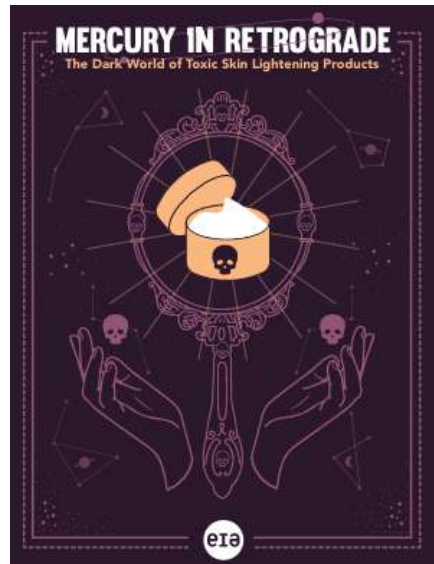
SLPs – Raw Material Sourcing

The most common types of **mercury compounds** used in the manufacturing of mercury-added SLPs:

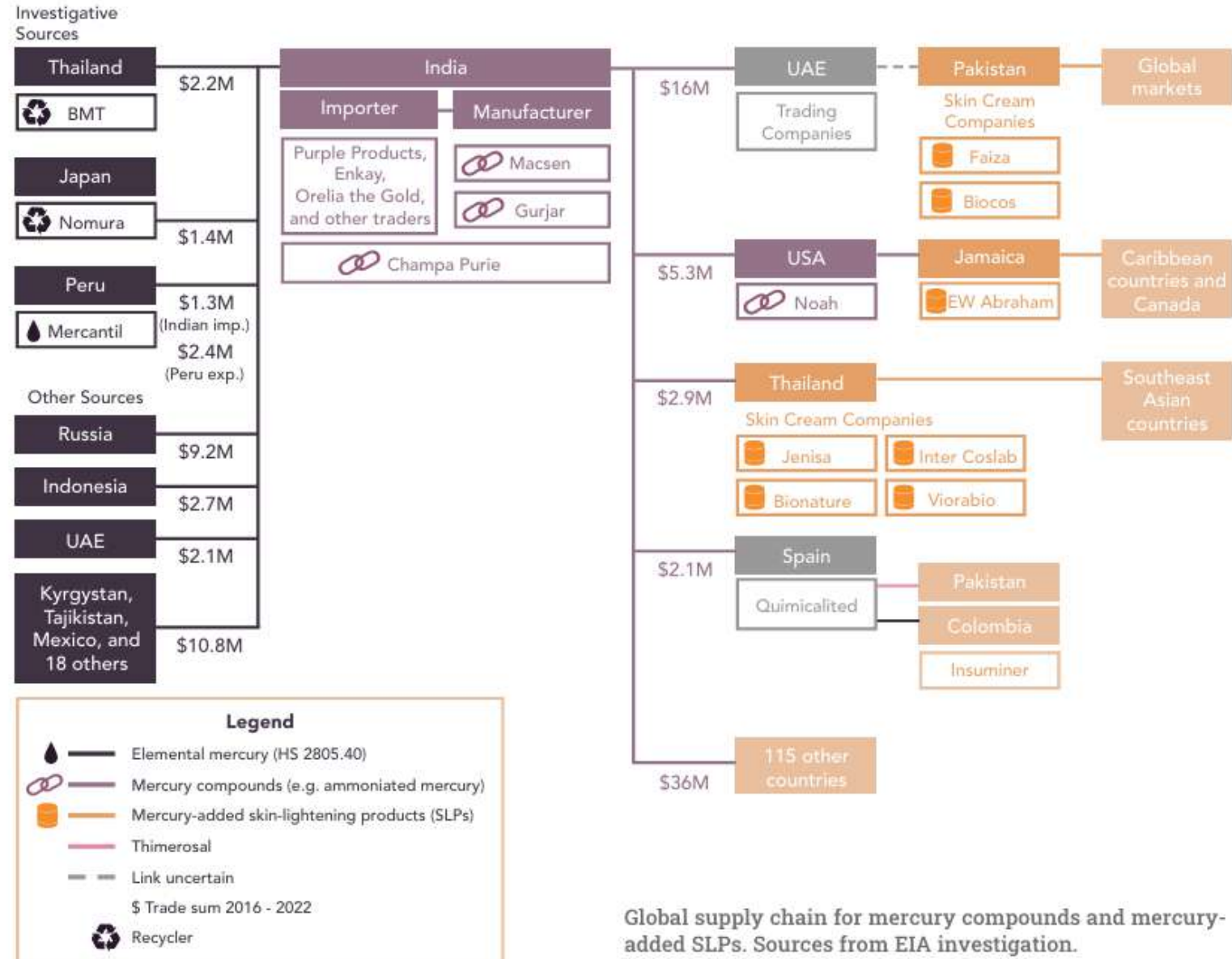
- **ammoniated mercury** - most popular Hg compound reported in Hg SLPs.
- mercury oxide
- mercurous chloride
- ethyl mercury
- phenyl mercuric salts
- and chlorides of mercury
- mercury(II) iodide (mercuric iodide)

A 2023 Environmental Investigation Agency report revealed that **companies in India, Spain, and the U.S. are supplying ammoniated mercury** for use in skin lightening products, with **production found in Thailand, Jamaica, and Pakistan**, and large-scale exports often routed through the UAE.





Global Supply Chain Diagram



Global supply chain for mercury compounds and mercury-added SLPs. Sources from EIA investigation.

Implementation of decision MC-5/3 on the study on mercury compounds



In response to [Decision MC-5/3](#), recalling para. 13 of Article 3, the Secretariat has developed this [draft study](#) of the global supply, production, trade and use of mercury compounds.

Comments received so far from:

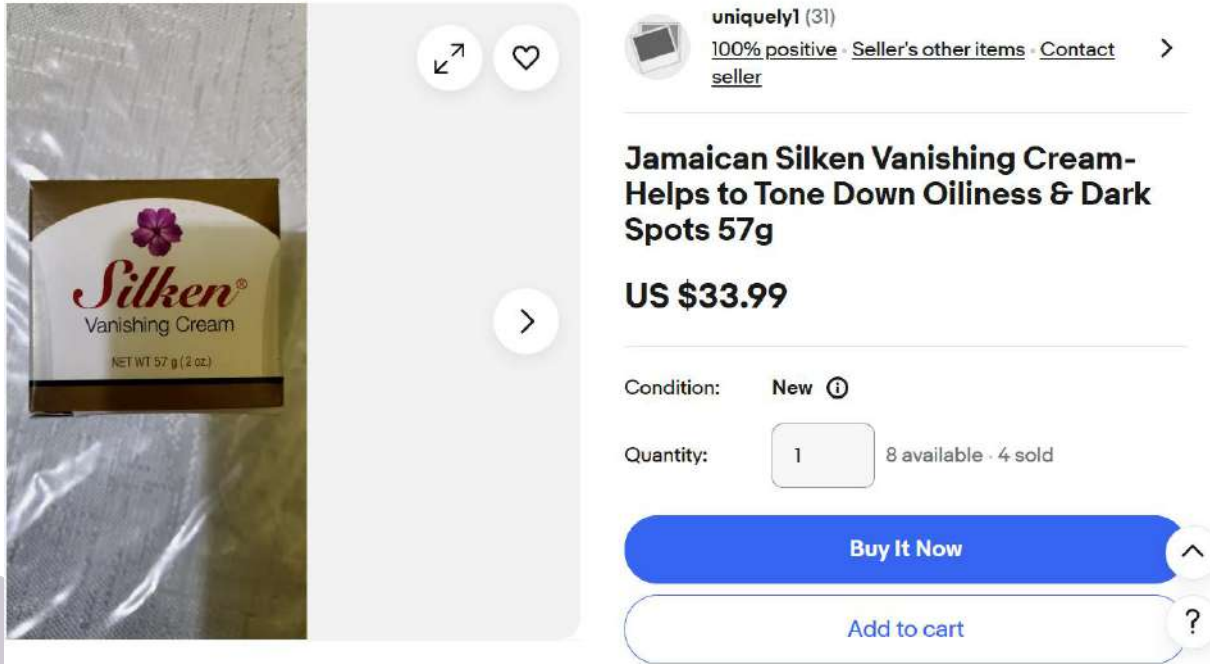
- Argentina
- Austria
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Canada
- EU
- Japan
- Peru
- NRDC
- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Zero mercury working group

Article 3(13): The Conference of the Parties shall evaluate whether the trade in specific mercury compounds compromises the objective of this Convention and consider whether specific mercury compounds should, by their listing in an additional annex adopted in accordance with Article 27, be made subject to paragraphs 6 and 8.



SLPs - Manufacturing

Formal SLPs

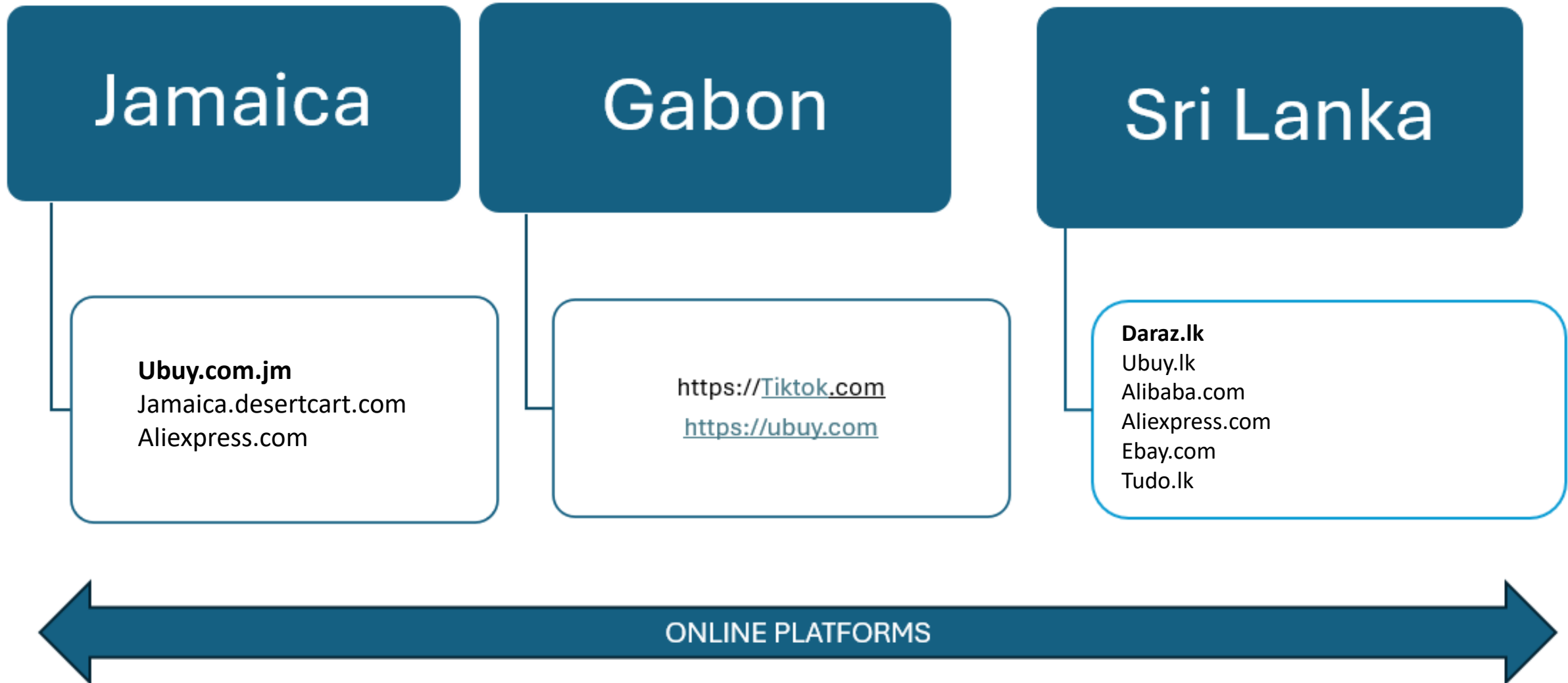


Cottage SLPs

- ✓ Common practice to combine different products
- ✓ Mixing of ingredients
- ✓ Lightening agents added to creams to enhance its potency



SLPs –online platform



SLPs – waste management

Challenges

- Lack- of take back programs for cosmetics
- SOP for Customs for seized SLP products are lacking
- Limited hazardous waste treatment and disposal options
- Limited awareness of hazardous ingredients



Establish Product Take-Back and Disposal Programs



Develop Clear Disposal Guidelines for Consumers and Retailers, and Customs



Integrate Cosmetic Waste into National Hazardous Waste Frameworks



Raise Public Awareness on the Hazards of Toxic SLPs



Thank you very much!

Contact:

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christabel.mibenge@un.org

Any question?

Addressing the Global Mercury Crisis in Skin Lightening Products Sold Online

“Elimination of mercury-added skin lightening products” *under the GEF-project GEFID 10810, 2022-2025*)

Sub-regional meeting 5-6 June 2025

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Elena Lymberidi-Settimo, European Environmental Bureau

Michael Bender, Mercury Policy Project

International Co-coordinators Zero Mercury Working Group
UNEP GMP Products Area co-leads



Picture credit, BRI 20



**Mercury
Policy Project**



Overview

- Contract work on project
- EEB/ZMWG campaign evidence
- Challenges and Measures
- Voluntary measures can enhance and complement online enforcement
- Sri Lanka experiences
- Conclusion and recommendations



Investigating online sales of Hg/SWPs

Under the project, EEB/ZMWG has been hired by WHO to contribute to existing knowledge about online marketing of skin whitening products (SWPs) in each of the three project countries, Gabon, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka, and suggest mechanisms for addressing this issue by:

- Identifying Hg/SWPs available online in 3 countries and assessing relevant info.
- Understanding the magnitude and proportion of online sales w/and without mercury.
- Providing information on existing controls for controlling online sales of illegal consumer products
- Documenting success stories that can benefit and potentially apply in project countries in their endeavours on controlling and regulating relevant online sales;
- Developing methodologies that could be used to affect changes in online marketing practices;
- Assisting countries in engaging online marketplaces in enforcing their prohibited product policies

Towards a Global SWP database

Global samplings 2017- 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023

- Over 1000 products tested, engaging multiple NGO partners from around the globe
- Over 40 platforms
- Over 70 brands found with mercury above 1ppm.



Who we are | About mercury | Policy | **Projects** | Resources | News



Mercury findings in skin-lightening products Online Database
Zero Mercury Working Group

For targeted search, use the Custom Search Builder and add as many conditions as needed

Custom Search Builder
Add Condition

Column visibility | Show 10 rows | Print

Year of Sampling	Brand	Product	Brand in Detention List	1 ppm Threshold Exceeded	Manufacturing Country (packaging)	Monitoring Entity	Place of Purchase	Country Of Purchase	Region Of Purchase
2001	Aroha Gold	Fairness Cream	N/A	N/A	Pakistan	EU Safety Gate	N/A	Netherlands	Europe
2002	Jarou	Le Vrai Savon Antiseptique - Jarou Kwanta (soap)	Yes	Yes	NA	EU Safety Gate	N/A	Germany	Europe
2008	Diana	Anti-freckle	N/A	Yes	Lakson	EU Safety Gate	N/A	France	Europe
2008	Stillman's	Skin Bleach Cream	N/A	Yes	United States of America	EU Safety Gate	N/A	Germany	Europe
2008 (language issue)	Unknown	Face cream - Yellow cream (jar 1)	N/A	Yes	NA	EU Safety Gate	N/A	Germany	Europe
2008 (language issue)	Unknown	Face cream - White cream (jar 2)	N/A	Yes	NA	EU Safety Gate	N/A	Germany	Europe

Showing 1 to 10 of 1,001 entries

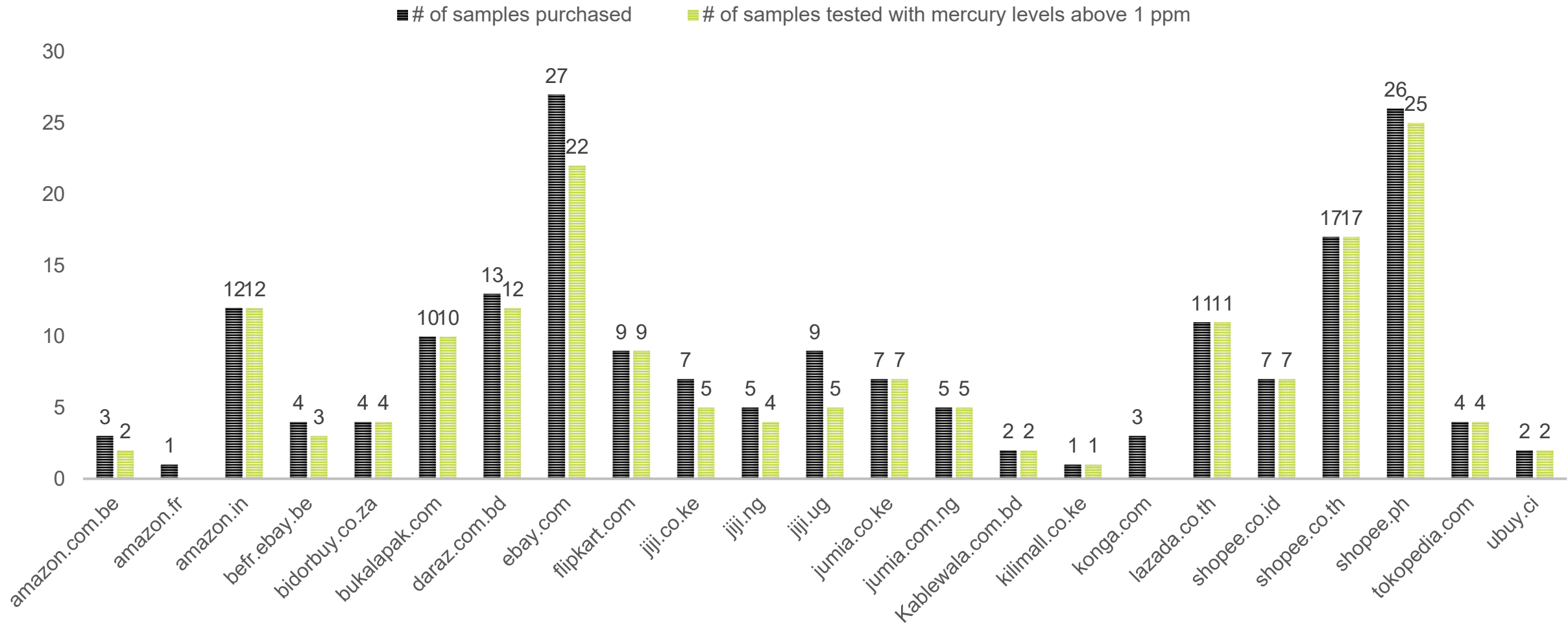
Previous 1 2 3 4 5 107 Next

ZMWG Database

<https://www.zeromercury.org/projects/mercury-added-skin-lightening-creams-campaign-database/>



High-Mercury vs. total SWPs purchased on e-commerce (Oct 2023)



Gaps, Challenges & Response Measures



Regulations (e.g. on **manufacture**, trade, sale labelling, compounds, online services)



Advisories, Detention lists for non-compliant products (e.g. national/regional detention lists or advisories, alert systems)



Licensing of manufacturers and product ingredient approvals



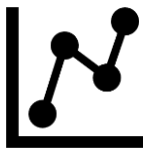
Enforcement /Inspections (e.g. clear mandates, responsibilities, formalized inspections, capacity building)



Penalties and sanctions



Advertising / Display and Marketing



Data collection (e.g. sources, screening techniques XRF, etc, labs)



Raising Awareness (e.g. inform regulators, health professionals, consumers, academia, CSOs)



Intergovernmental and Interregional cooperation (e.g. defined responsibilities, coordination, police, customs, harmonization of laws, alert systems etc)



Online commerce and voluntary agreements or product safety pledges (PSP) (e.g. regulations- sales bans, voluntary agreements , product safety pledges etc.)

Engaging online marketplaces in enforcing their prohibitive product policies

- Most online marketplaces have prohibitive product policies in place
- Many governments already involved in discussions with online marketplaces
- Online marketplaces are generally receptive, when contacted by authorities
- Importantly, any agreements must include committing to enforcing their prohibited product policies for mercury-added cosmetics



Case study: US State of California Attorney General settlement with Amazon.com on sale of mercury-added skin lighteners

Attorney General Bonta Announces Nearly \$600K Settlement with Amazon Resolving Proposition 65 and UCL Claims Relating to Sales on its Website of Skin-Lightening Face Creams Containing Mercury



Press Release / Attorney General Bonta Announces Nearly \$600K Settlement wit...

- Starting in October 2024, Third Party Sellers must have SLPs tested for Hg and other hazardous substances and verified through Amazon approved accredited labs.
- Required compliance includes: SWP label verification; good manufacturing practice certificate; facility registration and product listing; and product testing
- Bans sales of products subject to recalls, market withdrawals, stop sales requests
- Settlement ensures that consumers won't be exposed to mercury in skin lightening and brightening creams they buy on Amazon.com.



Voluntary agreements with online marketplaces to address unsafe and illegal consumer products

- Countries with product safety pledges (PSPs) include the EU Member States, Australia, Korea, Canada, Japan, and most recently, UAE and India.
- Those signing PSPs include, but are not limited to the following: Amazon and eBay(EU), Wish, Allegro, AliExpress, Amazon, bol.com, Cdiscount, eBay, EMAG, Etsy, Joom, Rakuten France Amazon Australia, eBay Australia, MyDeal.com.au, Temu, Ajo, JioMart, Netmed, BigBasket, Tata Cliq, Tata 1mg, Zomato, Ola, Amazon, noon, Lulu, Sharaf DG, Jacky's and those operated by Al-Futtaim Group (including Ikea and Ace Hardware), Eros, Nikai, Samsung
- Other countries, like Peru and Colombia have cooperative agreements with Mercado Libre to remove unsafe products.

Product Safety Pledge

Voluntary commitment of online marketplaces with respect to the safety of non-food consumer products sold online by third party sellers



Considerations towards developing voluntary agreements w/online marketplaces focused initially on mercury-added cosmetics

- Before considering voluntary agreements, **it's important to have policies** in place banning illegal products to use as leverage to bring marketplaces to the table
- When considering PSPs, it's important to recognize that they target a multitude of hazardous product categories, not just one product category such as Hg/SWPs.
- Broader PSPs are more challenging to design, and require engagement by multiple agencies and more staffing, as well as time.
- Therefore, an initial and more realistic approach may be to begin with developing a voluntary agreement to solely address Hg/SWPs.
- A complementary compliance mechanisms for countries is to first conduct market surveillance, identify and establish a **Hg SWPs recall, prohibited products and/or detention list.**



Key elements of voluntary agreements w/online marketplaces



- Have a local or designated contact for authorities to reach.
- Created digital tools & dedicated teams to address unsafe products; both automated and manual monitoring and surveillance tools used
- Have systems for detecting, preventing, removal of illegal products; automatic technical controls prevent future listings for the product.
- Require unique product identifiers and safety certification from Third Party Sellers for certain products, which helps with traceability and compliance
- Welcome governments support in providing and updating the recalls and hazard alert websites, portals

Sri Lanka recent experiences



1. SRL bans the sale and offering of sale, including from internet, of cosmetics with $>1\text{ppm}$ Hg. (CAA Act 9/2003)
2. SRL conducted SLP sampling where HgSLPs were found (CAA 2020, WHO/BRI 2024)
3. Identified Online platforms used for SLP purchasing
4. Established a list of suspect SLPs based on earlier sampling
5. Suspect SLPs were identified on the online platforms
6. The list of Hg SLPs was published on the CAA website
7. Platforms were sent a letter from CAA – 43 contacted , 6 have already responded.
8. Follow up to be taken on basis of above, towards a voluntary commitment.

Model agreement with online marketplaces (draft)

- 1) Authorities agree to provide information to be shared with Third Party Sellers on targeted guidance for selling in online marketplaces (e.g. legal obligations, etc.)
- 2) Marketplace agrees to check the educational portals and government lists; screen and remove non-compliant products within two days of notification.
- 3) Marketplace agrees to provide Third Party Sellers with above information, along with notification of prohibitive product policies and consequences of non-compliance (e.g. barred from selling.)
- 4) Marketplace agrees to provide Third Party Sellers with the necessary steps it must take before allowing sales listings of skin whitening products (SWPs) (e.g. signed document stating that manufacturer/distributor was contacted ensuring SWPs do not contain mercury.)
- 5) If SWP found to contain mercury, Seller required to submit lab tested results for SWPs before being allowed to post sales offerings of SWPs on marketplace
- 6) Marketplace agrees to require Third Party Sellers to provide the name and address of the manufacture and the contact information for the distributor.

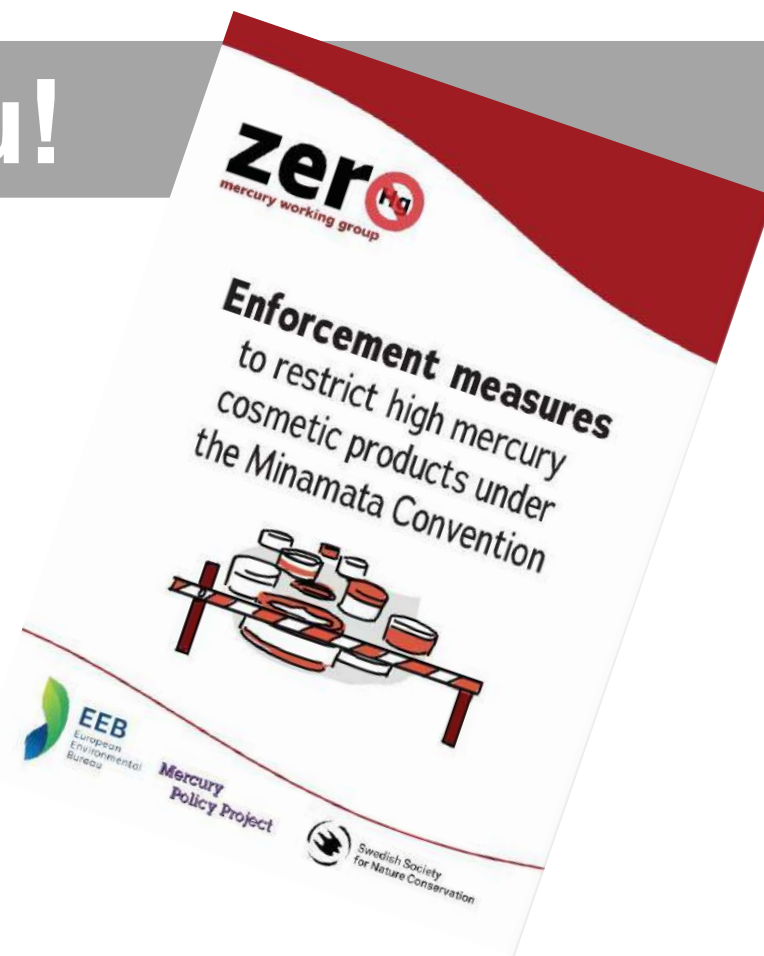


Conclusions and Recommendations

- Hg/SLPs are a global crisis requiring immediate international attention
- Countries still facing challenges – they lack:
 - Laws or Regulations
 - List of prohibited products / detention lists
- Effective enforcement is critical
- Sales and offering of sales bans important, establishing liability for online platforms
- Complemented by voluntary agreements with online platforms.
- Without globally coordinated effort, toxic SLP production and (online) trade will persist into the future



Thank you!



<https://www.zeromercury.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Enforcement-measures-to-restrict-high-mercury-cosmetic-products-under-the-Minamata-Convention.pdf>

For more information: <https://www.zeromercury.org/mercury-added-skin-lightening-creams-campaign/>

Consumer Affairs Authority

Act no. 09 of 2003



Outreach to Online Industry in SRL

Samantha Karunaratne

Director Competition Promotion

Consumer Affairs Authority

Vision

A well protected consumer within a disciplined business culture

Mission

To safeguard consumer rights and interests through

- * Consumer Empowerment
- * Regulation of Trade
- * Promotion of Healthy competition

Objectives of the Authority

- To protect consumers against the marketing of goods or the provision of services which are hazardous to life and property of consumers.

To protect consumers against unfair trade practices and guarantee that consumers interest shall be given due consideration.

To ensure that whatever possible, consumers have adequate access to goods and services at competitive prices.

To seek redress against unfair trade practices, restrictive trade practices or any other forms of exploitation of consumers by traders.

Will you get sick after going to WHITE.

සුදුපෙන්වා ගන්න

කොයි වෙනවාද?

Mercurio,
calmel, vermillion
ලෙස ලේබල්වල සඳහන් වේ
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Sri Lankan people who are dying of cancer by going WHITE.

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පිළිකාවෙන්
මැරෙන්න හදන
ලංකාවේ මිනිස්සු



Heavy Metal Content mg/kg



Hg - 36920



Hg - 37250



Pb - 23.4
Hg - 38770



Hg - 14520



Hg - 42980



Hg - 32980

Tastings done by ITI laboratory

Heavy Metal Content mg/kg



Hg - 64570



**Pb - 75
Hg - 62440**



Hg - 66680



Hg - 45380



Hg - 55700



**Pb - 19.8
Hg - 58490**

Heavy Metal Content mg/kg



Hg - 1980



Hg - 21590



Hg - 94.6



Current Situation of the cosmetic market in SL

CDDA had the regulatory power to control cosmetics Until establishment of NMRA.

Our Experience

Current issue

low-quality imports

Adulterated skin whitening products.

SLS standard 743:2014 heavy metal content mg/kg

Lead	10
Mercury	01
Arsenic	03
Cadmium	03



Regulations issued under the CAA

Information marked on each and every bottle , pack or container of skin creams and lotions.

Name of the product

Name and address of the
Manufacturer

Name and address of the
importer and /or Distributor in Sri
Lanka

Country of Manufacture

Brand name

Volume/ weight

Batch or code or lot identification
number

Date of manufacture

Expiry date of Best before date

Maximum Retail Price

List of Ingredients

creams and lotions shall conform to the permissible maximum limits for heavy metals when tested in accordance with ISO/TR 17276 AS specified in SLS 743 issued by the Sri Lanka Standard Institution.

Skin Cream and Lotion include:

makeup creams and lotions
cleansing creams and lotions
moisturizing creams and lotions
hair removal creams and lotions
sun screen creams and lotions
whitening creams and lotions
vanishing creams and lotions
cold creams and lotions
any other skin creams and lotions
identified by the respective Regulatory body.

Direction 65/66
2069/37
2018/05/30

Section 12 of the CAA Act.

12. (1) The Authority may for the purpose of protecting the consumer and ensuring the quality of goods sold or services provided, by Notification published in the Gazette, from time to time, determine such standards and specifications relating to the production, manufacture, supply, storage, transportation and sale of any goods, and to the supply of any services.

(2) The Authority may by Notification published in the Gazette adopt such standards and specifications prescribed by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution established by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution Act, No. 6 of 1984, relating to the production, manufacture, supply, storage, transportation and sale of any goods, and to the supply of any services, as standards and specifications, to be determined under subsection (1).



Provisions in the CAA Act

10. Authority to issue directions to manufacturers or traders in respect of price marking, labelling and packeting of goods.

13. (1) The Authority may inquire into complaints regarding—

(a) the production, manufacture, supply, storage, transportation or sale of any goods and to the supply of any services which does not conform to the standards and specifications determined under section 12 ; and

(b) the manufacture or sale of any goods which does not conform to the warranty or guarantee given by implication or otherwise, by the manufacturer or trader.

27. Every trader shall, register with the Authority on payment of an annual fee of a sum not exceeding rupees one hundred thousand as may be determined by the Minister, in consultation with the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance.

30. No trader shall, in the course of a trade or business, engage in any type of conduct that is misleading or deceptive or is likely to mislead or deceive the consumer or any other trader.

31. Any trader who, in the course of a trade or business, in connection with the supply or possible supply of goods or services or in connection with the promotion by any means of the supply or use of goods or services—

(a) falsely represents that goods or services are of a particular standard, quality or grade, or that goods are of a particular style or model ;

(b) falsely represents that goods are new ;

(c) represents that goods or services have sponsorship, approval, performance, characteristics accessories, uses or benefits they do not have ;

(d) represents that such trader has a sponsorship approval or affiliation he does not have ;

(e) makes false or misleading statements concerning the existence of, or amounts of price reduction or price increase ;

(f) makes false or misleading statements concerning the need for any goods, services, replacements or repairs ; or

(g) makes false or misleading statements concerning the existence or effect of any warranty or guarantee,



Regulations under the CAA cont..



CONSUMER AFFAIRS AUTHORITY ACT, No. 09 OF 2003 **Special Direction under Section 10(1)(b)(ii)** **Direction 91**

For the protection of the consumer any e-commerce entity or platform operator engages in marketing and selling of any goods shall at the three stages,

- Pre-purchase
- Purchase
- Post-purchase

Pre-purchase

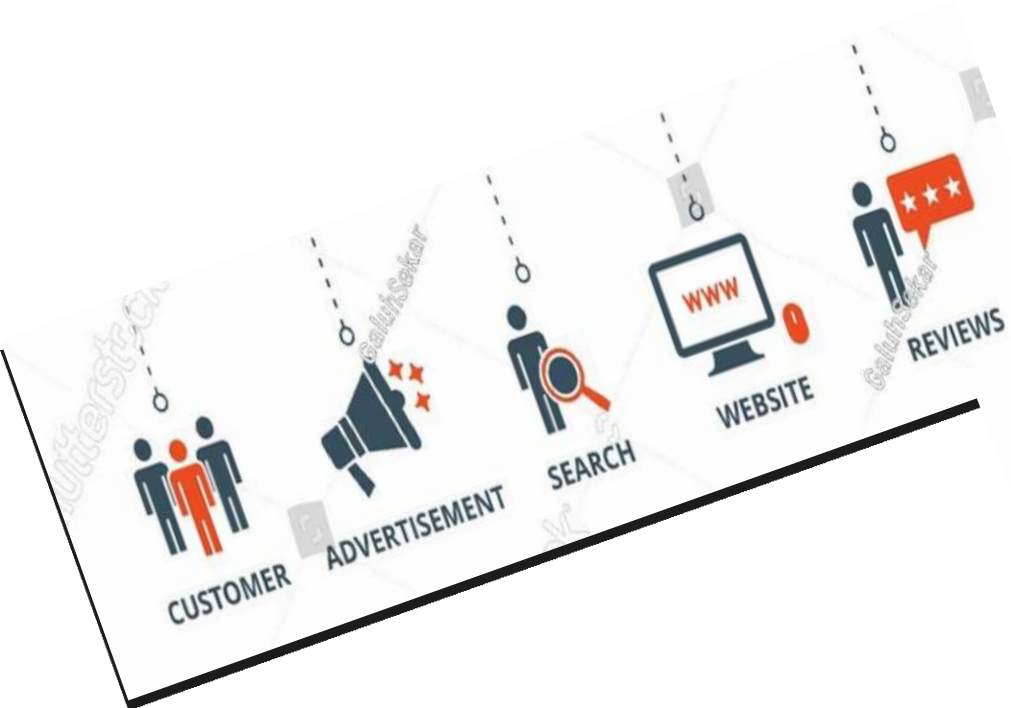
Fair business advertising and marketing practices

Unsolicited emails, SMS etc

Consumer reviews

Transparency of information

Collection of data



Purchase stage

Order confirmation

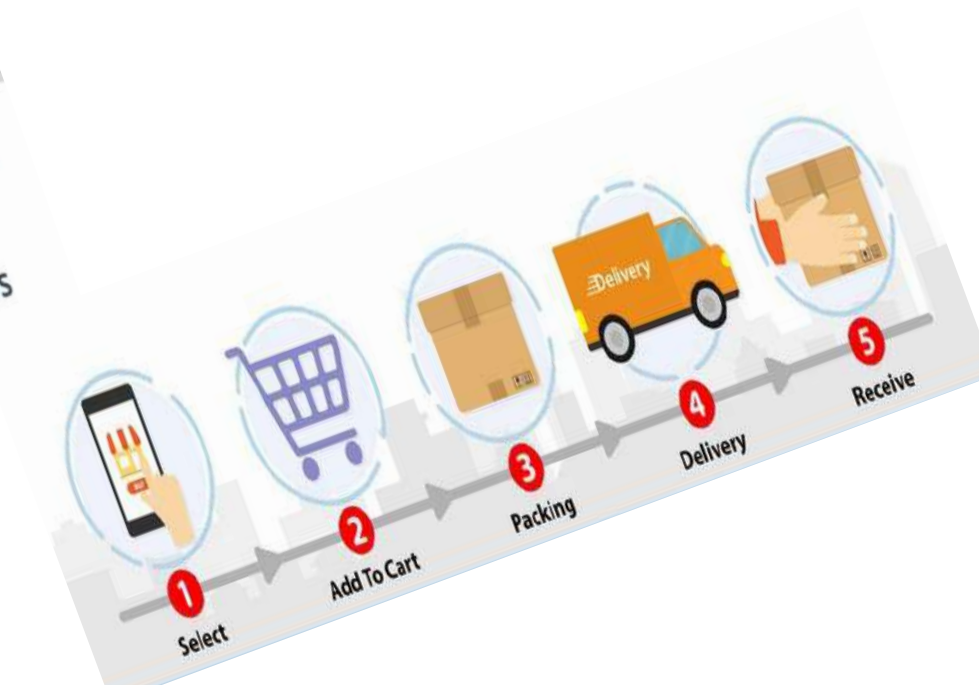
Transparency of transaction

Payment terms

Delivery and logistics

Cooling off periods and right of cancellation of orders

Privacy and data protection



Post purchase stage

Warranty

Product safety



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 **Daraz.lk**
<https://www.daraz.lk> > Moisturizers >
Jhalak Beauty Cream Fairness & Whitening Cream
Jhalak Beauty Cream Fairness & Whitening Cream. Rs. 1,500. Jhalak Beauty ... Follow. 84%. Seller Ratings. 100%. Ship on Time. 83%. Chat Response Rate. Visit ...
LKR 1,500.00

 **Ubuy Sri Lanka**
<https://www.ubuy.com.lk> > productin > MKT9161M8-sk... >
Skin whitening JHALAK Beauty cream 30gm
Skin whitening JHALAK Beauty cream 30gm · LKR 1028 · Product Details · Features & Benefits · Product Description · Customer Questions & Answers · Customer Ratings.
LKR 1,028.00 · In stock · 5.0 ★★★★★ (1)

 **Facebook · Stylish.lk**
9 reactions >
Stylish.lk - ❤️ JHALAK BEAUTY CREAM FAIRNESS & ...
JHALAK BEAUTY CREAM FAIRNESS & WHITENING CREAM NET wt 30 gm Highlights For skin whitening Double action Anti- ageing Freckles and sun ...



SAVE MORE ON APP

BECOME A SELLER

HELP & SUPPORT

LOGIN

SIGN UP

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Search in Daraz



smart watch | bags for girls | power bank

Categories ▾

Health & Beauty > Skin Care > Dermacare > Moisturizers and Cream > Moisturizers > Jhalak Beauty Cream Fairness & Whitening Cream

Jhalak Beauty Cream Fairness & Whitening Cream

☆☆☆☆☆ No Ratings

Brand: No Brand | [More Skin Care from No Brand](#)**Rs. 1,500**

Promotions

Min. Spend Rs. 999 ▾

Installment

📅 Up to 3 months, as low as Rs. 500 per month.

Scent

Not Specified

Not Specified

Delivery Options

📍 Western, Colombo 1-15,
Colombo 01 - Fort[CHANGE](#)

Return & Warranty ⓘ

🕒 14 days easy return

🛡️ Warranty not available



📱 Scan with mobile

Download app to enjoy
exclusive discounts!Sold by
MK Bazaar[Chat Now](#)

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Daraz.lk

<https://www.daraz.lk> > ... > Moisturizers

Zuni Beauty Cream Face & Body Brightening ...

Zuni Beauty Cream Face & Body Brightening Night Beauty Cream 30g ... Up to 3 months, as low as Rs. 527 per month.

LKR 1,580.00 · In stock · 4.0 ★★★★★ (2)



Images :



Zuni Beauty Cream Face & Bo...

Daraz.lk



ZUNI SRI LANKA - ZUNI NIGHT...

Facebook



Zuni Beauty Cream 20g - Gla...

Glamour Cosmetics Onlin...



Zuni Beauty Cream Face & Bo...

Daraz.lk



Zuni Anti-Aging+Anti-Acne Be...

Neila Beauty Store



Profile for ZUNI SRI LANKA

Facebook

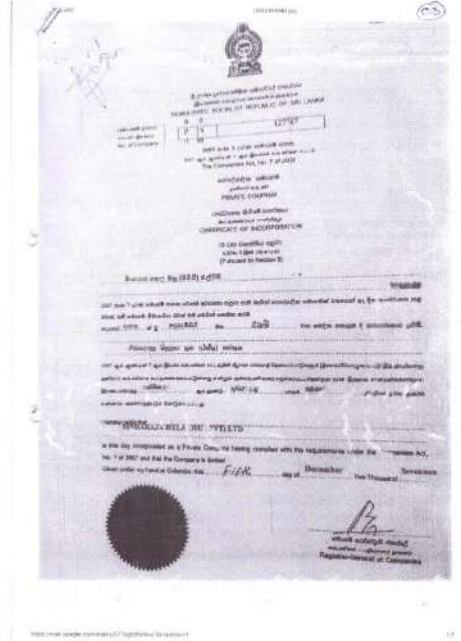
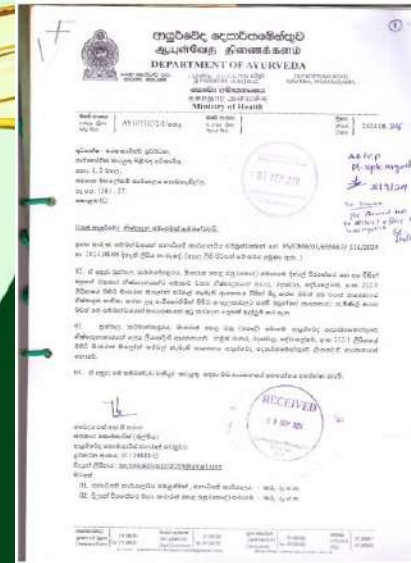


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හොඳම ඖෂධ



CONTACT US
070 504 9604



Legal Action and other activities done to protect consumers

Online raid
Court ordered to remove all the promotional posts on online platforms

Recent measures taken by the CAA to stop the online sale and promotion of whitening creams under the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO)

A request letter sent with a list of 49 skin whitening product names which have identified by CAA and taken legal actions, to the 48 online platforms, social media groups to remove the harmful whitening cream products from their online platforms and websites.

Published the same product list on Consumer Affairs Authority official web site.

https://caa.gov.lk/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=890&Itemid=839&lang=en

Published the same list in CAA official you tube channel and fb page.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/16aeKnG9n8/?mibextid=wwXlfr> and regulatory authorities to

The screenshot displays the official website of the Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) of Sri Lanka. The header includes the CAA logo, the name of the authority in Sinhala and English, and the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Food Security. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main navigation menu includes links for Latest News, Downloads, Our Staff, Registration, Fines, and Public Notices. A sub-menu under Public Notices highlights 'Hazardous Products' and 'MRP'. The central image shows a white surgical mask. To the right, a table titled 'Hazardous Skin Products Containing Mercury' lists various products and their mercury levels. The table has three columns: 'Name of the Product', 'Batch no', and 'Hlg content detected/ ppm'. The products listed include Anna Gold, Adhigama, Bulk Magic Beauty Cream, Beauty Booster Beauty Cream, Beauty Care Day Cream, Beauty Natural Glow Clarifying, Beauty Way Beauty Cream, and Beauty Anti-Aging. The mercury levels detected range from 14526 to 4585 ppm. The bottom section of the website features a 'HAZARDOUS PRODUCT DETAILS' heading and a link to 'Hazardous Skin Cream Products Containing Mercury'. The footer includes links for Market Investigation, Consumer Education, and a social media icon.

Name of the Product	Batch no	Hlg content detected/ ppm
Anna Gold	No batch number on label	14526
Adhigama	No batch number on label	Potential Value and Microbial Factors do not comply with the Specifications of Sri Lanka Standards for Skin Creams (SLS 543)
Bulk Magic Beauty Cream	07128218	14526
Beauty Booster Beauty Cream	No batch number on label	14526
Beauty Care Day Cream	No batch number on label	14526
Beauty Natural Glow Clarifying	055387	14526
Beauty Way Beauty Cream	No batch number on label	14526
Beauty Anti-Aging	No batch number on label	4585



මේ ක්‍රීම් ගතවද? එහෙනම් බඩුම තමයි - මකට් එකේ තියෙන වි...

ශ්‍රී ලංකාවෙදළසෙසෙල් විකිනීමට ඇති සමේ ආලේප කරන ක්‍රීම් සහ දියර වර්ග රැසක බර ලෙහි සංයුතිය භයනක ලෙස ඉහළ මට්ටමක ඇති බව රසයනභා.

www.ceylonwire.lk

මේ ක්‍රීම් ගතවද? එහෙනම් බඩුම තමයි - මකට් එකේ තියෙන විස ක්‍රීම් ලිස්සිතුව මෙන්න <https://www.ceylonwire.lk/here-is-a-list-of-poison-ivy-creams-available-on-the-market/>

Whatsapp 📱 <https://chat.whatsapp.com/EzJv3ytK62iDV1w6nnrQuF>

Whatsapp channel 📱 <https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VajBZAQ0LKZMMvulUw3o>

10:15 PM



Warning Issued: 49 Skin Creams Found Harmful and Unsafe for...

The Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) has issued a public warning after laboratory tests revealed dangerously high levels of heavy metals in sever...

saksitv.com

Warning Issued: 49 Skin Creams Found Harmful and Unsafe for Skin by CAA | Check-out the list! - Saksi TV

https://saksitv.com/share/current-affairs/news/nam_4262/

3:19 PM



මේ ක්‍රීම් වර්ග නම් ගන්න...

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www.todaynews.lk.com

<https://www.todaynews.lk.com/archives/65108>

9:34 AM



ප්‍රමිතියට වඩා සදිස සහිත සමට හානිකර...

අන්තර්ජාතික නිර්ණයකය වන ISO/TR/17276 අනුව සකස් කරන ලද ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නීතියෙන් සම්මත කර...

www.bbc.com

<https://www.bbc.com/sinhala/articles/c9913rz8311o>

7:53 AM



Consumer Affairs Authority warns of toxic skin creams - Breaking...

The Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) has issued a stern public warning following laboratory tests that uncovered dangerously high levels of heavy...

www.dailymirror.lk

<https://www.dailymirror.lk/breaking-news/Consumer-Affairs-Authority-warns-of-toxic-skin-creams/108-309930>

10:01 AM

ලක්ෂ්‍ය වෙළෙඳ නාමයක් වූ මරුවා නාදවයි

බැරලෝහ නිසා පිවිස අවදානමක් - පාරිභෝගික අධිකාරිය

■ හිමි
අලුතෙන්
වෙළෙඳපොළේ
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අවදානමක් ඇති
බව පාරිභෝගික
කටයුතු අධිකාරිය
පවසයි.



පාරිභෝගික කටයුතු අධිකාරිය විසින්
වෙළෙඳපොළේ ඉතා ගත් කමට යොදන ක්‍රීම් සහ
ලෝහේ වර්ගවල කාමිපල ඒවායේ අඩංගු ලෝහ
ප්‍රමාණයන් අනුමත ප්‍රමාණයට වඩා වෙනුවෙන් වැඩි
බව තහවුරු කර ඇති බවද එම අධිකාරිය සිතයි.
ලක්ෂ්‍ය වීම සඳහා ඔබේ පිටිතය අවදානම්ව ලක්
කොට ගන්න යැයිද අධිකාරිය ප්‍රකාශයෙන්
ඉල්ලා සිටියේය.

මේ පමුණින්ද යොදන වෙළෙඳපොළේ පවා දිගින් දිගටම
කරුණු පැහැදිලි කරන්නේ වෙළෙඳපොළේ මත
පමුණක් නිර්දේශිත ඖෂධ පමුණක් ගන්නා ලෙසයි.

මෙයට අමතරව සමාජ ජාල හරහා දැවැන්ත
ලෙස ප්‍රකාශවීම් මේ ආකාරයේ ආලේපන ද්‍රව්‍ය මිලදී
ගන්නා ලෙස පොදු මිත්ත තත්ත්වයක්ද දිවුනු බවත්
එම අධිකාරිය සිතා සිටියේය.

අප මේ වන විට කොතරාදන ඇති ලක්ෂ්‍යවෙන්ට
ආලේප කරන ක්‍රීම් වර්ග කිහිපයක් පමුණක් බවත්
තවත් විශාල ප්‍රමාණයක් වෙළෙඳපොළේ පවතින
බවත් ඒ සම්බන්ධයෙන් වැඩිදුරටත් සිදු කරන බවද එම
අධිකාරිය පෙන්වා දෙයි.

ලක්ෂ්‍ය වෙන්වන ඖෂධ කුණු කසන ගොඩක් අප
ප්‍රකාශ වීමකින්ද යොදන වෙළෙඳපොළේ පවා දිගින් දිගටම
කරුණු පැහැදිලි කරන්නේ වෙළෙඳපොළේ මත
පමුණක් නිර්දේශිත ඖෂධ පමුණක් ගන්නා ලෙසයි.

පාරිභෝගික කටයුතු අධිකාරිය විසින්
වෙළෙඳපොළේ ඉතා ගත් කමට යොදන ක්‍රීම් සහ
ලෝහේ වර්ගවල කාමිපල ඒවායේ අඩංගු ලෝහ
ප්‍රමාණයන් අනුමත ප්‍රමාණයට වඩා වෙනුවෙන් වැඩි
බව තහවුරු කර ඇති බවද එම අධිකාරිය සිතයි.

ඒ අනුව දැනුවත් පාරිභෝගිකයන් ලෙස අනවසර
ලෝහ ප්‍රමාණයන් ඉක්මවා ගත ක්‍රීම් සහ ලෝහේ
මිලදී ගැනීමෙන් වළකින ලෙස පාරිභෝගික කටයුතු
අධිකාරිය මෙයින් දැනුම් දෙන අතර එවැනි නිෂ්පාදන
අලෙවි කරන අලෙවිකරුවන් සම්බන්ධයෙන් නීතිමය
පියවර ගෙන ඇති අතර එවැනි වෙළෙඳපොළේ එරෙහිව
දැඩි ලෙස ක්‍රියාත්මක කරනු ලැබේ.

Consumer Affairs Authority

⚠️ ලක්ෂ්‍ය වීම වෙනුවෙන් ඔබගේ ජීවිතය අවදානමකට ලක්
නොකරන්න! ⚠️ පරිභෝගික කටයුතු පිළිබඳ අධිකාරිය මගින්...

www.facebook.com

<https://www.facebook.com/share/16aeKnG9n8/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

8:17 PM

ප්‍රමිතියට වඩා සහිත සහිත සමට හානිකර ආලේපන වර්ග 49...
අන්තර්ජාතික නිර්ණයකය වන ISO/TR/17276 අනුව සකස් කරන ලද ශ්‍රී
ලංකාවේ නීතියෙන් සම්මත කරන ලද ශ්‍රී ලංකාප්‍රමිති නීතියේ SLS 743...

share.google

ප්‍රමිතියට වඩා සහිත සහිත සමට හානිකර ආලේපන වර්ග 49ක් ගනු අනතුරු
ඇඟවීම

Source: BBC https://share.google/?link=https://www.bbc.com/sinhala/articles/c9913rz8311o&utm_source=sharelaunch,sh/x/discover/m1/5

Shared via the Google app 4:06 PM

REMOVES MAKEUP AND IMPURITIES

PROVIDE SOFT AND SUPPLE SKIN

CLEAR AND BRIGHTENED SKIN

BRIGHTENS DULL SKIN WHILE ALSO CALMING IRRITATION

BRIGHTEN AND TONE DULL AND WRINKLED SKIN

TONE BRIGHTENING CLEANSING GEL FOAM

TONE BRIGHTENING BOOSTING TONER

TONE BRIGHTENING CAPSULE AMPOULE

TONE BRIGHTENING CAPSULE CREAM

TINTED SUNSCREEN

TONE BRIGHTENING TONE-UP SUNSCREEN

Official SKIN1004 Sri Lanka. Safe & tested beauty products with cash

A summary of some responses given by online platforms

- *OP 1 “We would like to confirm that our products are registered with the NMRA under test reports for each products before approval granted, We assure you that all products we offer do not contain harmful level of Mercury or other restricted substances.”

- OP 2 “We would like to inform you that we have successfully removed the concerned product listings from our website.”

- OP 3 “Action plan Risk Mitigation measures and future commitments.”
 - Immediate action undertaken
 - Catalogue Update
 - Seller Communication
 - Internal Education
 - Policy Revision
 - Marketplace Agreements
 - Policy engagement

Gaps Identified

No harmful products recalling mechanism,

Magistrate order can be given within the magistrate area,

High testing charges,

Simple portable tool kit (such as XRF) to identify heavy metal content in products at the field investigations,

Lack of coordination among relevant government agencies, Their data/findings to share with CAA,

Illegal imports,

Control of social media platform advertisements,

Regulation of cottage industries.



Way forward

Developing a guideline for online platforms regarding selling whitening products and registration of sellers on their platforms.

Increase the sample testing of products available in the market.

Conduct awareness programs for sellers social media groups through printed, electronic and social media.

Conduct awareness programs for General Public.

Register online vendors under the provision of CAA act.

Thank you
dcp@caa.gov.lk

BUILDING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR MONITORING MERCURY SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS- CUSTOMS

GEF 10810: Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products
National Inception Workshop- Sri Lanka

Customs Related Activities under Project Component 2

Encourage the importance of **accurate labeling and use of common Harmonized System (HS) codes** to track trade flows of mercury SLP

Develop approaches/techniques to be used by custom authorities for rapidly identifying non-conforming products in project countries

Train custom agents in project countries

Tools/ Approaches to Monitoring Hg SLPs

▶	Development of a comprehensive database of known Hg SLPs on the local/regional/global market (including online platforms)
▶	Coordination with existing tools utilized by Customs: • E.g. ASYCUDA platform and related systems • Recommendations for adoption of 8 – 10 digit HS Codes that can be done nationally, regionally or in coordination with globally recommended HS Codes.
▶	Coordinating with related agencies for training/engagements: • Bureau of Standards • Ministry of Health/ Food and Drugs Agency • National Laboratories • Consumer Affairs etc. ...
▶	Training of Customs officials as needed in use of tools to identify Hg content e.g. XRF

Thank you!

Questions?



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www.briwildlife.org

For more information on the project, visit:
<https://www.unep.org/mercuryfreecosmetics>

[#mercuryfreecosmetics](https://twitter.com/mercuryfreecosmetics)

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Public health interventions and awareness raising - from the global to the local level

Adopting a Behavioural Science Approach to SLP use

Asia Sub-Regional meeting on Eliminating Mercury in Skin-Lightening Products (SLPs)

Colombo, Sri Lanka

06 June 2025



Behavioural approach to awareness raising

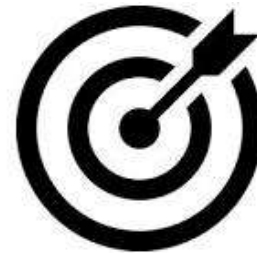
- 💡 WHO **proposes a behavioural science (BeSci) approach** to changes people's behaviour change - not just awareness raising.
- 💡 **Awareness** of desired behaviour alone, **does not equal** to behaviour change.
- 💡 The BeSci approach is based on behavioural and context-specific research - **needs to be generated at a local level for context specific insights.**
- 💡 WHO aims to **enable countries** to study the **use of SLP at the local level.**
- 💡 Gather **insights to design interventions (policies/campaigns)**



Public health interventions



Insights



Targeted intervention



Change

Relevant lessons learned from public health



Healthy eating and food labelling



Prevention of uptake harmful behaviours: substance abuse, smoking, sexual behaviours



Social support for healthy behaviours



Unpack the behaviour to identify specific BeSci techniques



PREVENT the uptake of SL behaviours

1. Education and awareness
2. Promote positive norm/ role models
3. Create barriers to easy access
4. Substitutions
5. Anticipated regret



>> EMPHASIZE BENEFIT OF NOT DOING, ALTERNATIVE



STOP current SL behaviours

1. Habit disruption
2. Substitution/ replacement
3. Incentives
4. Social support
5. Cognitive restructuring



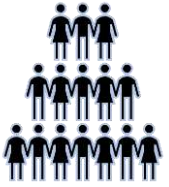
>> HIGHLIGHT COST OF CONTINUING, RISKS



Behavioural insights collection in countries



A **WHO** behaviour change tool to be **used** by local and regional teams leading SLP reduction efforts.



Engage local SLP users and stakeholders to gather data and evidence about SLP use (**April 2025 - feedback from countries + activities to Dec 2025**)



Tool is a **package of 3 elements**:

1. Data collection instruments (quant and qual)
2. SLP user journey template
3. Guidance on using the tool



Behavioural Insights on SLPs: Data collection



- **Set of modules** for a questionnaire-based instrument to collect behavioural data
- **Select the modules most appropriate** to local context – shorter versus longer
- **Topics included**



- **Use of SLPs:** prevalence, reasons, frequency
- **Obtaining SLPs:** sources, availability, choices
- **Motivations:** psych, peer & social, colorism
- **Knowledge & practices:** use of sunscreen, reading labels
- **Information and trust:** sources of info and who do users' trust



Survey - quantitative instrument

Module A: Using skin lightening products

Skin lightening products are products that some people use to help manage skin issues like acne, dark spots, hyperpigmentation and melasma.

They are often in the form of creams, soaps, lotions, and serums. In [Sri Lanka] common brands include: [Olay Natural White; Lotus white Glow; Gluta White; Dr Rashel Whitening Cream; Glow & Lovely].

A1. Do you currently use skin lightening products?

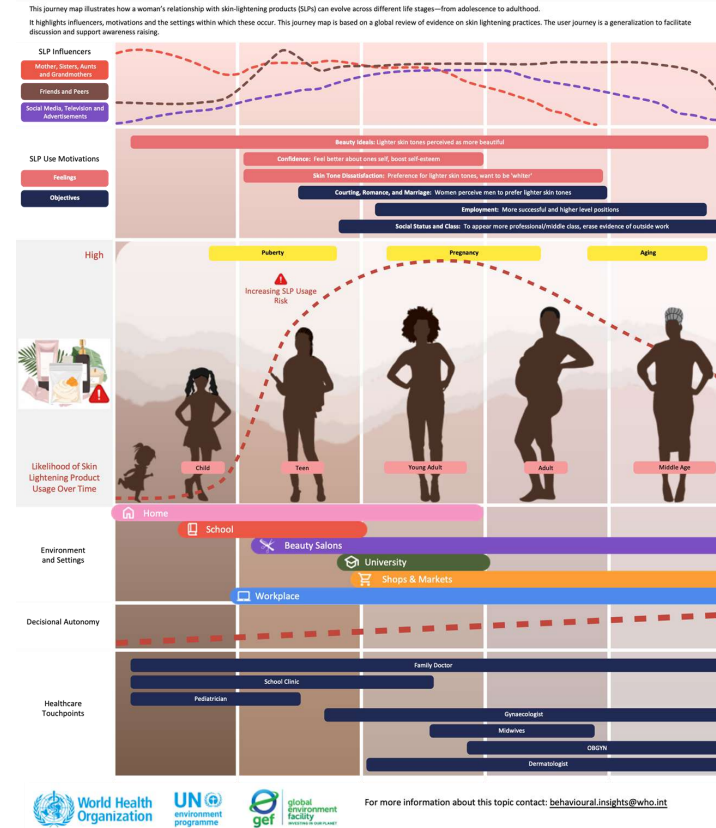
1. Yes
2. No [route to A8.]

A2. How often do you use skin lightening products?

1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Less than monthly

A3. What is the main reason you currently use skin lightening products? [Open ended]

Journey mapping tool



Package of tools for use in countries

FGD – qualitative instrument

Appendix B: Discussion guide

1. Introduction

- Welcome participants and introduce yourself and any others present (e.g. facilitators, notetakers).
- Explain the purpose of the focus group or interview.
- Ask participants to read the information sheet and sign the consent form.
- Once completed re-iterate:
 - The discussion is confidential, and results will not be attributed to individuals
 - They are free to withdraw from the focus group/interview at any time or choose not to respond to specific questions
 - The focus group discussion or interview will be audio recorded to assist with data analysis.

2. General attitudes towards skin care and use of skin products

- I want to start the discussion by hearing about how you care for your skin? What is your daily routine? What sort of products do you use?
- What are you seeking to achieve with the products you use?
- Do you use soap or particular cleansers? Why?
- Do you use any moisturisers? Sunscreen? Why?



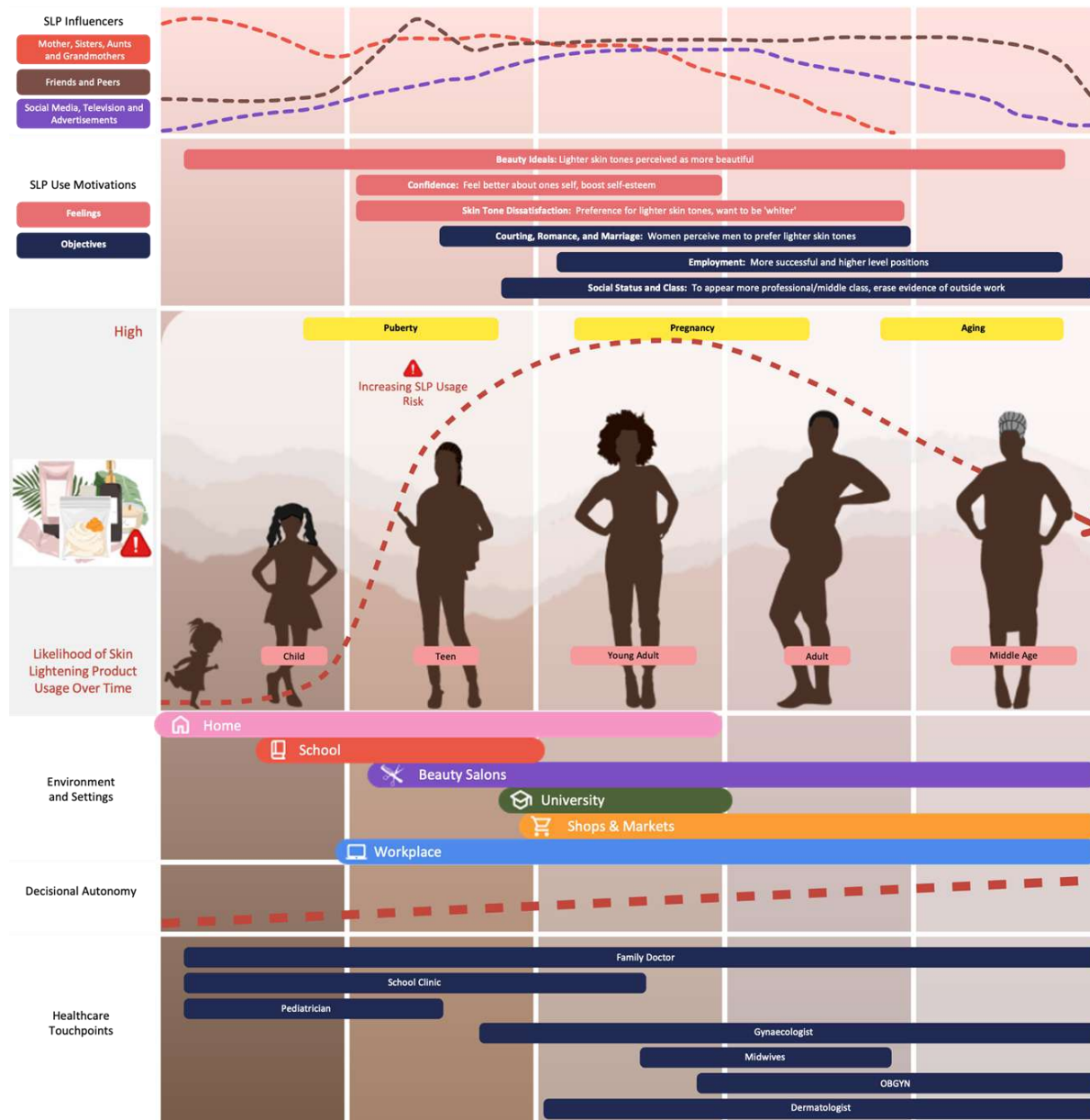
THANK YOU!



Targeting country efforts to change Skin Lightening Behaviours – interactive session



This journey map illustrates how a woman's relationship with skin-lightening products (SLPs) can evolve across different life stages—from adolescence to adulthood. It highlights influencers, motivations and the settings within which these occur. This journey map is based on a global review of evidence on skin lightening practices. The user journey is a generalization to facilitate discussion and support awareness raising.



Mapping Women's Journeys through the Use of Skin Lightening Products (SLPs)

Illustrates how women's relationship with SLPs can evolve across different life stages. By **mapping influences, settings, motivations** we can develop **targeted approaches**.

A template **version to prompt discussion** and **refine the questionnaire/need for insights**

Assists in **triangulating findings** to give better understanding of implications



1. Divide into 4 groups.

Group 1: Sri Lanka, Pakistan ++

Group 2: Philippines, Thailand ++

Group 3: Maldives, and Vietnam ++

Group 4: Malaysia, Indonesia, Nepal++

2. Choose 1 country amongst the group you want to focus on.

3. Choose a rapporteur.



Guiding questions for groups

(Use the posters on your tables to answer)

Q1: Who are the main users of SLPs in your chosen country? How do you know (studies/data etc.)?

Q2: Who influences people to use SLPs?

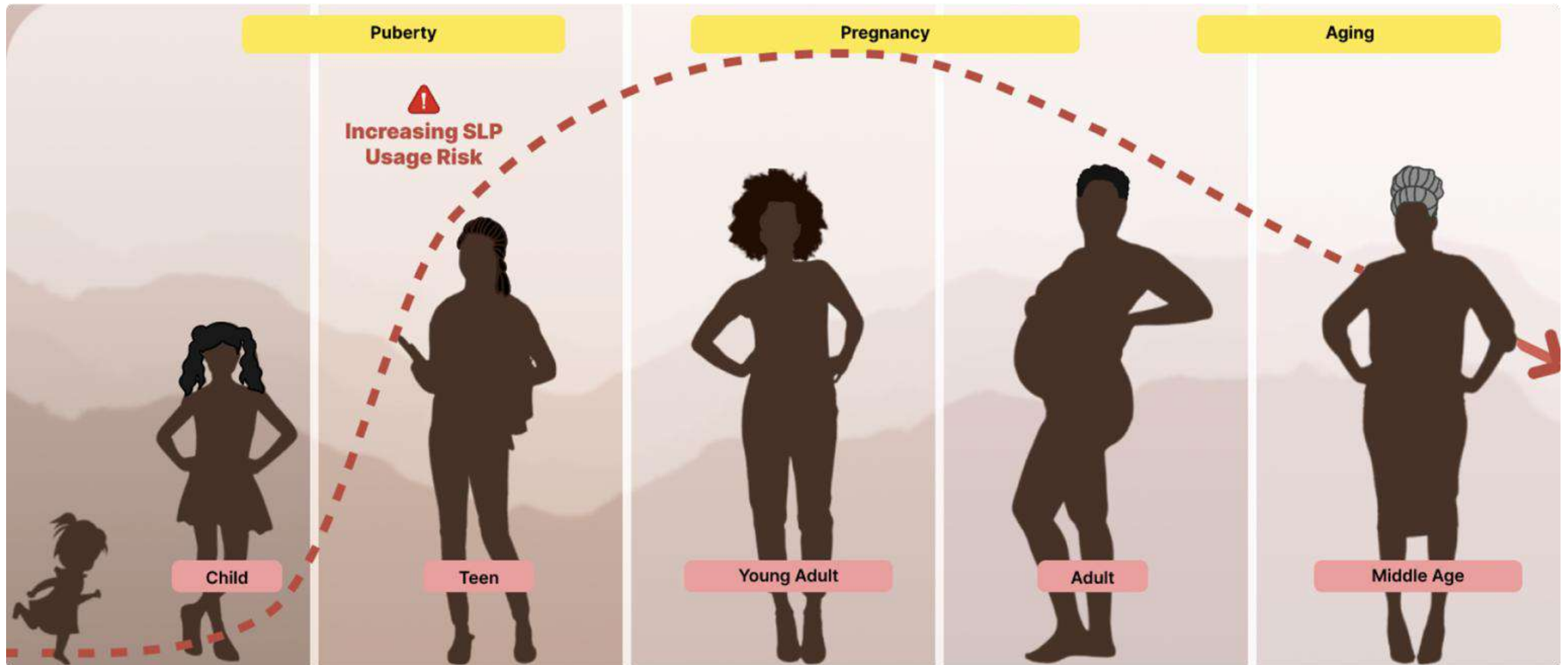
Q3: Why do people use SLPs (e.g. employment, marriage etc.)? How do you know?

Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs (internet/social media etc.)?

Q5: Which healthcare touch points could people get more information on the risks of SLP use in your chosen country?



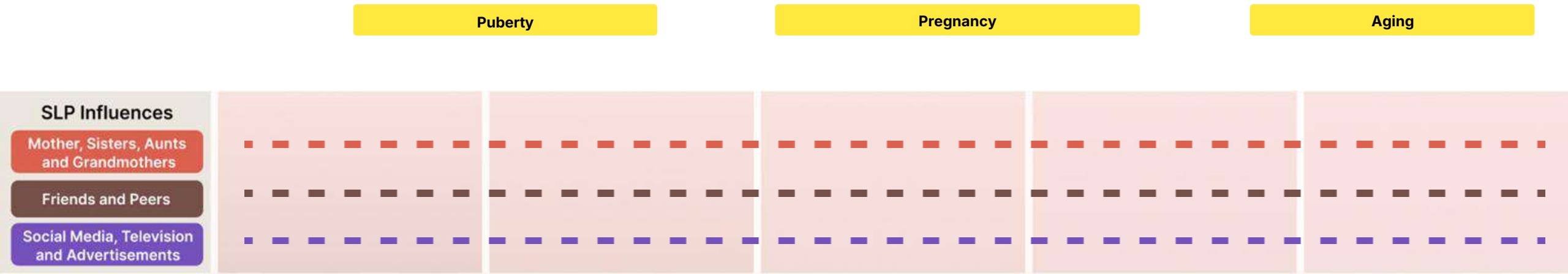
Skin Lightening Product use across Life Stages



The evidence indicates that age is correlated to specific use behaviours and risks.

Q1: Who are the main users of SLPs in your country? How do you know (studies/data?) Map this on the image above.

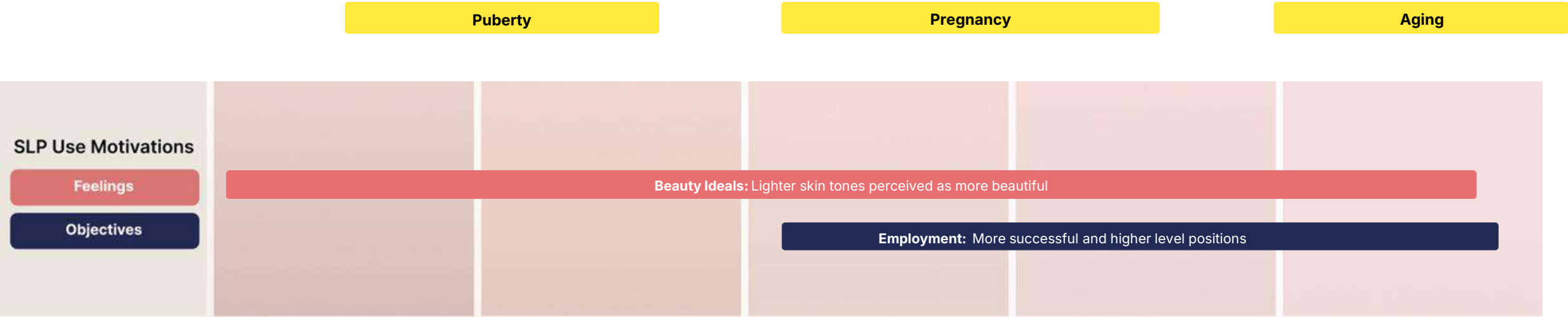
Main influences for users identified



There are different skin lightening influences.

Q2: Who influences people to use SLPs in your identified country? Map this on the image above.

Motivations for using SLPs



There are different skin lightening motivations in people that use or want to use SLPs.

Q3: Why do people use SLPs in your country (employment, marriage etc.) – how do you know?

Where do people obtain SLPs?

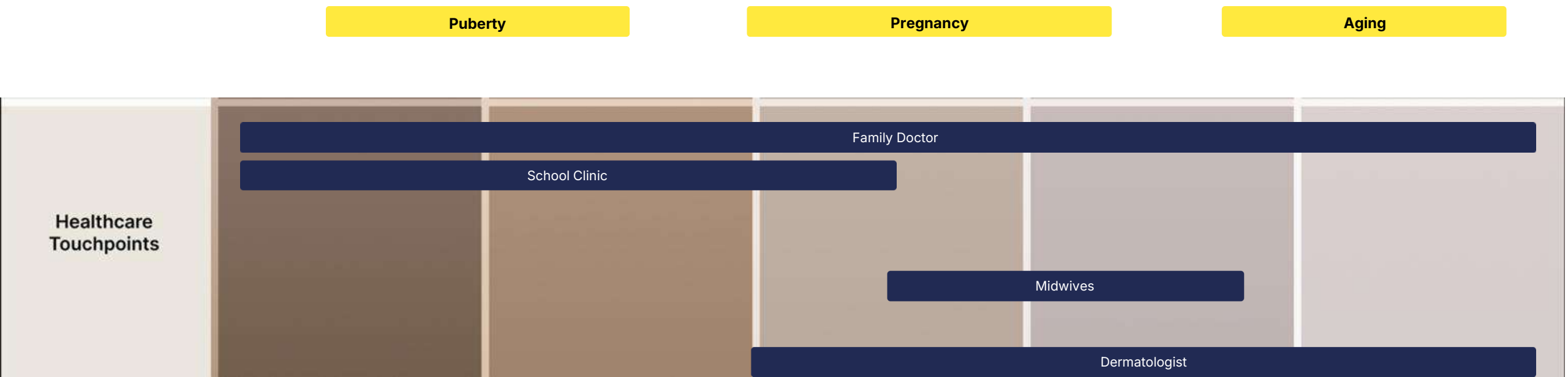


There are different environments and settings throughout all life stages.

Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs (internet/social media/shops etc.)?

Map these on the image above.

Information on the risks of SLP use

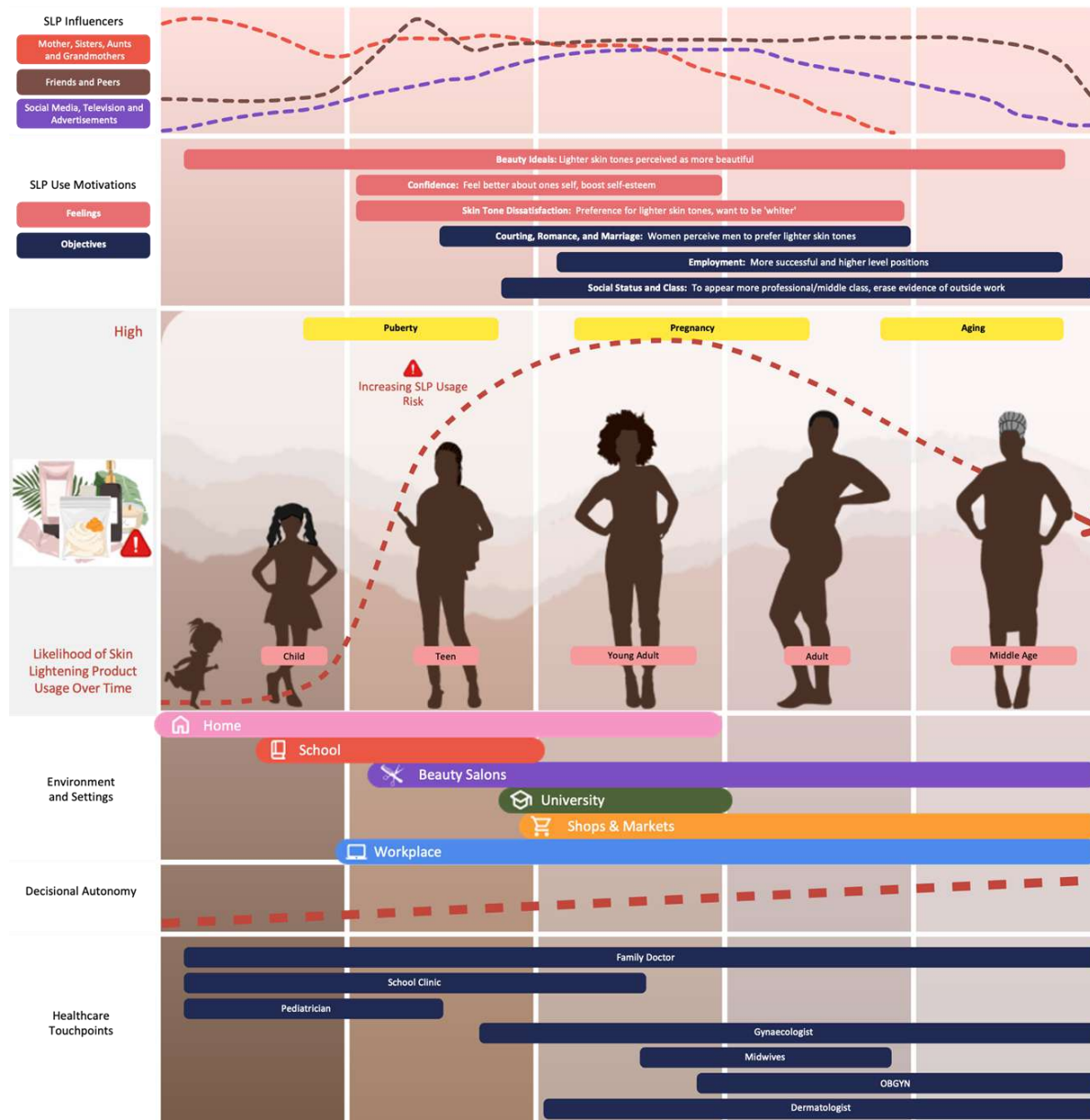


There are different healthcare touchpoints throughout all life stages.

Q5: Which healthcare touchpoints could people get more information **on the risks of SLP use** in your chosen country?

Map these on the image above.

This journey map illustrates how a woman's relationship with skin-lightening products (SLPs) can evolve across different life stages—from adolescence to adulthood. It highlights influencers, motivations and the settings within which these occur. This journey map is based on a global review of evidence on skin lightening practices. The user journey is a generalization to facilitate discussion and support awareness raising.



Mapping Women's Journeys through the Use of Skin Lightening Products (SLPs)

Wrap-up question for all

What assumptions have you made in using the tool?

What data is missing based on this exercise?

Next steps:

- WHO SLP Behaviour Change tool shared for feedback (comments finalised in June 2025)
- Testing the tool and journey template in 3 countries in SLP project.
- Revise with learnings from trial and publish findings.
- Offer of support to countries outside the SLP project for guidance on tool's use.
- Provide training and technical support to countries to adopt a behavioural change approach.





Awareness Raising on SLP through Social Media in Sri Lanka

**Multi Country Meeting on Elimination of
Mercury Added Skin Lightening Products
5-6 June 2025, Colombo**

Dr. Ranjith Batuwanthudawe
Director (Health Education & Publicity)
Health Promotion Bureau
Ministry of Health
Sri Lanka

HEALTH PROMOTION BUREAU





Behavioural Research on Skin Lightening Products in Sri Lanka



1. University of Jaffna Study

Title: Knowledge and Practice on Usage of Skin Whitening Products and Associated Factors

Method: Descriptive cross-sectional study using a validated self-administered questionnaire

Sample: 360 undergraduate students

Key Focus Areas:

- Knowledge levels
- Usage patterns
- Adverse effects
- Influence of gender and academic discipline

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363845568_Knowledge_and_practice_on_usage_of_skin_whitening_products_and_associated_factors_among_the_students_of_University_of_Jaffna_Sri_Lanka



2. Wayamba University Study

Title: Knowledge, Perceptions, and Consumption Behaviour of Cosmetics Among Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

Method: Analytical cross-sectional study using a structured self-administered questionnaire

Sample: 421 undergraduates from five state universities

Key Focus Areas:

- Socio-demographic factors
- Cosmetic consumption behavior
- Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP)
- Adverse health effects

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1184398/full>

3. University of Kelaniya Study

Title: How Comparative Mindset Influences Consumer Buying Behaviour in Buying Skin Whitening Face Care Products: Sri Lankan Context

Method: Qualitative study using in-depth interviews

Sample: 10 current users and non-users of skin whitening face care products

Key Focus Areas:

- Influence of comparative mindset on purchasing decisions
- Impact of advertising and peer influence

<https://dl.lib.uom.lk/bitstreams/c9220406-c638-4e8e-98e1-5e80331b2be5/download>



Observational Study in Kandy Sri Lanka, 2018



Demographics and reasons for Use

Gender: 94% Males

Age: 13-51 years

Application: Mostly used on face

No of products: Commonly used 1-4 products simultaneously

Duration of use: 2-4 months: 27%,

Over 1 year: 27%

**Reasons: Fairness (47%), Acne (36%), Scars (16%),
Hyperpigmentation (17%), Moisturizing (7%)**



Sources of Information

Friends: 38%

Self Initiated: 26%

Other: Beauty parlors, General practitioners, Pharmacists



Local observations of Adverse events

At least one adverse event: 90.5%

Common issues identified:

Skin Atrophy- 63%

Telangiectasia – 61%

Acne- 48%

Pigment changes - 38%

Hyperpilosis – 19%

Market dynamics and unregulated products



- Over the counter and online sales
- Lack of ingredient awareness
- Prevalence of illicit products and counterfeits
- Misleading claims



Socio cultural context and Public Awareness

Media Influence and Colorism



- Pervasive advertising
- Celebrity endorsements
- Challenging narratives

Cultural drivers of skin lightening



- Deep-rooted colourism
- Marriage and Employment prospects
- Traditional beliefs

Public Awareness and dialogue



- Lack of product knowledge
- Evolving public discourse
- Role of healthcare professionals
- Education and Advocay



How Social Media is Changing the Narrative in Sri Lanka

Social media has become a key platform for raising awareness. In Sri Lanka, both individuals and organizations have used it to start conversations and shift public attitudes.

1. Influencer campaigns: Local influencers talk openly about the harms of SLPs. Some share personal stories to connect with followers and break stigma.
2. Hashtag movements: Campaigns like “Colour of beauty is the colour you own” encourage people to embrace their natural skin tones.
3. Public health initiatives: The Sri Lanka College of Dermatologists has run digital campaigns warning about the health risks of skin whitening. They promote natural skincare and informed choices.
4. International collaborations: Sri Lanka works with groups like the UN Environment Programme to ban toxic ingredients and regulate the market. These efforts are creating small but important changes in how people think and talk about skin color.



A Tool for Change:

Behavior-Based Surveys to understand the issue deeper,

HPB is planning behavior-focused observational study

**Task 1: Nationally
Representative Survey
among Females Aged 16-
50 Years**

**Task 2: Qualitative Focus
Group Discussions with
Students and Authorities**

**Task 3: Key informant
Interviews**

Sample Size Recommended by Health Promotion Bureau

- Cluster size (n'): 20
- The design effect = $1 + \delta (n - 1)$
- Intraclass correlation coefficient (δ) taken as = 0.3 Benette et al.,2017
- Calculated design effect = $1+0.3(19) \approx 7$
- The corrected sample size with the design effect: $384 \times 7 = 2688 \approx 2700$
- Applying a 10% non-response rate,
- The final sample size (n) = $2700 + (2700/10) \approx 3000$
- A cluster is defined as a Gramasewa Niladhari (GN) area
- Therefore, the number of clusters required is: $3000/20 = 150$

Sampling Approach: Stratified Multistage Random Sampling will be adopted

- **Step 1**

- Each district was assigned a proportion of the survey sample based on the proportion of the national population residing in that district (150 Clusters will be distributed across districts based on district population split).

- **Step 2**

- Grama Niladhari (GN) divisions are considered as natural clusters. These Clusters/GN will be randomly selected within each district, by listing all the GN divisions belonging to a district on an Excel sheet and using a random number generator to select from that list.

- **Step 3**

- Households within each GN division will be selected randomly, with up to 15 households per Cluster/GN division. The selection process will ensure a balanced geographic distribution within each district.
-

- **Step 4:** Households were randomly selected within the GN division by the enumerators, using the following method:
 - Starting Point within the GN Point will be selected randomly using a **Random Point Locator**
 - Moving rightwards from the focal point, every 'nth' house that was seen was approached for being selected. If the household was not obliging the adjacent household was approached.
 - The number 'n' was derived by dividing the sample allocated to that GN division by the number of households in that division. E.g. if there was a GN division with 100 households, and the sample allocated is 10, then it is every 10th house that would be selected.
 - Female member at each selected household will be selected randomly by Kris Grid Method.

Randomly 150 cluster will
be selected randomly by
random number
generator



Enumerator will pick a
random point within
GN/Cluster using
Random Point Locator



In each sample point
enumerator will conduct
20 interviews using
skipping pattern



Each interview lasted 30
minutes



Interviews with a CAPI
set up questionnaire



A female respondent will
be randomly selected
from the household using
Krish Grid Method



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Posted - 18th December 2024

Reach - 856K

Engagement - 55K





Have you noticed spots on your Skin?

WhatsApp to The Central Leprosy Clinic on 0754088604

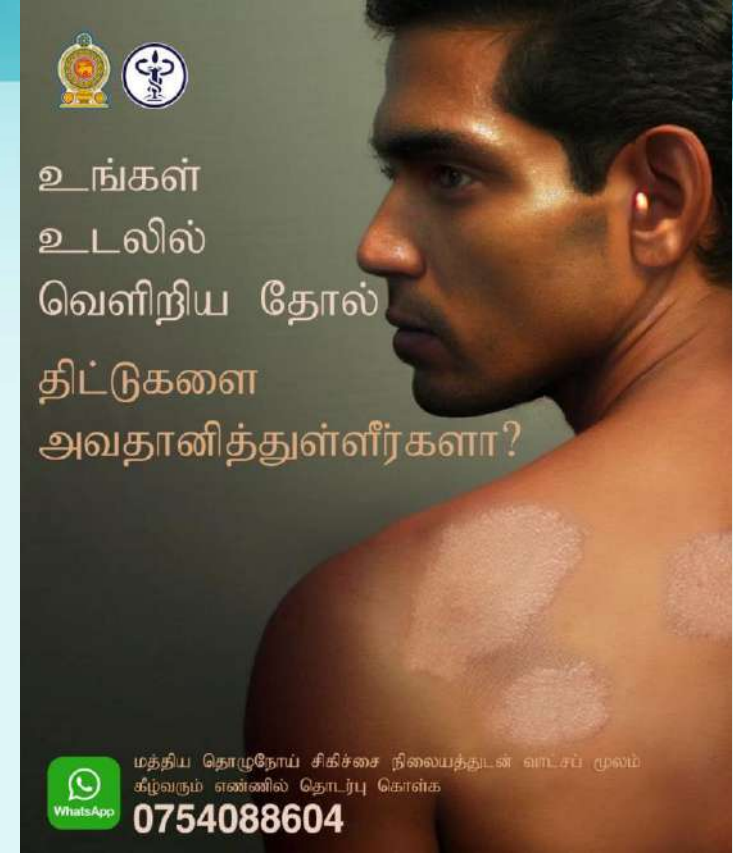
This advertisement features a profile view of a man's head and shoulders. He has several light-colored, irregular spots on his left shoulder and upper arm. The background is a solid dark grey. In the top left corner, there are two circular logos: the Indian national emblem and a medical symbol. The text is in a clean, sans-serif font.



ഇവേ കിറർ രേഖി
ഓ കാരേ
കിടേഖി?

മിമിമി ഓടർ കടമിമി WhatsApp കർമ്മ 0754088604

This advertisement is identical in layout to the English one, featuring a man with skin spots. The text is in Malayalam. The logos and overall design are consistent with the other versions.



உங்கள் உடலில் வெளிறிய தோல் திட்டுகளை அவதானித்துள்ளீர்களா?

மத்திய தொழுநோய் சிகிச்சை நிலையத்தின் வாட்சப் மூலம் கீழ்வரும் எண்ணில் தொடர்பு கொள்க 0754088604

This advertisement is identical in layout to the others, featuring a man with skin spots. The text is in Tamil. The logos and overall design are consistent with the other versions.

Posted on 22 March 2023
Reach 52,000
Engagement 34,518 (Likes 21K, Comments 1.1K, shares 11.7K)



Thank you.

Multi-Country Meeting on the Elimination of Mercury-Added Skin Lightening Products

Awareness Raising Through Social Media in Sri Lanka

The Role of the Health Promotion Bureau (HPB)

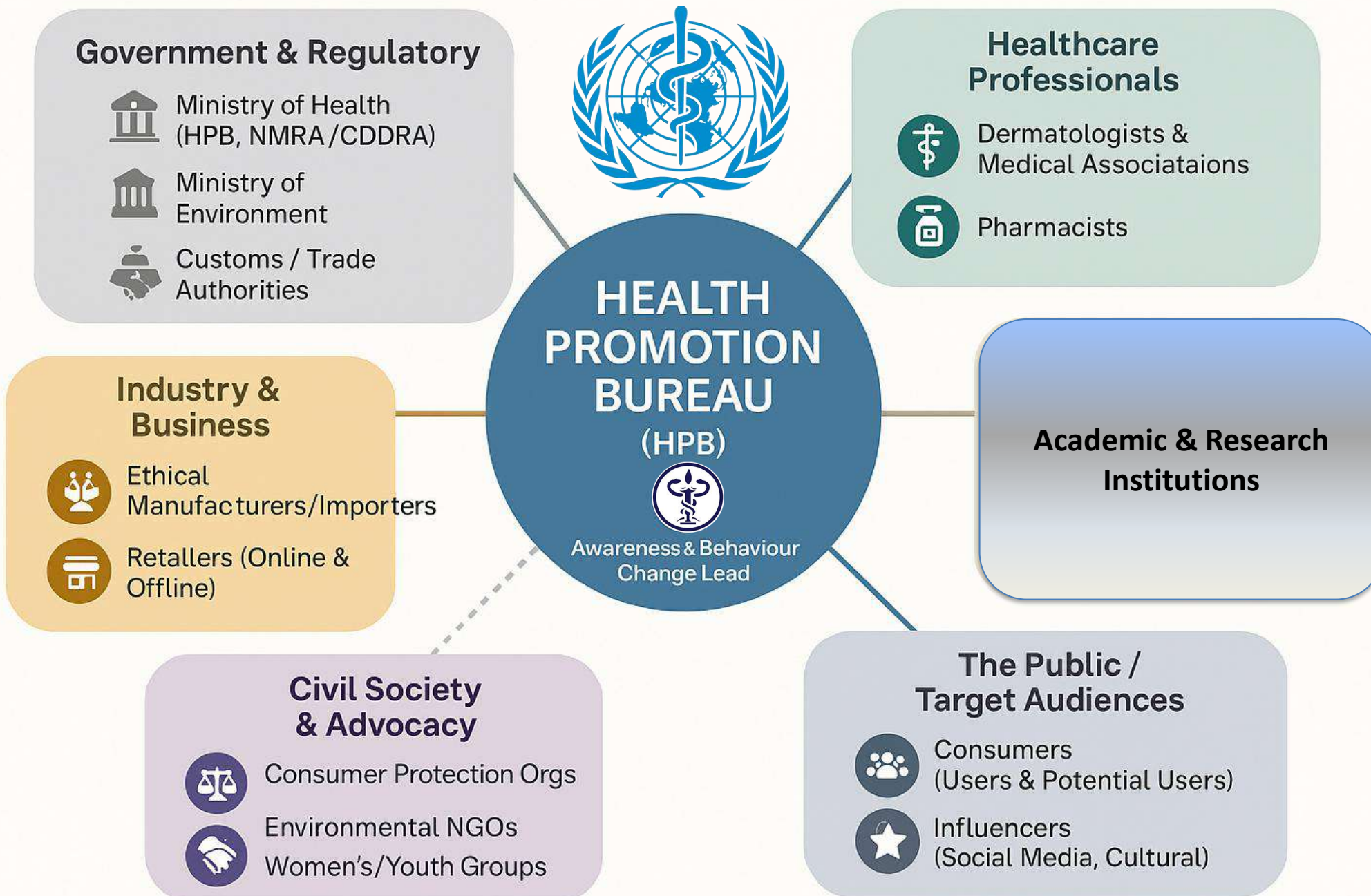
Health Promotion Bureau, Ministry of Health and Mass Media, Sri Lanka



The Health Promotion Bureau: Our Mandate for Public Health

- National focal point for health promotion in Sri Lanka.
- Focuses on public health education, risk communication, and behavioral change
- Plays an integral role in national health initiatives, including the Elimination of Mercury-Added Skin Lightening Products project
- Our goal: Reach a wide audience efficiently to protect public health



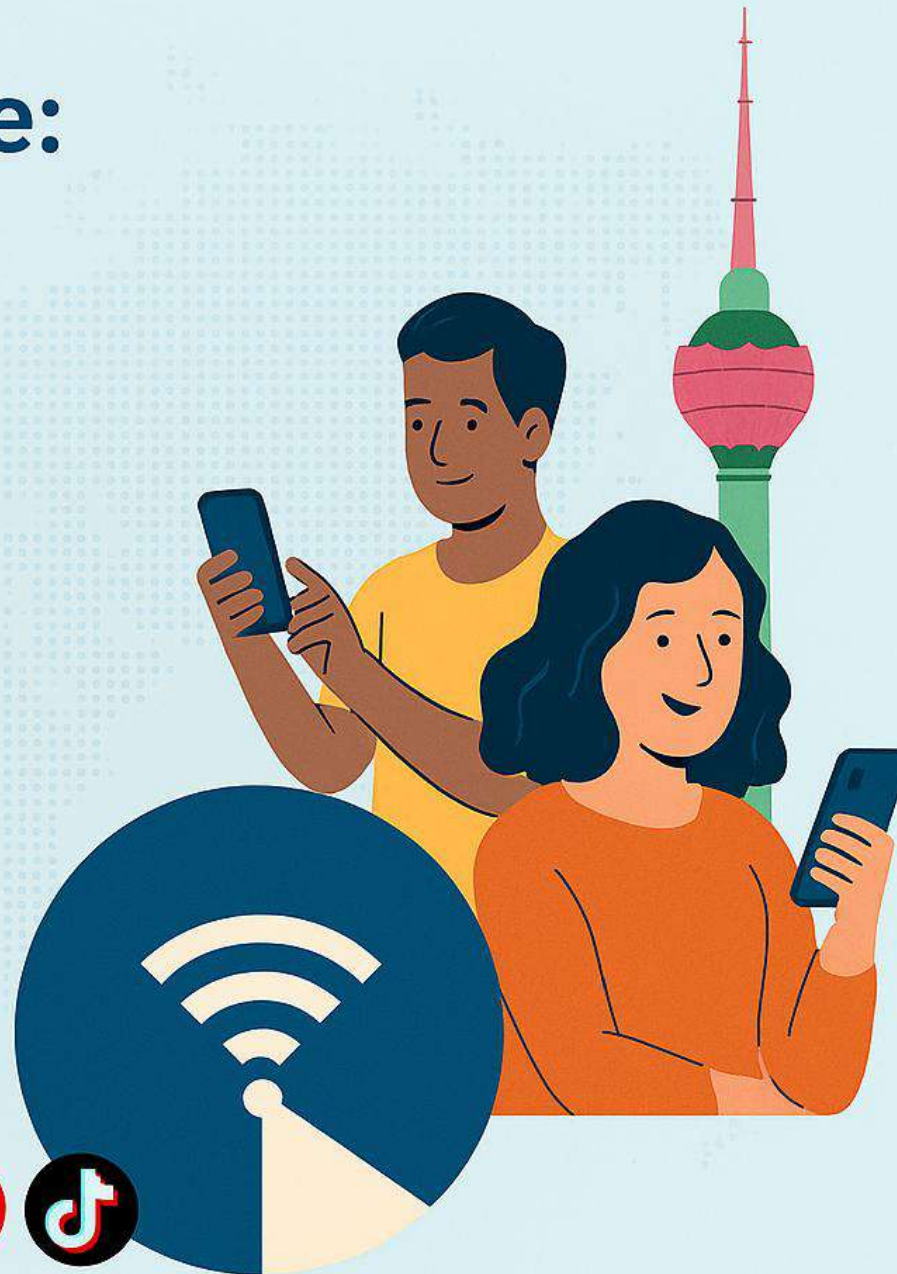


HPB's role: Catalyzing collaboration & communication for a mercury-free Sri Lanka.



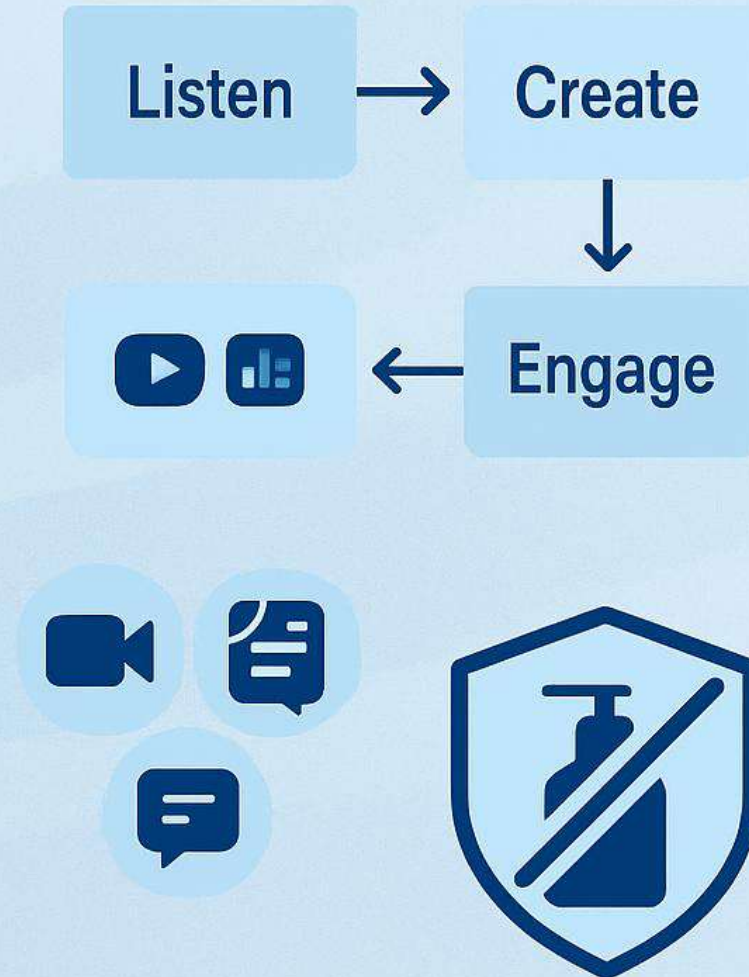
Sri Lanka's Digital Pulse: Social Media Adoption

- High mobile phone penetration across the island
- Significant growth in internet and social media users
- Dominant platforms: Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram are key
- Social media is a primary source of information for many citizens



Our Strategy: Engaging for Health & Safety

- Shift from one-way communication to interactive engagement
- Targeted messaging for diverse demographics
- Uses diverse content formats (videos, infographics, live Q&As)
- Seeks strategic collaborations, including with tech partners and civil society
- Combating misinformation and disinformation is a critical focus, especially on harmful products



HPB's Proactive Approach: Eliminating Mercury in Cosmetics

- HPB, as part of the Ministry of Health, is directly involved in the national execution of GEF/UNEP/WHO/BRI project to eliminate mercury-added SLPs in Sri Lanka
- HPB's Core Contribution: Leading the public awareness and behavioral change component of this specific project
- Strategic Focus for Social Media:
 - Clearly communicating severe health hazards (kidney, neurological, skin damage)
 - Raising awareness on the Minamata Convention and national regulations
 - Empowering choices to reject harmful products



Navigating Challenges: Our Path Forward in Sri Lanka

- Persistent Misinformation & Illegal Sales: Ongoing battle, particularly in the online sphere
- Deep-Rooted Cultural Norms: Shifting beauty ideals requires sustained effort
- Measuring Impact: Complexity in quantifying long-term behavioral change
- Dynamic Digital Environment: Adapting to new platforms and algorithms
- HPB's Role: Implementing comprehensive strategies drawing from global insights



IS THIS YOUR “PERFECT” FUTURE?

THE HIDDEN SCARS OF ‘FAIRNESS’

For generations, society promised fair skin meant a good marriage and a bright future.

But the very creams promising this ideal can cause permanent scarring, disfiguring rashes, tremors, and internal organ damage.

#TrueBeautyIsHealth
#BeyondFairness
#MarriageNotMercury



YOUR CHOICE FOR “FAIRNESS” COULD BE THEIR UNSEEN COST



MERCURY

found in many skin whitening creams
can affect your developing
child's brain.



IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE to memory,
learning abilities, and cognitive
development

#ProtectTheirBrains #UnseenCost #ChildHealthSL
#MercuryPoisoning

LEARN MORE ABOUT PROTECTING YOUR CHILD'S
PRECIOUS BRAIN. VISIT OR CONSULT YOUR NEAREST CTOR

MERCURY FROM FAIRNESS CREAMS CAN AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL DEVELOPMENT



Future Outlook: United for a Mercury-Free Future

- Strengthening data-driven strategies and monitoring for illegal online sales within Sri Lanka
- Expanding partnerships (tech, community, civil society, regulatory bodies like NMRA/CDDA, enforcement)
- Targeted campaigns to challenge harmful beauty norms and promote natural skin tones, especially for youth
- HPB's commitment to comprehensive awareness, integrated with policy and enforcement efforts



Thank You

We remain committed to promoting a mercury-free future through strong intersectoral collaboration, public empowerment, and evidence-based digital strategies.

Let's continue working together toward a healthier, safer future.





Civil Society Engagement in tackling SLP

Satish Sinha
Associate Director
Toxics link, India

CSOs working in South Asia region





Civil Society Intervention



Testing & Analysis

Conducting laboratory tests to identify mercury content in cosmetic products

Dissemination of Findings

Publishing and sharing a comprehensive report detailing test results and product risks

Awareness Campaigns & Media Engagement

Running targeted public campaigns and working with media to amplify awareness and educate consumers

Stakeholder Consultations

Engaging policymakers, health authorities, and industry actors to collaborate on stronger regulations and safer practices

CSO's Engagement

- Regularly monitoring products for mercury independently as well as with ZMWG
- Select products available both online as well as offline



Samples	Product name	Location (sample purchased from)	Country of Origin (based on the labelling on the product)	Result (ppm)
TL-WC-1	Chandni Whitening Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	11000
TL-WC-2	Face Fresh	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	8000
TL-WC-3	Faiza Beauty Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	0
TL-WC-4	Golden Pearl Whitening Beauty Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	4000
TL-WC-5	Goree Day and Night Whitening Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	14000
TL-WC-6	Goree Beauty Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	11000
TL-WC-7	Kojie San	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Philippines	0
TL-WC-8	Stillman's Skin Bleach Cream	Delhi, Mumbai, Vijayawada	Pakistan	0.3
TL-WC-9	Lotus Herbals WhiteGlow Skin	Delhi, Mumbai,	India	0

Public Awareness

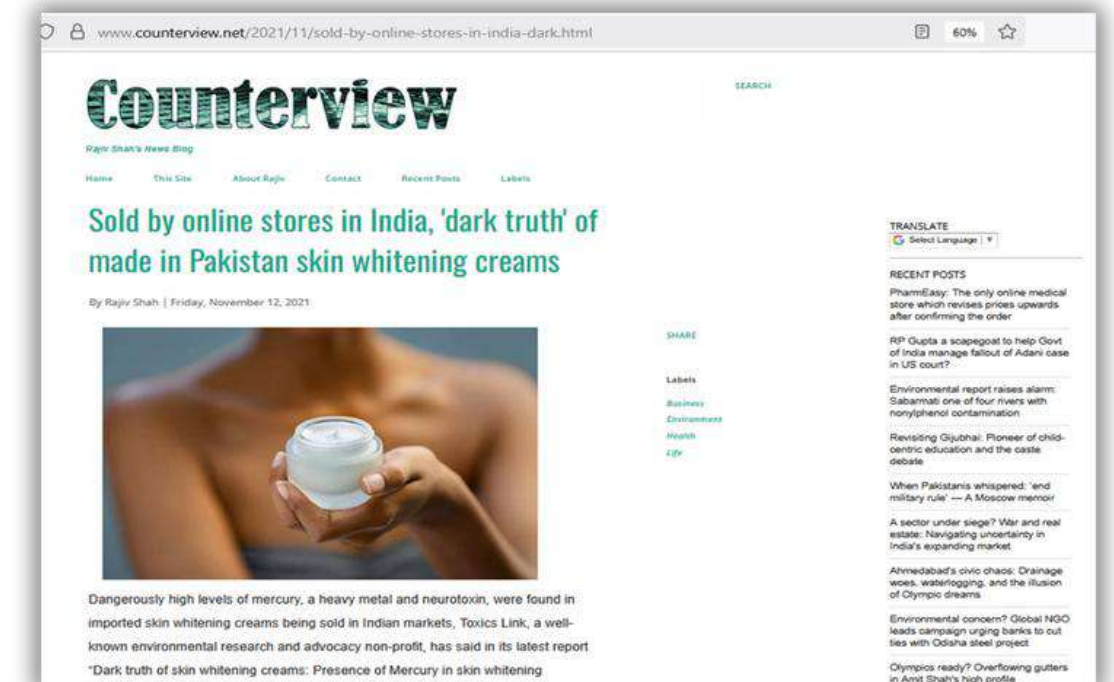
Engagement with consumers

Toxics Link had organized several awareness campaigns & workshops in different parts of the country

- Stakeholder consultation
- Press meets
- Workshop in women colleges
- Social media campaigns



Toxics Link
for a toxics-free world



Case Studies From India

THE HINDU

In search of skin lightening creams, kidneys take a hit

Researchers from Kerala have reported a series of cases from Malappuram district where the regular use of fairness creams has been linked to nephrotic syndrome. Heavy metal screening of the blood and urine samples of these patients revealed high levels of mercury, the toxic effects of which are well-known

Updated - April 26, 2024 10:06 am IST

C MAYA

READ LATER PRINT

timesofindia.indiatimes.com

Mumbai doctors link fairness cream to kidney illness in family

Malathy tyer / TNN / Updated: Feb 4, 2023, 11:01 IST

Soon after Vibha (name changed) started using a locally made fairness cream she had bought from her beautician in Akola, people started complimenting her 'fairer look'. This prompted her mother and elder sister to start using the cream too. But their joy was short-lived as each of them developed glomerulonephritis, a condition in which the tiny filters in the kidneys are damaged.

Read Less

MUMBAI: Soon after 20-year-old biotech student Vibha (name changed) started using a locally made fairness cream she had bought from her

TOI ENTERTAINMENT

Fairness cream toxicity causes kidney disease in two individuals; doc warns against using them

TOI Lifestyle Desk / TIMESOFINDIA.COM / Feb 23, 2024, 14:08 IST

The obsession with fairness cream and the desire for a fair complexion are deeply rooted in society. Two women from Raigad, Ms Namita Shinde and Mr Ramesh More, developed kidney diseases after using herbal fairness cream prescribed by a barber. Consumers should avoid uncertified fairness products and opt for FDA-approved creams.

Read Less

The obsession with fairness cream is not unknown to all. The likeness for a fair complexion is not deeply rooted in the society many find it difficult to detach themselves from this false standard of beauty. Using fairness cream has become a part of the daily routine of many. Apart from personal

INDIA TODAY

News / India / Kerala / Cosmetics worth Rs 7 lakh seized in Kerala over harmful mercury content

Cosmetics worth Rs 7 lakh seized in Kerala over harmful mercury content

Cosmetics worth Rs 7 lakh with mercury levels 12,000 times higher than permitted levels were seized, Kerala Health Minister Veena George announced. She also urged consumers to check product labels before buying them.

Indian Journal of Dermatology

LETTER • Indian J Dermatol. 2022 Nov-Dec;67(6):837. doi: [10.4103/ijd.ijd_616_21](https://doi.org/10.4103/ijd.ijd_616_21)

Beautification Gone Awry: Membranous Glomerulonephritis Following Use of Skin Lightening Cream Containing Mercury

P K Abraham Tharakan¹, N V Seethalekshmy¹

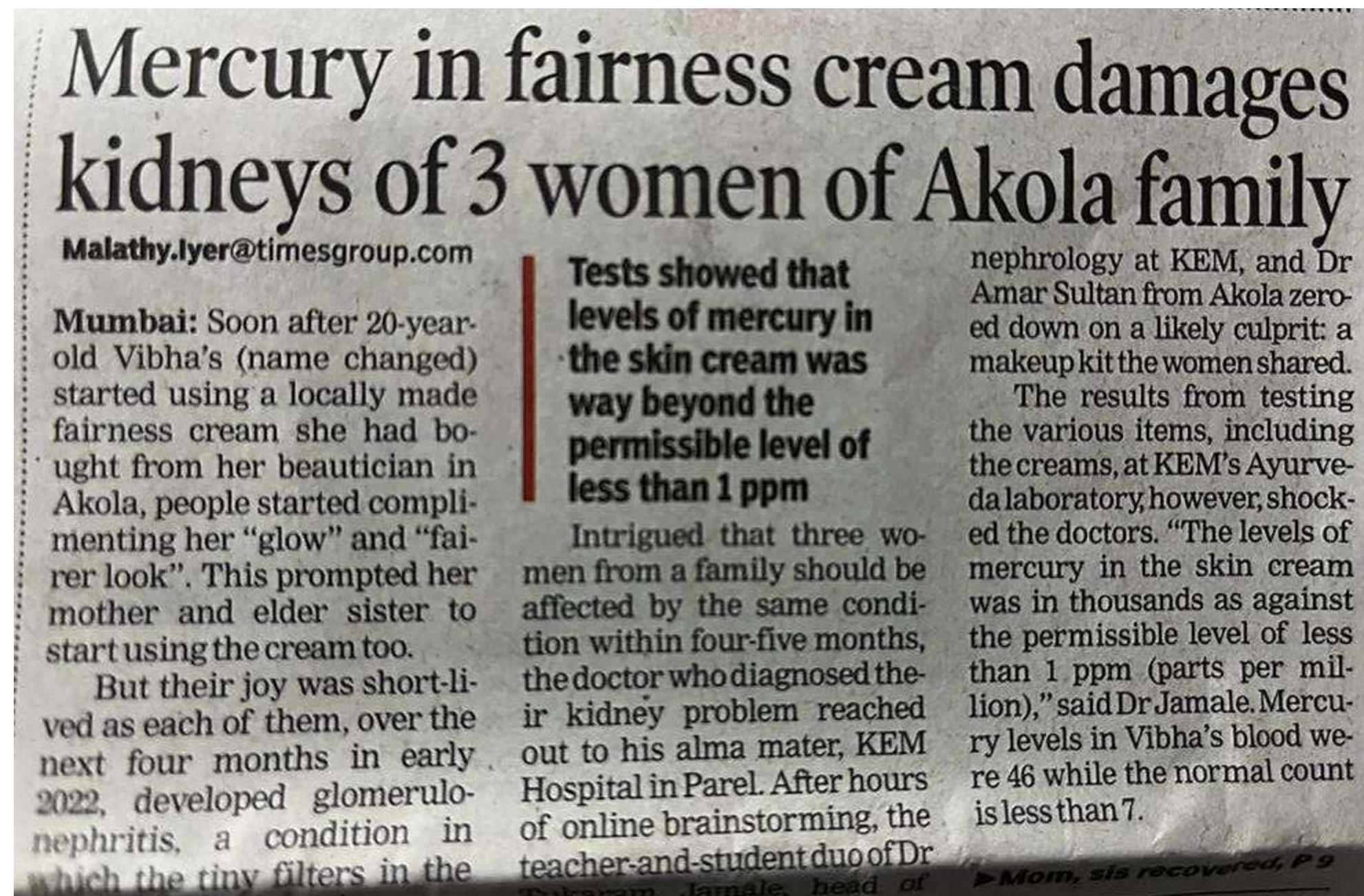
• Author information • Article notes • Copyright and License information

PMCID: PMC10043663 PMID: [36998857](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36998857/)

Sir,

The use of skin fairness creams is quite popular in the Indian subcontinent. Unfortunately, some of these creams contain mercury due to its ability to suppress melanin production. Mercury has multiple toxic effects on the body including rashes, tremors, headache, weight loss, fatigue and kidney damage to mention a few. I would like to report an inadvertent renal side effect of using a mercury containing cream for skin lightening purposes and also

Case Study



Three women from a family were diagnosed with kidney problem within 4-5 months after usage of fairness cream

Tests showed that levels of mercury in the skin cream was more than thousand times of the permissible level of 1 ppm

Mercury levels in patient's blood was 46 (mcg/L) while the normal count is less than 7 (mcg/L)

Case Study



Beautification Gone Awry: Membranous Glomerulonephritis Following Use of Skin Lightening Cream Containing Mercury

P K Abraham Tharakan, From the Department of Nephrology, SH Medical Centre, Kottayam, Kerala, India

N V Seethalekshmy, Department of Pathology, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, Kochi, Kerala
Indian Journal of dermatologist, Nov. 2022

47-year-old lady with complaints of bilateral pedal oedema of 5 months onset, diabetes mellitus, and proteinuria of 1,500 mg/day, hyperpigmentation of both upper limbs, biopsy showed features suggestive of membranous nephropathy

She had used faiza cream for 2 years, and later banned due to hyperpigmentation on recommendation of a physician

Mercury content was found to be 7,590 mg/kg in Faiza cream

Case Study

research letter

www.kidney-international.org

NELL-1–associated membranous nephropathy linked to skin fairness cream use: insights from an Indian case series



OPEN

Ranjit Narayanan¹, Sajeesh Sivadas¹ and Anila Abraham Kurien²

¹Department of Nephrology, Aster MIMS Hospital, Kottakkal, Kerala, India; and ²Department of Pathology, Renopath, Center for Renal and Urological Pathology, Chennai, India

Kidney International (2024) **105**, 1316–1319; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kint.2024.03.025>

KEYWORDS: fairness creams; membranous nephropathy; mercury toxicity; NELL-1; nephrotic syndrome; renal biopsy

Copyright © 2024, International Society of Nephrology. Published by Elsevier Inc. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Neural epidermal growth factor-like protein 1 (NELL-1) is an autoantigen associated with both primary and secondary membranous nephropathy (MN) and is described with malignancy, autoimmune diseases, lipoic acid, and traditional indigenous medicines.^{1–6}

We noticed NELL-1–positive MN being disproportionately reported in our kidney biopsies since 2021 without any discernible secondary cause. In early 2023, 4 consecutive cases of MN were reported NELL-1–positive. All 4 admitted to actively using skin fairness creams before their symptoms, prompting us to prospectively evaluate all patients with MN

13 of 15 patients admitted using skin fairness creams before their symptom onset.

Patients tested showed elevated levels of mercury levels in blood or urine

Mercury content >10,000 times higher than the 1- ppm limit set by the Minamata convention



Role of the customs

Single HS code for beauty products including skin lightening cream is a challenge

Lab facility by the custom departments to detect these products

Inter country custom coordination (WCO can a play role)

Capacity /Awareness of the custom officials

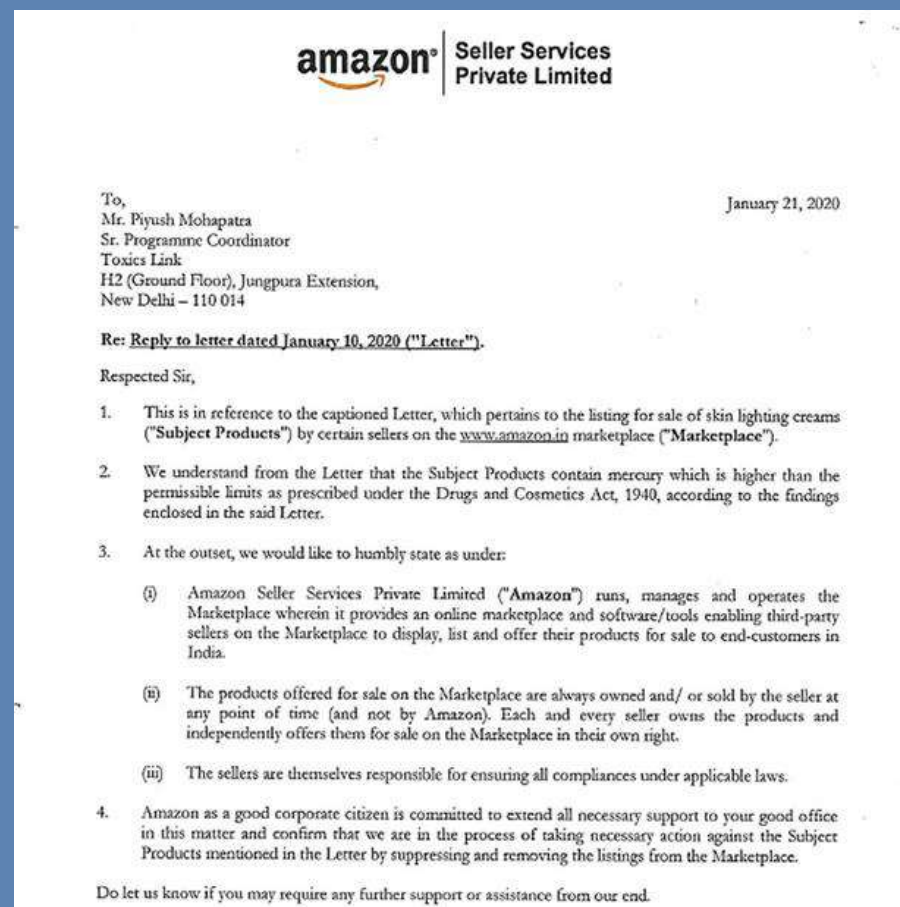
Online platform

Engagement with Government

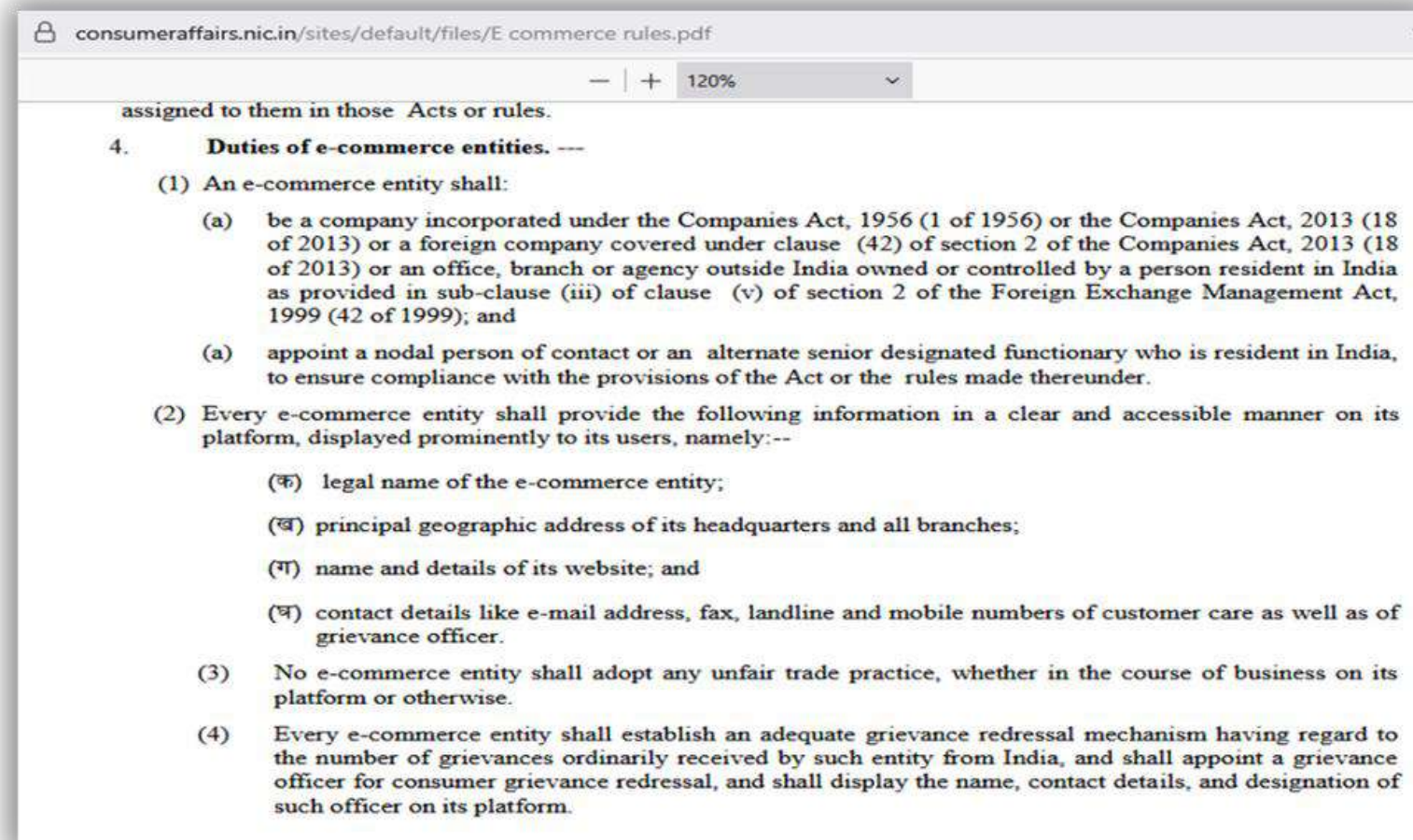
- Shared evidence of non-compliant creams with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC, a focal point to the Minamata Convention).
- One-to One Meet with Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) & state FDAs

Engagement with Online platforms

- Many non-compliant skin-lightening products (with high mercury) are still available online.
- Issued formal letter but they denied to have any third party seller responsibility



India's E-commerce Policy



- Drafted in 2019, not finalized yet
- The policy has faced repeated delays and the final round of stakeholder consultations was in August 2023
- Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020
- Doesn't reflect any action on sellers of non-compliance products
- Mercury in cosmetics is not explicitly mentioned, leaving a regulatory gap

Success Story

Indian Products: Mercury Free

Indian manufactured products are mercury free



Healthcare professionals

are increasingly recognizing mercury poisoning from cosmetics, and related cases are now being reported more frequently.



Advertising Ethics Reinforced

Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) in 2014 had issued “Advertising should not communicate any discrimination as a result of skin colour.”



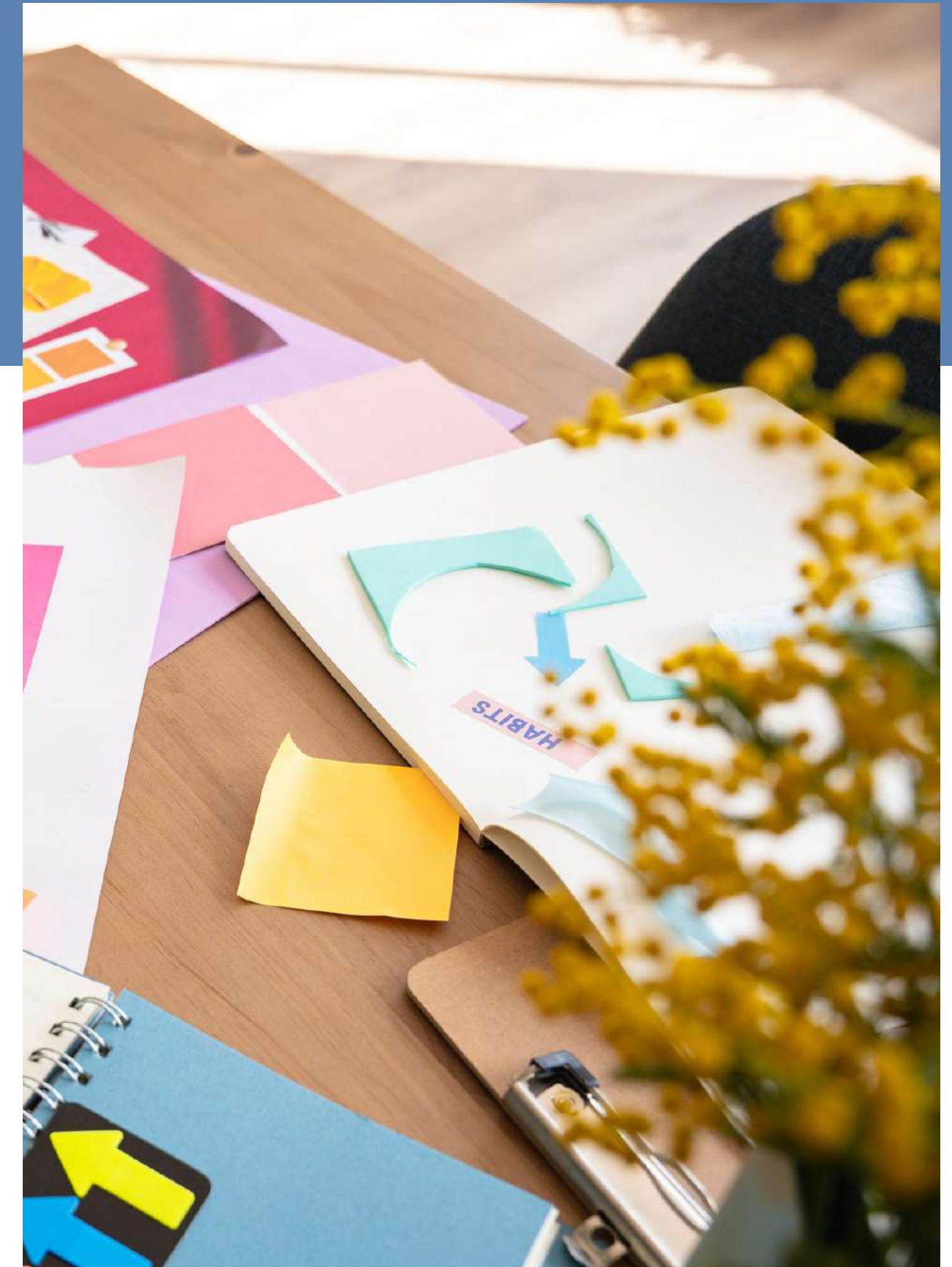
Consumer Protection in E-Commerce

Department of Consumer Affairs in Dec 2024 announced voluntary “Safety pledge” commitment for e-commerce platforms
Aims to detect and prevent the sale of unsafe and spurious products on digital marketplaces



Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

- Advertising norms for fairness creams, notified in August 2014
- Advertising should not communicate any discrimination as a result of skin colour.
- Advertising should not associate darker or lighter colour skin with any particular socio-economic strata, caste, community, religion, profession or ethnicity.
- Advertising should not perpetuate gender-based discrimination because of skin colour.
- This discourages sale of skin lightening creams in India.



Safety Pledge

1

Voluntary commitment, announced by the Department of Consumer Affairs in Dec 2024

2

Aims to detect and prevent the sale of unsafe and spurious products on digital marketplaces

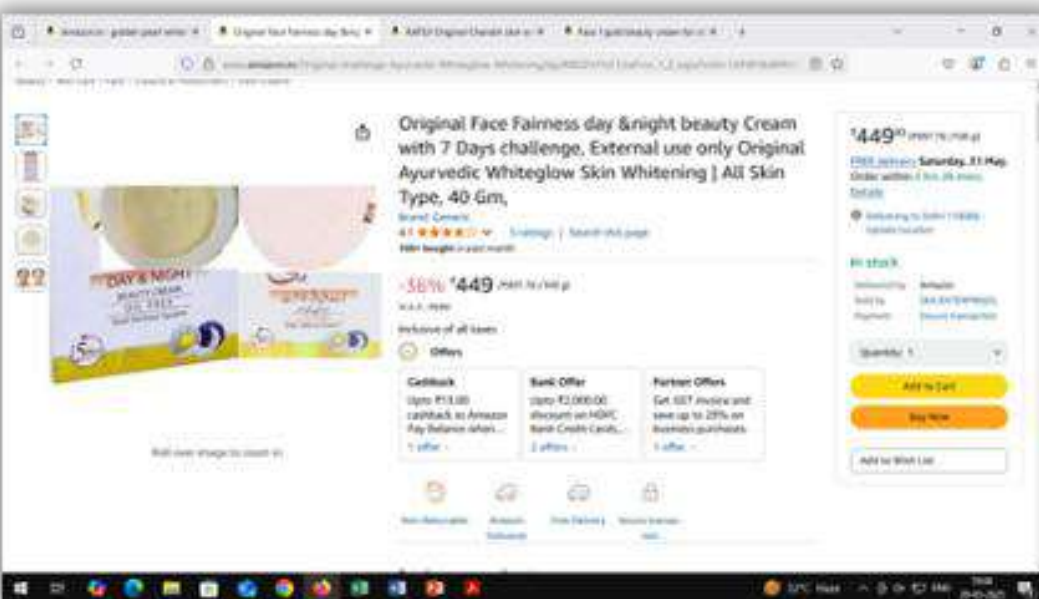
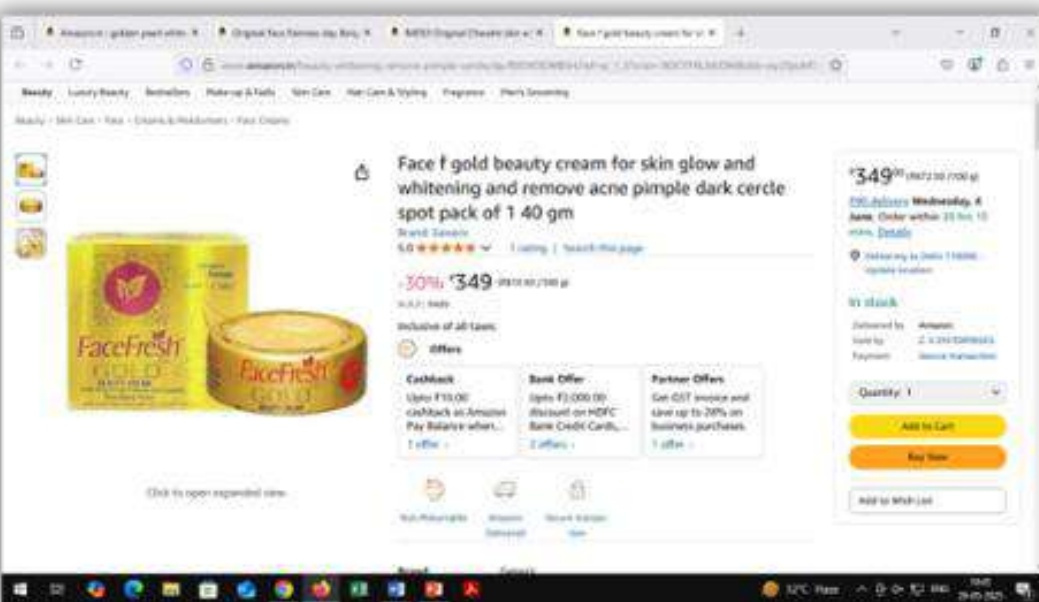
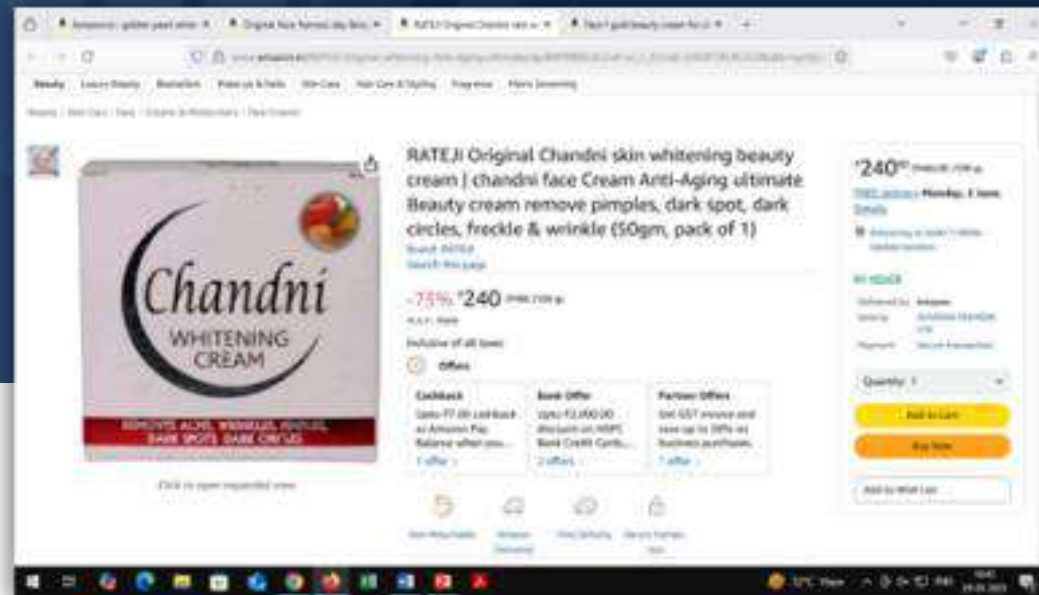
3

Only a few e-commerce site announced adoption

4

Amazon India and Flipkart, major online platforms haven't signed the pledge





Challenges

Consumer awareness

Regulate e commerce portal

National detention list)

Role of the state/provincial agencies

Role of Customs

Market surveillance



Toxics Link
for a toxics-free world

THANK YOU

Connect: Toxics Link



01149 931863



www.toxicslink.org



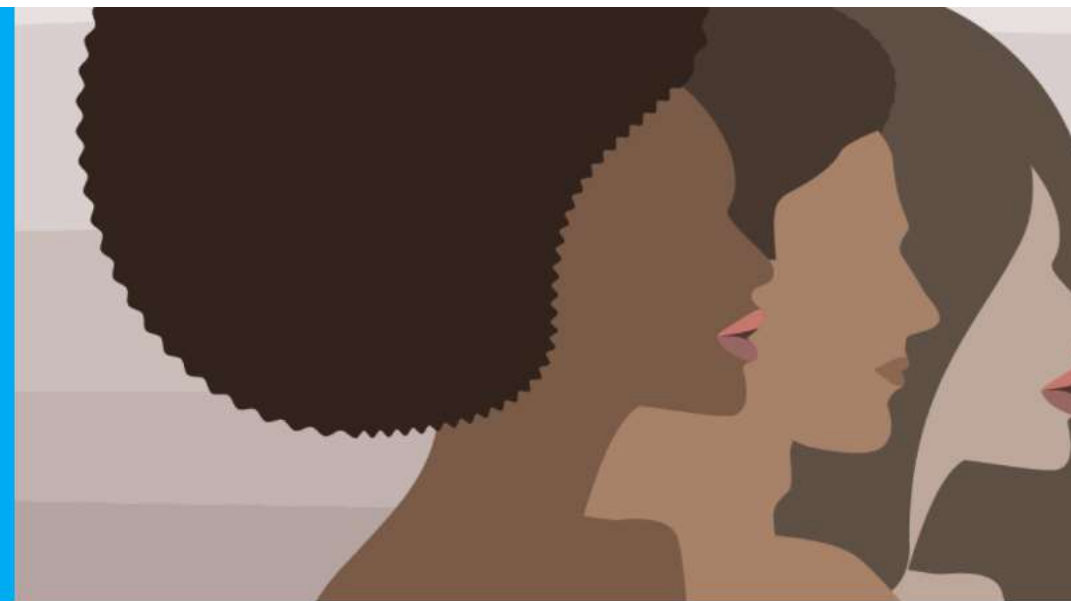
Global knowledge management and communication

Malgorzata Stylo, UNEP

Malgorzata.stylo@un.org



Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products



Overview

Why does it matter?

About the projects

Countries

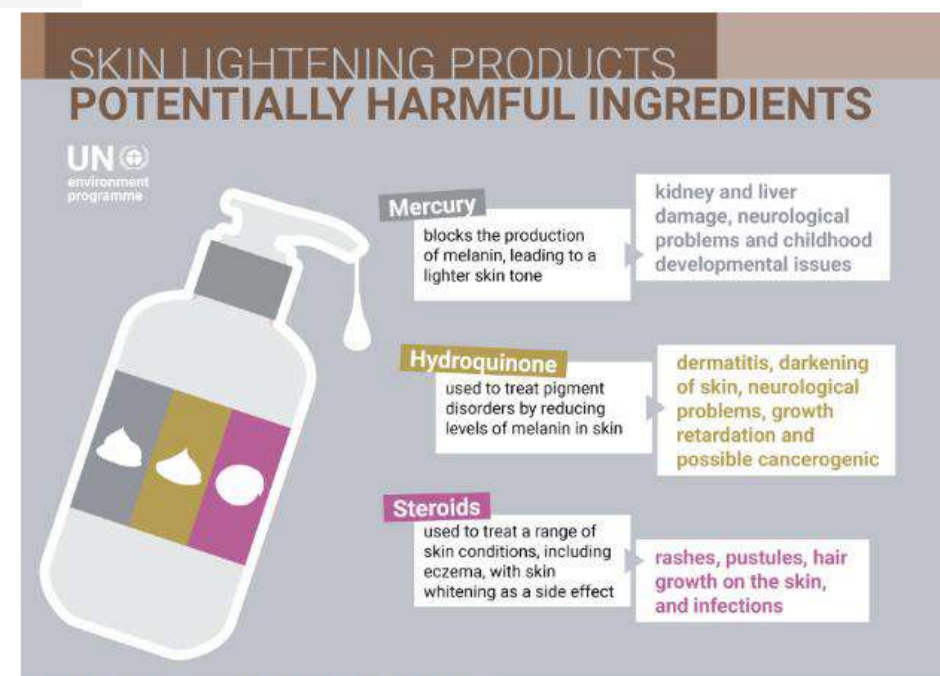
Community of Practice

Skin lightening - also referred to as skin whitening or bleaching – refers to the use of cosmetic products, mainly creams or soaps, to reduce the amount of melanin, or pigment, in the skin to make it appear lighter.

Demand for products is rooted in social, cultural and historical factors. In many cultures, harmful stereotypes associate lighter skin with beauty and better prospects of employment, marriage and social standing.

Beauty standards promoted by media, advertising and marketing often reinforce the bias that a lighter skin tone is more desirable than darker skin tone.

www.unep.org/mercuryfreecosmetics

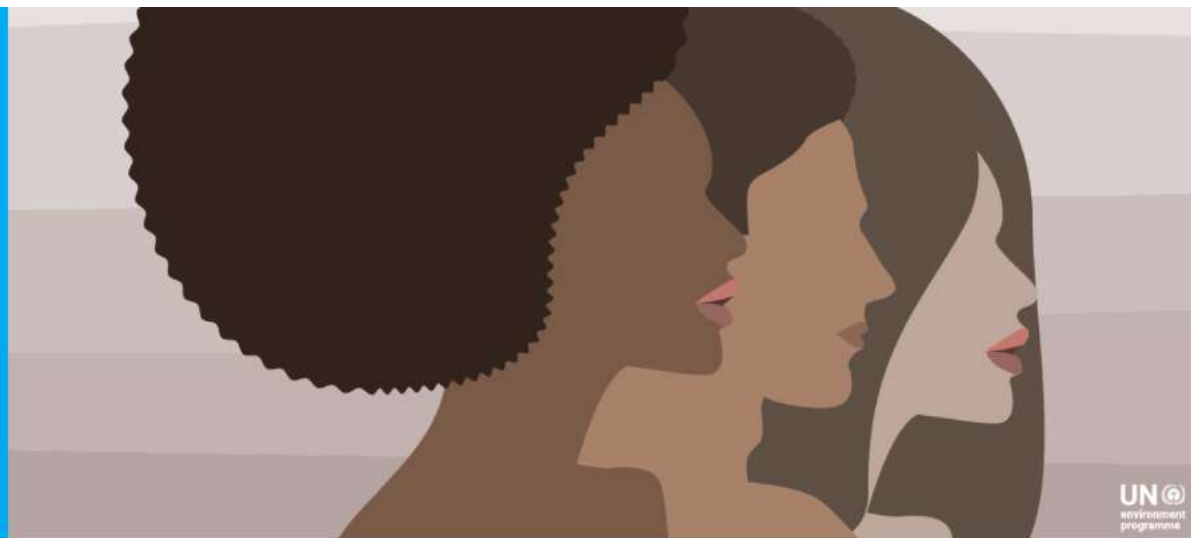


Potentially harmful ingredients in skin lightening products



www.unep.org/mercuryfreecosmetics

Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products



[Overview](#)

[Why does it matter?](#)

[About the project](#)

[Countries](#)

[Community of Practice](#)



Sri Lanka's Skin-Lightening Industry: A Silent Threat to Public Health

Sri Lanka's beauty industry is booming, and at the center of it all is the growing demand for skin-lightening products (SLPs). From local stores to online marketplaces, creams and soaps promising a lighter complexion are readily available. However, beneath the allure lies a serious health risk that many consumers remain unaware of.

The Hidden Dangers of Skin-Whitening Products

According to the Sri Lanka Minamata Initial Assessment ([MIA, 2019](#)), 23 local industries produce cosmetics and soaps, with 68% of surveyed manufacturers unknowingly using mercury. The lack of stringent oversight allows hazardous substances to seep into popular products, posing significant health risks.

[A 2019 study](#) uncovered that most consumers turn to skin-whitening products based on peer recommendations. Users typically apply these creams for two to four months, often unaware of the adverse effects.

In Sri Lanka, mercury is freely available. Informal interviews suggest that, besides store-bought sources, mercury extracted from electronic appliances is sometimes used in these products. However, mercury is just one of several whitening agents found in them. Studies have also identified other concerning substances, including [hydroquinone](#), [corticosteroids](#), [kojic acid](#), [arbutin](#), [Glutathione](#), [Retinoids](#), [Tranexamic acid](#), and [azelaic acid](#).

The Fight Against Toxic Beauty Products

Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products - Knowledge Hub

Related links

[Sri Lanka - Minamata Party Profile](#)

[Sri Lanka Regulatory Authority \(NMR\)](#)

[Sri Lanka Consumer Affairs Authority](#)

[Presentations at the Third meeting of the SLP projects Stakeholders Group](#)

Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products **project stakeholder group**

**Platform to
exchange
information between
project and
stakeholder on the
topic**

- **How often:** Semestral basis
- **Where:** Virtual
- **Secretariat:** UNEP GMP



Over 110 members on the mailing list of the group : mercury-in-cosmetics@googlegroups.com

**Next meeting
September 2025**

UNEP EVENT

First meeting of the Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products project stakeholders group

28 November 2023

Online

Eliminating Mercury Skin
Lightening Products
meeting of project stakeholders group
28 Nov 2023

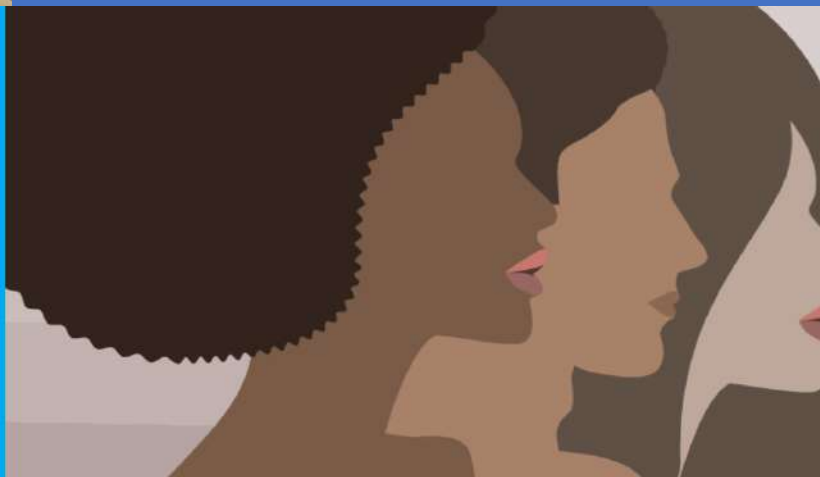


UNEP EVENT

Second meeting of the Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products project stakeholders group

21 May 2024

Virtual



UNEP EVENT

Third meeting of the Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products project stakeholders group

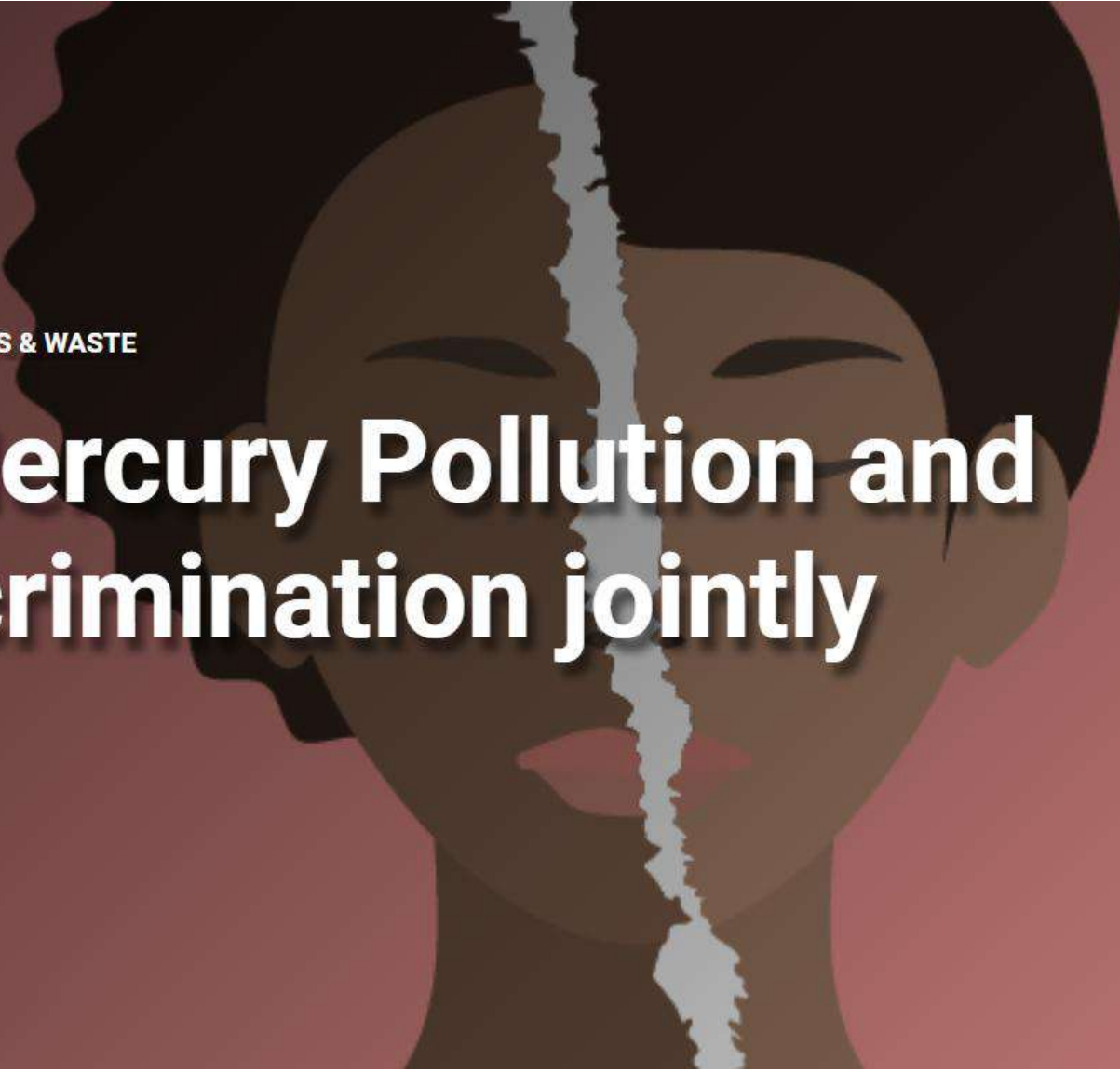
30 January 2025

Online, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm (GMT+1)



20 MAR 2024 | EDITORIAL | CHEMICALS & WASTE

Tackling Mercury Pollution and Racial Discrimination jointly



21 March

The International
Day for the
Elimination of Racial
Discrimination

Social media campaigns

20 MAR 2025 | EDITORIAL | CHEMICALS & WASTE

How eliminating skin-lightening products with mercury helps counter racial discrimination



Skin lightening products expose communities to mercury: spread the word, share our social media cards!



Videos

[Interviews of Amira Adawe, The Beautywell Project](#)

[Interview of Catherine Tetteh, Melanin Foundation](#)

Spread the word: share our key messages #SayNoToHate #FightRacism #MercuryFreeCosmetics



True radiance comes from within, not from mercury.

Brightness is not in your skin, brightness is who you are.

The color of beauty is the color you are born with.

Do not perpetuate harmful cultural norms. Do not use skin-lightening products. Your skin is beautiful as it is.

Unmasking **Mercury** and Colorism in Cosmetics



SPEAKERS By order of intervention.



Brenda KOEKKOEK



Senior Coordination Officer,
Minamata Convention on Mercury



Mrinalini RAI



Director, Women4Biodiversity



Amira ADAWE



Executive Director, Beauty Well



Anthony SAAH-BONKIE



Executive Director, Liberian Youth for
Public Health Initiatives (LYPHIL) |
Chemicals and Waste Youth Platform



Ghurni BHATTACHARYA



Youth Present Representative,
World Future Council



Ruth ANDRADE



Environmental Partner, Lush



Malgorzata STYLO



Associate Programme Management
Officer, UN Environment Programme



Richard GUTIERREZ



Programme Management Officer,
Minamata Convention on Mercury |
Co-Moderator



Diana RIZZOLIO



Coordinator, Geneva Environment
Network | Co-Moderator

5 March 2025 | 13:00 – 14:00 CET | IEH 1 & Online >>> tiny.cc/GEN5Mar25

Outreach during the Minamata COP6

Mercury in cosmetics – more than what meets the eye

Special event at
Minamata COP5,
2023
Geneva, Switzerland



**True
radiance
comes from
within, not
from
mercury**



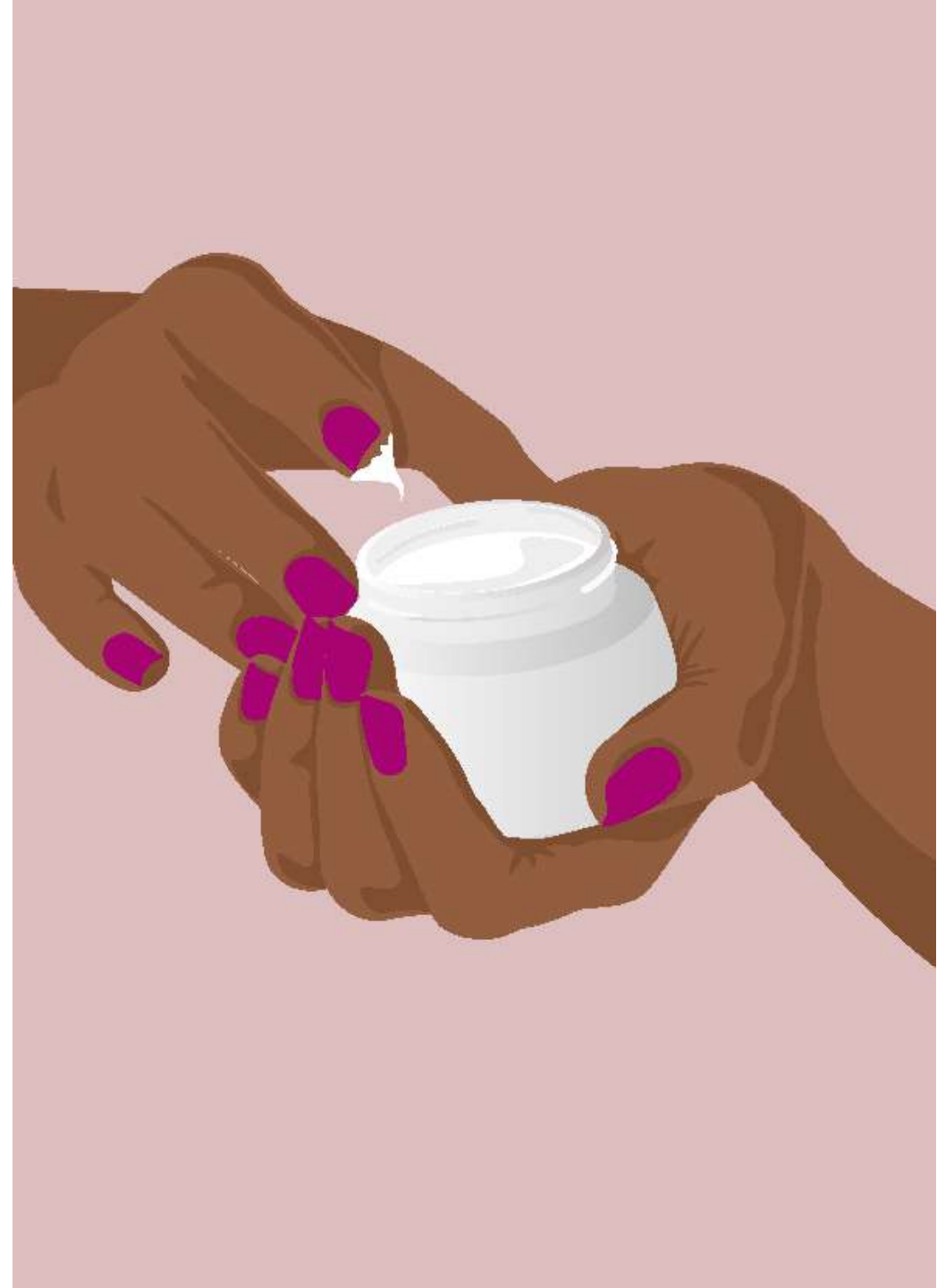
Outreach and Launch
social media campaign
**Regional pre-COP
meetings**
September – October
2025



Story for the Minamata
Convention 8th
Anniversary
16 Aug 2025



Event, Photo booth,
movie screening
Minamata COP 6
3-7 November 2025



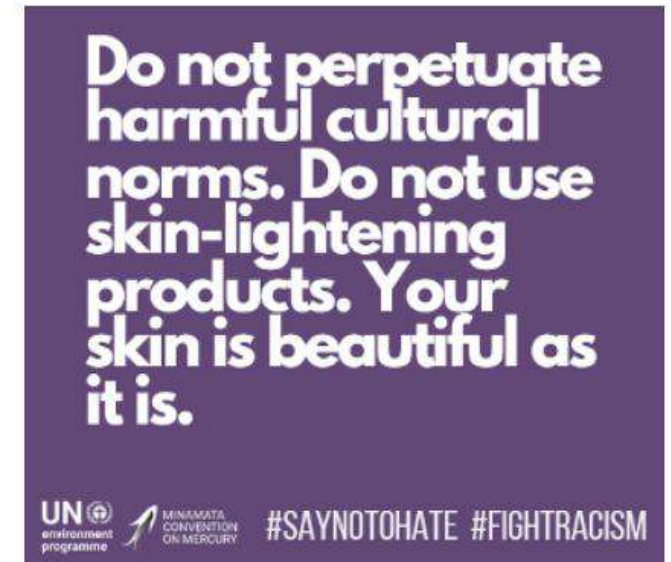
Global Campaign **Against Toxic Beauty Ideals** and **Toxic Chemicals** in Cosmetics

- Raise **global awareness of the risk of toxic chemicals** in skin lightening products
- **Share project and countries success**
- Promote cultural **pride of all skin tones**
- **Confront toxic beauty standards and celebrate diversity**
- Mobilize and influence the **private sector**
- Mobilize **influencers and youth**
- Influence **policy makers** and regulators
- Influence **consumers**



Key Messaging

Hashtags: #SayNoToBleaching
#MercuryFreeCosmetics
#SeeMyComplexion #EndColorism
#JeSuisBelle

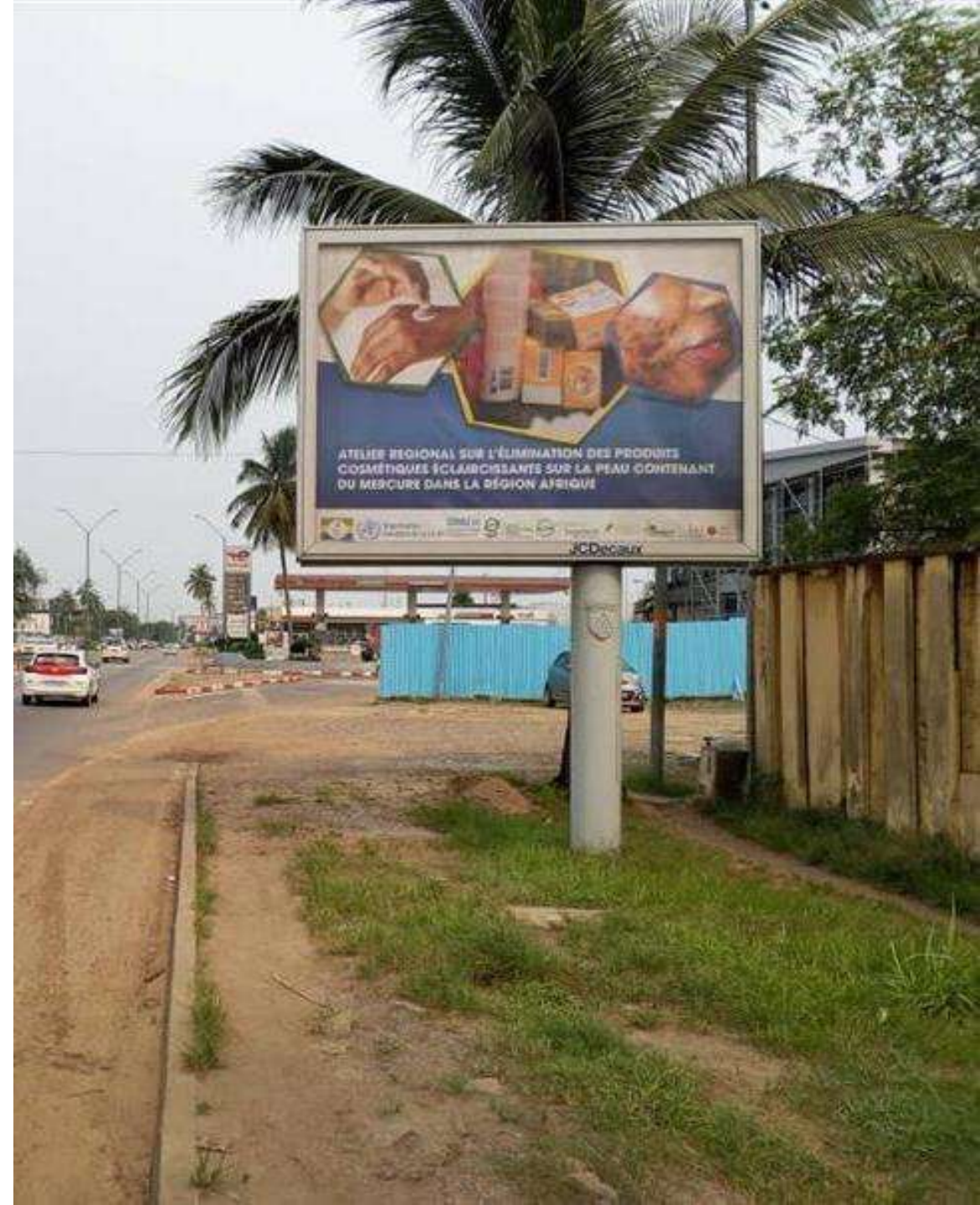


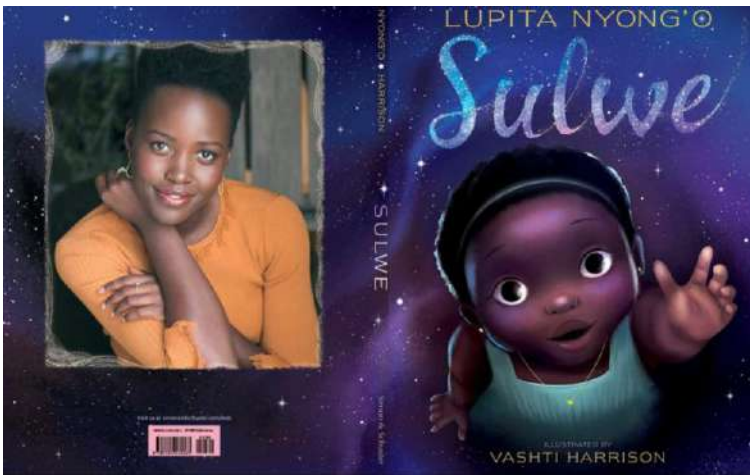
Channels

- Social media campaigns, news stories
- Project visual briefs – to share lessons learned, infographics
- Special events
- In-person engagement at Minamata COP6

Actors: public and private sector, civil society, community groups

Angles: health, pollution, human rights, consumer protection, behavioral insights





Influencers and Companies Engagement

- **influencers:** Lupita N'yongo, Nina Davuluri, Nyakim Gatwech, **Roberta Annan**, etc.
- **movie directors:** Alicia K Harris, **Adama Bineta Sow**
- **artists:** Angelica Dass, **Sema Jonsson**
- **private sector companies:** **Lush**, SkinByBeryl, L'Oreal, Clarins





Thank you very much!

Contact:

malgorzata.stylo@un.org

imelda.dossouetui@un.org

caroline.wood@un.org

Any question?



GEF-VII: Integrated Management and Environmentally Sound Disposal of POPs Pesticides in Agriculture Sector and Mercury and Waste in Healthcare Sector in Sri Lanka

15.03.2025

Project Brief



Funded by: Global Environmental Facility (GEF) –Out of STAR Allocations

Project Duration: 5 Years (2024 – 2029)

Project Objective: To improve the implementation of regulations, strengthen national systems & capacities in chemicals management, and support the transformation of healthcare waste management systems

GEF Grant Amount: USD 5,040,000

Total Co-financing: USD 33,157,800

Implement Partner: Ministry of Environment

Implementation Modality: UNDP CO support to NIM

Other Project Partners: Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education, Provincial Councils & Local Governments, Private Sector

Geographical Area: National with project demonstrations in Northwestern, Eastern and Western Provinces

Objective

- The Project objective is to improve the implementation of regulations, strengthen national systems and capacities in chemicals management, and support the transformation of healthcare waste management systems



Components

1

- Strengthen the Policy, Regulatory and Institutional Frameworks for the management of POPs, Mercury and other Chemicals of Concern (CoC)

2

- Environmentally sound management disposal of obsolete stocks of Agrichemicals POPs, Mercury and their wastes

3

- Establish Healthcare Waste Management (HCWM) Systems to effectively prevent U-POPs emissions, and develop Business Models for waste disposal at Healthcare Facilities which are aligned to the national COVID-19 recovery efforts

4

- Knowledge Sharing, Management & Evaluation

Component 1



(a) Strengthening the Enforcement of Policy and Regulations on Chemical Management

- Revision of inventories of all chemicals and establish inventories for those included in the SC in 2011 and 2013.
- Centralize the chemical Control system, laboratory for POPs and CoCs is improved, and enforce the monitoring of imports and use of chemicals.
- Institutional coordination system strengthened.



Component 1:

(b) Create National Conditions to Scale Up Mercury Phase-Out in the Health Sector

- Green procurement standard established including consideration of bulk procurement for replacement of mercury based medical devices
- Develop a green finance framework for the procurement of mercury-free products and HCWM



Component 2



Environmentally sound disposal of obsolete stocks of POPs chemicals, residual mercury and waste containing and/or contaminated with POPs chemicals and mercury

- Disposal of mercury and mercury waste stocks recovered from mercury phaseout initiatives and processes in the health sector
- Systems including inventories for continuation of safe storage and disposal of mercury and mercury waste established
- Guidance for inventory of mercury /POPs contaminated sites developed and piloted.
- Stocks of remaining obsolete POPs pesticides, contaminated chemicals and containers
- Guidance tools and guidelines for decontamination of Mercury/ POPs contaminated sites developed and tested

Component 3

Long-term sound management strategies of healthcare waste (considering recovery from Covid-19 and preparedness for emergencies too). Develop business models for HCWM

- Standards and regulations on HCWM revised, based on the demonstration of the introduction of the data management systems to improve monitoring in 6 selected hospitals
- Integrated resource recovery programmes demonstrated in the above 6 locations
- Establish two CCWTF based on non-incineration technologies and PPP in Northwestern and Eastern Provinces to service M/S scale healthcare facilities
 - Northwestern (10 y) IRR 24% :1000 kg/d (provided that 700 kg/d comes from THK)
 - East (10y) IRR 4%- 475kg/d
- Training and capacity building of LAs
- Improve the operation of hybrid autoclave facilities that are in use at hospitals

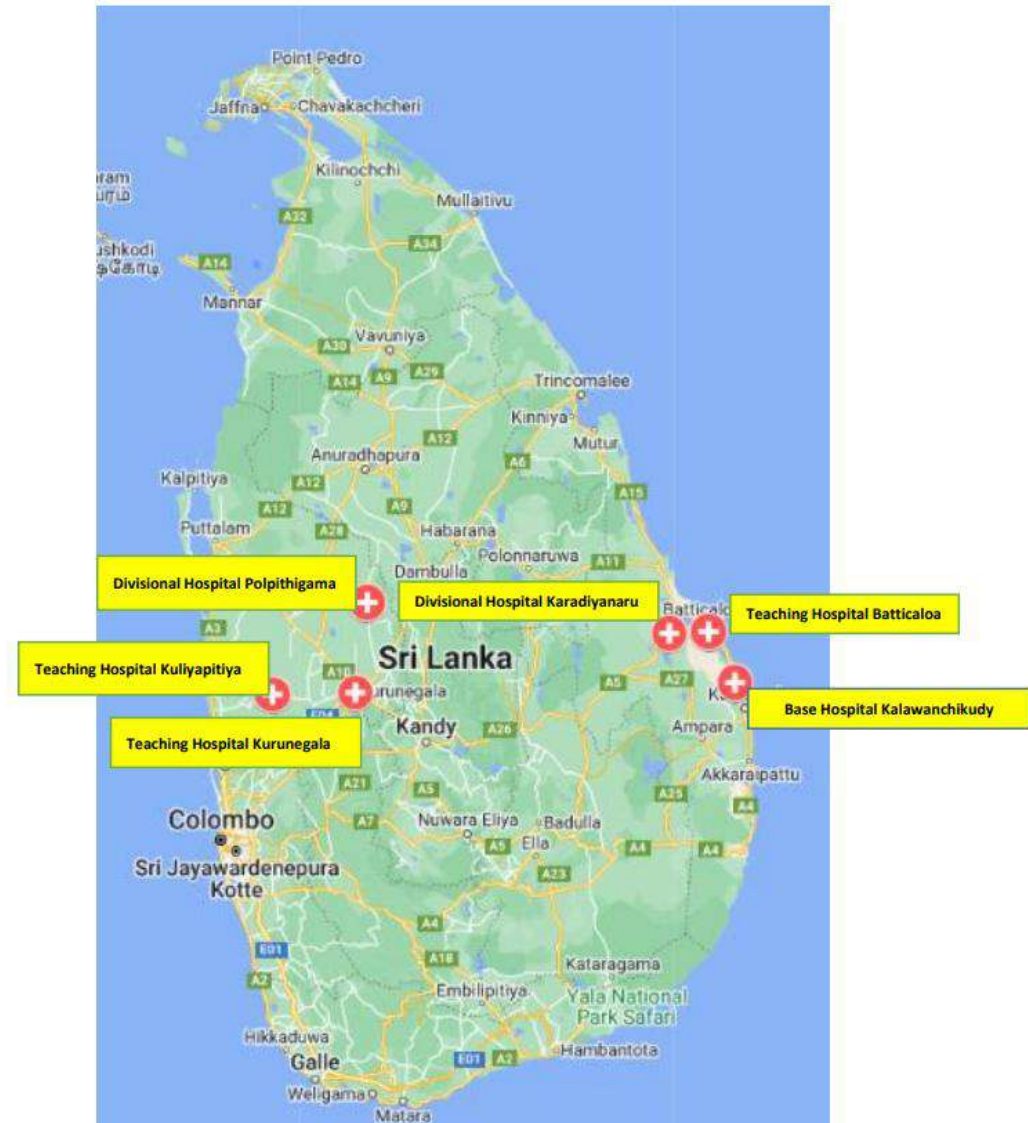
HCWM Pilot Sites

NorthWestern Province

- Teaching Hospital Kurunegala
- Teaching Hospital Kuliypitiya
- Divisional Hospital Polpithigama

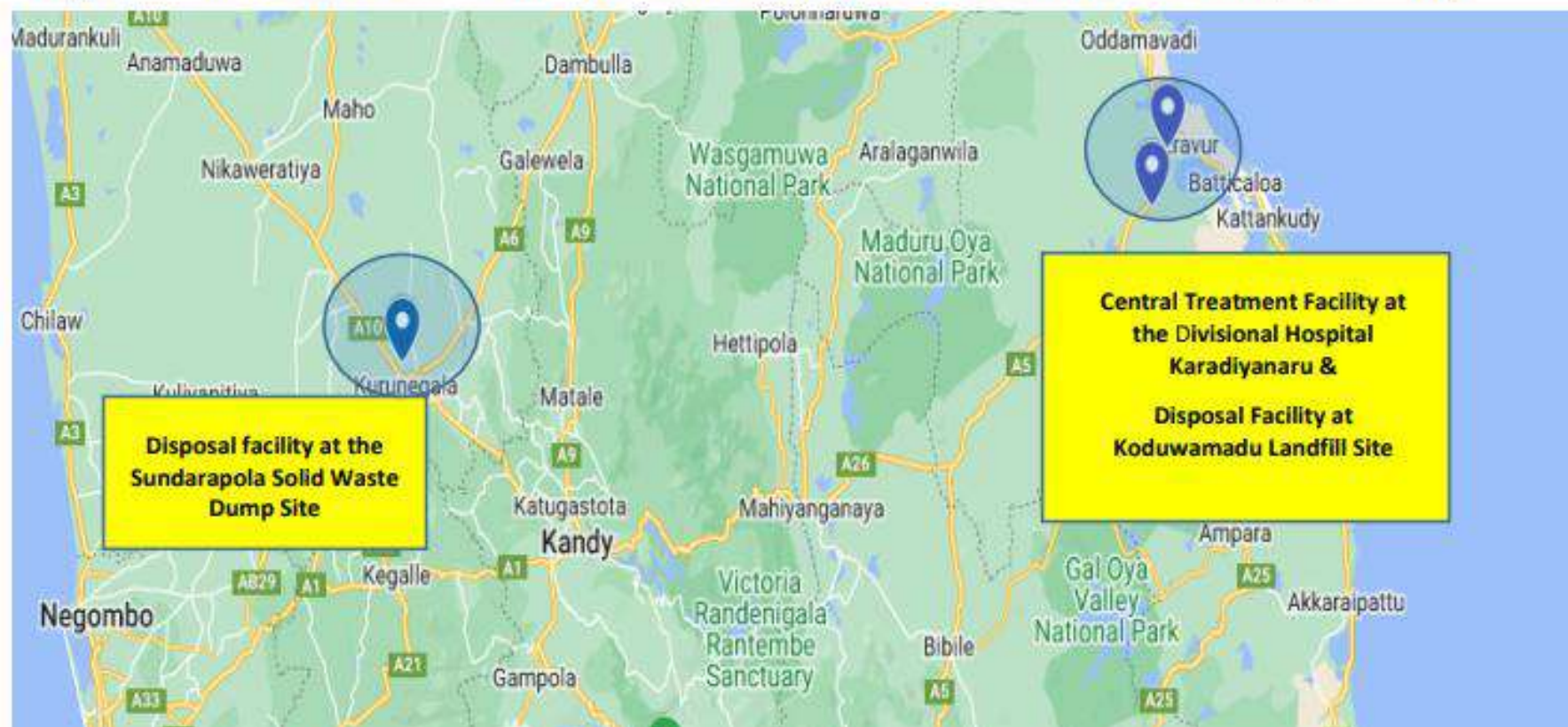
Eastern Province

- Teaching Hospital Batticaloa
- Divisional Hospital Karadiyanaru
- Base Hospital Kalvanchikudy



Clinical Waste Treatment Facilities

Proposed Locations for Centralized Clinical Waste Treatment Facility (CCWTF)



Decontamination Sites

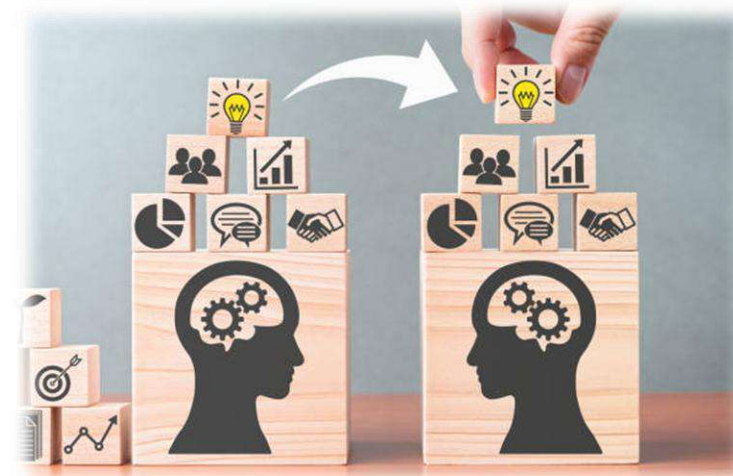
Proposed Decontamination Sites



Component 4

Knowledge Sharing and M&E

- Engagement of CSOs/CBOs
- Document lessons
- Awareness and Training including public awareness (i.e. Hg free household thermometers)
- Gender action plan for HCWM
- Project Management, M&E and reporting



Thank
You



Synergies with similar projects in the country/region: dental amalgams, medical devices

1. GEF7 PHASING OUT MERCURY MEASURING DEVICES IN HEALTHCARE
2. GEF7 PHASING DOWN DENTAL AMALGAM PROJECT

GEF7 PHASING OUT MERCURY MEASURING DEVICES IN HEALTHCARE PROJECT SCOPE: OBJECTIVE AND COMPONENTS



Project objective

To eliminate uncontrolled releases of mercury from healthcare settings



Timeline:

1 September 2023 – December 2028



Multisectoral collaboration between Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment in project countries



Co-financing partners include Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment in project countries



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HEALTH
FOR ALL



GLOBAL
MERCURY
PARTNERSHIP



GEF7 PHASING OUT MERCURY MEASURING DEVICES IN HEALTHCARE PROJECT SCOPE: OBJECTIVE AND COMPONENTS

1 Development of national health strategies for phasing the procurement and manufacture of mercury medical devices



National strategies for phasing out mercury-added thermometers and Sphygmomanometers in healthcare developed or updated in selected countries.



Development of a stakeholder engagement strategy and implementation



Carrying out of a situation assessment and inventory of mercury-added measuring devices

2 Support for conversion, decommission and remediation



Phasing-out mercury-added thermometers and sphygmomanometers used in healthcare, from procurement to the safe and environmentally sound interim-storage of mercury-containing wastes



Mercury-containing medical waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner, from storage to disposal



Awareness raising towards manufacturers

3 Knowledge management



WHO technical and informational materials developed and/or updated.



Technical guidance developed on the management of mercury-containing healthcare waste



Good practice examples and lessons learned from the implementation of project Components 1 & 2 documented and disseminated.



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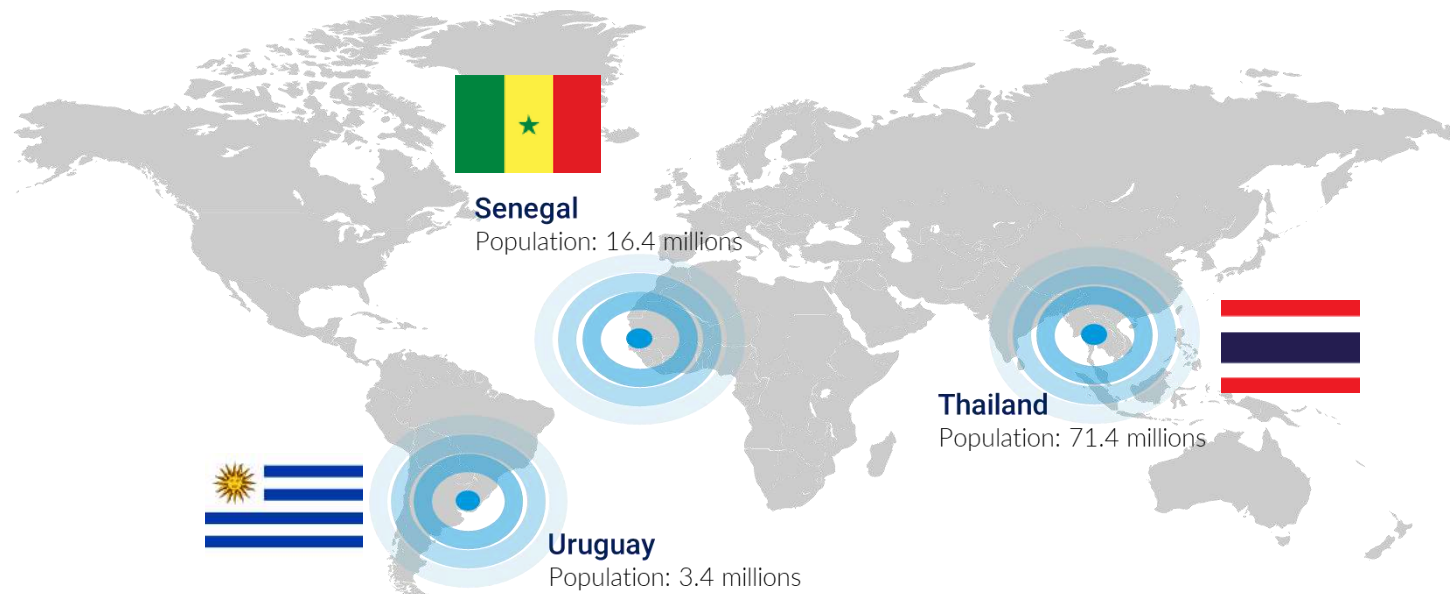
Project objective

To protect human health and the environment from harmful effects of mercury through implementation of policies and improved practices to phase down the use of dental amalgams



Timeline:

March 2023 – February 2026



Multisectoral collaboration between Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment in project countries



Co-financing partners include FDI, IADR, civil society (2), academia (3), and private sector (7)



GLOBAL
MERCURY
PARTNERSHIP



Project components and main activities

1 Phase down of dental amalgam use through improved policies and technical capacity



Conduct national situational assessment on regulations, insurance policies, oral health workforce model and training/curricula – and make improvements in line with the Minamata Convention on Mercury



Establish an inventory of dental amalgam and mercury-free alternatives



Develop case studies that demonstrate the feasibility to phase down the use of dental amalgam

2 Improve management of mercury and hazardous waste from dental use



Conduct a national situational assessment on the dental amalgam/mercury waste management schemes and the possibility of a health system-wide approach on mercury management



Select dental/health facilities to demonstrate sound management practices to handle dental amalgam and their wastes



Manage and dispose of dental amalgam waste collected in an environmentally sound manner

3 Knowledge management and global awareness



Disseminate project results through the Project Knowledge Hub (UNEP Global Mercury Partnership) and WHO project webpage.



Conduct awareness raising events, present project results at national, regional and international events.



Development of global products:

- 1) Global database to inform project outputs/results, relevant decisions of Conference of the Parties and reporting
- 2) Technical guidance on environmentally friendly and less invasive oral health care.

SIMILAR PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY/REGION: DENTAL AMALGAMS, MEDICAL DEVICES: LESSONS LEARNT (So far)

Lesson learnt: Beneficial to explore synergies with relevant projects to enhance efficiency and maximize impact

Lesson learnt: Establishing a sustainable waste management scheme is complex

Lesson learnt: Joining expertise between WHO and UNEP to provide oversight on global products

Cross-cutting lessons learnt

- Anticipate flexibility in the project design to integrate COP decisions to project activities
- Administrative and project management activities can require some time to establish, and it is important to consider these processes in the project timeline and workplan



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GEF Project

- GFE approval: Dec 2021
- Project duration: 2023-2027
- Budget: USD16 million, GEF funding
- Partners: UNDP,

Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center-
Ministry of Ecology and Environment,
China Association for Medical Devices Industry



M.Sc. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez
CEO and Chairperson

December 8, 2021

Mr. Pradeep Kurukulasuriya
GEF Executive Coordinator
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
New York City, USA

Dear Mr. Kurukulasuriya,

I am pleased to inform you that I have endorsed the full-sized project proposal detailed below:

Decision Sought:	CEO Endorsement of Full-sized Project
GEFSEC ID:	10349
Agency:	UNDP
Agency ID:	6279
Focal Area:	Chemicals and Waste
Project Type:	Full-sized Project
Country:	China
Name of Project:	Demonstration of production phase-out of mercury-containing medical thermometers and sphygmomanometers and promoting the application of mercury-free alternatives in medical facilities in China
GEF Project Financing:	\$16,000,000
Agency Fee:	\$1,440,000
Funding Source:	GEF Trust Fund

Agency Fee Commitment:					
Agency	Trust Fund	20% committed at Council Approval (US\$)	50% to be committed at 1 st Disbursement (US\$)	30% to be committed at Mid-Term Review (US\$)	Total (US\$)
UNDP	GEFTF	288,000	720,000	432,000	1,440,000

I am endorsing this project on the understanding that the project is in conformity with the GEF focal areas strategies, and in line with GEF policies and procedures.

Sincerely,

M.Sc. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez
Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson

Copy to: Country Operational Focal Point, GEF Agencies, Trustee

1818 H Street, NW • Washington, DC 20433 • USA
Tel: +1 (202) 473 3202 • Fax: +1 (202) 522 3240
E-mail: gefcoo@thegef.org
www.thegef.org

Expected results

The **objective** of this project is to **set the enabling environment to accelerate uptake of mercury-free technology in production of medical thermometers and sphygmomanometers, and to lay the foundation for market acceptance and growth for mercury-free devices in the medical services sector, to meet the associated phase out deadlines under the Minamata Convention**

Objective Indicators:

- Demonstration at **4 + 2** mercury-containing manufacturers, completely stop their production lines, reducing mercury consumption, production and sales to zero, eliminating the consumption of **75 metric tons of mercury**
- Facilitated by technology transformation and national replication programme, completely phase out by **31 December 2025** the consumption of mercury by the **18 + 5** enterprises
- Mercury-free medical devices promoted in at least **6** demonstration medical facilities, staff trained to use and maintain mercury-free medical devices;
- ESM of mercury on interim mercury storage, mercury-containing waste and mercury contaminated areas at the demonstration production facilities and medical facilities implemented.

GEF PROJECTS SYNERGIES



Inter-agency (WHO-UNEP) and inter-ministerial collaboration (MoH and MoE): Joining expertise and mutualizing efforts/resources



Waste management : exploring national or regional solutions would be more sustainable approaches for an integrated management of mercury waste from the health sector.



Capacity building and awareness raising activities: Increases awareness and knowledge about the Minamata Convention, mercury as a toxic material, mercury-added products, role of the health sector



Regulations: for example SIP project in Gabon will help enforcing the national new legislation.



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HEALTH
FOR ALL



Thank you

Elena Jardan
jardane@who.int

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/chemical-safety>



Global elimination of mercury added skin lightening products (SLPs)

Grace Halla
UNEP GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit
6 June 2025
Grace.halla@un.org

UN
environment
programme



Lessons learnt so far on the MSP

CONSIDERATIONS

- Synergies with SLP projects (e.g. regional mercury monitoring hubs)
- Target manufacturing countries to stop flow of products into the market
- Stronger linkages among testing, trade and enforcement authorities (e.g. designation of national labs for official analysis, development of detention list)
- Stronger linkages with civil society to reach disadvantaged populations
- Outreach to cosmetic industry (e.g. toxin free/plant derived formulas as alternatives) and industry associations to combat colorism and perception of skin tones

CONTINUATION/EXPANSION

- Behavioral study – driving demand
- Sampling and testing (e.g. procurement and training of equipment)
- Stronger outreach to online platforms/accountability and liability reforms
- Global knowledge hub
- Global/regional database of mercury added SLPs
- Exchange among community of practice, including influencers (youth, celebrities and public figures)
- Project Stakeholder Group (meet semi-annually)

Country selection/ confirmation

Confirmed target countries:

LAC: Antigua and Barbuda, Mexico (2)

AFR: Burkina Faso, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Uganda (13)

ASP: Cambodia, Pakistan, Philippines (3)

Country selection criteria:

- Party of Minamata Convention
- Identified the manufacturing, export, import and use of mercury containing SLPs as one of the priority areas in the respective MIAs and/or reported to COP5 decision 5/5 on challenges in preventing the manufacture, import and export of cosmetics listed in Part I of Annex A to the Minamata Convention on Mercury as well as current or proposed measures for addressing these challenges taken by Parties
- Expressions of interests by Parties of the Minamata Convention, including national reporting, SIP submissions and other available data collection and analysis
- Have not received GEF support on the same topic previously or can justify additional assistance is necessary

Overview

Project Type: Medium Sized Project (MSP) – one step

Project Type/Size: 5M USD

Executing Agency: Biodiversity Research Institute

Strategic Partner: Global Mercury Partnership, World Health Organization, World Custom Organization

Proposed duration: Project implementation: 6 years (June 2026 - May 2032) – **linkages with AFR FSP**

Components:

- 1) LEGISLATIONS/LICENSING/LABELLING REQUIREMENTS:** Strengthen national capacity on legislation, enforcement and compliance on banning the manufacturing, import and export of mercury SLPs
- 2) SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** Identify manufacturing and trading patterns through improved product identification and testing capacities, both online and in store sales; behavioral studies on usage; waste management (source to disposal)(manufacturing vs non-manufacturing)
- 3) MONITORING/PRODUCT SAFETY PLEDGES/DETENTION LIST/ALERT SYSTEMS/INSPECTIONS/ONLINE LIABILITY REFORMS/ENFORCEMENT/PENALTIES:** to monitor control and enforce the ban across manufacturing, trade and sales (e.g work with custom and trade authorities, Green Customs Initiative etc.)
- 4) RAISE AWARENESS/ADVERTISING/MARKETING:** National and global awareness raising and knowledge management: through policy and advocacy campaign with strong gender mainstreaming, engagement with cosmetic industry, associations, youth groups/influencers and focus on vulnerable populations

Partners and Stakeholders

- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Health
- Customs
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Communication
- Ministry of Trade/Industry/Commerce
- Food and Drug Administrations
- Standards Bureau
- Local municipalities
- Health Professionals (dermatologist, preventive. Medicine, etc)
- UNEP Global Mercury Partnership
- Local and international NGOs
- Academia
- Beauty and aesthetic professionals
- Waste disposal facilities
- Local/regional/international influencers
- Online and informal retailers
- Youth organizations
- Public/Schools
- Associations for importers/traders/manufacturers

Guiding Questions for Session 6

1. What are your plans related to mercury SLPs after returning home? How do you plan to use the information obtained in the last two days and apply them in your country context?
2. Do you envision obstacles and/or challenges already (short term and long term)? And how do you plan to address them?
3. Which sessions did you find the most intriguing and are there areas which you would like to know more or understand better?
4. What could be improved in terms of content, speakers, organization for such a meeting?
5. Any other feedback the countries would like to provide.

COUNTRY : NEPAL

Skin Lightening Product use across Life Stages



The evidence indicates that age is correlated to specific use behaviours and risks.

Q1: Who are the main users of SLPs in your country? How do you know (studies/data?) Map this on the image above.

- YOUNG (20-45)
- ADULT/ADULT
- OBSERVATION

Motivations for using SLPs

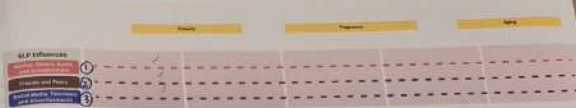


There are different skin lightening motivations in people that use or want to use SLPs.

Q3: Why do people use SLPs in your country (employment, marriage etc.) – how do you know?

- BEAUTY/INFLUENCE
- HEALTH/AGE
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- PEER PRESSURE
- BEAUTY TRENDS
- FAMILY
→ OBSERVATION

Main influences for users identified



There are different skin lightening influences.

Q2: Who influences people to use SLPs in your identified country? Map this on the image above.

PEER INFLUENCE
PUBERTY - 2, 3, 1
PREGNANCY - 3, 2, 1
AGING - 1, 2, 3

Where do people obtain SLPs?



There are different environments and settings throughout all life stages.

Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs (internet/social media/shops etc.)?

Puberty
Map these

- School (Friends)
- Social media

- SHOP
- BEAUTY SHOP/TOTAL BEAUTY
- BEAUTY ADVISOR/STAFF

AGING
- SHOP
- FRIENDS

Information on the risks of SLP use



There are different healthcare touchpoints throughout all life stages.

Q5: Which healthcare touchpoints could people get more information on the risks of SLP use in your chosen country?

Map these on the image above.

PUBERTY
- FAMILY DOCTOR
- SCHOOL CLINIC (School Nurse)
- DERMATOLOGIST

PREGNANCY
- FAMILY DOCTOR
- MIDWIFE

AGING
- DOCTOR
- DERMATOLOGIST

Motives

Skin Lightening Product use across Life Stages

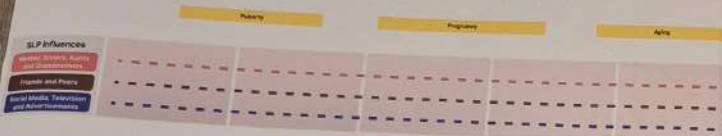


The evidence indicates that age is correlated to specific use behaviours and risks.

Q1: Who are the main users of SLPs in your country? How do you know (studies/data)? Map this on the image above.

Motives
Young Adult
+
Adult
No studies/data.

Main influences for users identified



There are different skin lightening influences.

Q2: Who influences people to use SLPs in your identified country? Map this on the image above.

Social Media → Recent popularity of a certain SLP → Hy content unknown
Television
Advertisers
Older families

Motivations for using SLPs



There are different skin lightening motivations in people that use or want to use SLPs.

Q3: Why do people use SLPs in your country (employment, marriage etc.) – how do you know?

Beauty Standards → Social Media
→ big influence from the western & East Asian entertainment industry

Where do people obtain SLPs?



There are different environments

Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs?

Map these on the image above.

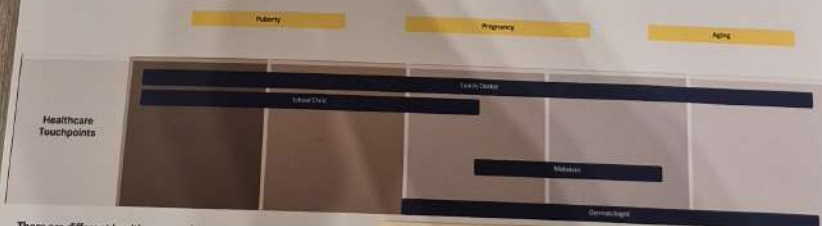
Social Media

life stages.

media/shops etc.

Local Shops

Information on the risks of SLP use



There are different healthcare touchpoints throughout all life stages.

Q5: Which healthcare touchpoints could people use on the risks of SLP use in your chosen country?

Map these on the image above.

- General practitioners

MoEnv + HPA

Group 2 Thailand (Thailand country)



The evidence indicates that
Q1: Who are the main influences on SLP use behaviours and risks?
Q2: Who influences SLP use? How do you know (studies/data?) Map this on the image above.

NO Official data

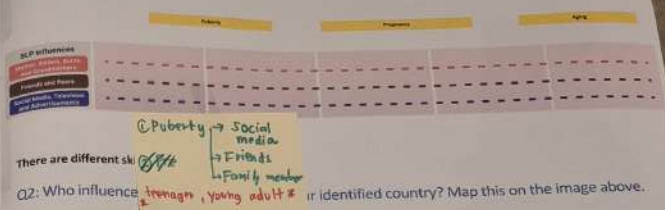
Motivations for using SLPs



- cultural
- More attractive

There are different skin lightening motivations for people who want to use SLPs.
Q3: Why do people use SLPs? (employment, marriage etc.) – how do you know?

Main influences for users identified



There are different skin lightening influences for people who want to use SLPs.
Q2: Who influences SLP use? Map this on the image above.

Where do people obtain SLPs?



There are different environments and settings where people obtain SLPs.
Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs? (shops etc.)? Map these on the image above.

- shops & Markets
- Online markets (e-commerce)

Information on the risks of SLP use



There are different information sources for people who want to use SLPs.
Q5: Which information sources would people get more information on the risks of SLP use in your country?

Chosen sources

Map these

- no known information
- Pharmacist
- community pharmacist
- dermatologist

PAKISTAN

① 64% Young adults

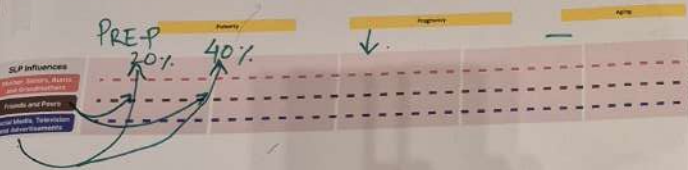
Skin Lightening Product use across Life Stages



The evidence indicates that age is correlated to specific use behaviours and risks.

Q1: Who are the main users of SLPs in your country? How do you know (studies/data)? Map this on the image above.

Main influences for users identified



There are different skin lightening influences.

Q2: Who influences people to use SLPs in your identified country? Map this on the image above.

PRE-P.
1 Social M/M.
2 FRIENDS/PEER

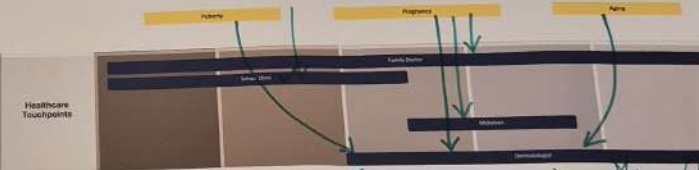
Where do people obtain SLPs?



There are different environments and settings throughout all life stages.

Q4: Where do people obtain SLPs (internet/social media/shops etc.)? Map these on the image above.

Information on the risks of SLP use

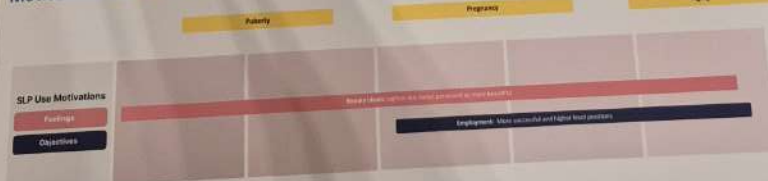


There are different healthcare touchpoints throughout all life stages.

Q5: Which healthcare touchpoints could people get more information on the risks of SLP use in your chosen country? Map these on the image above.

(Social Media) + Media (Ads)

Motivations for using SLPs



There are different skin lightening motivations in people that use or want to use SLPs.

Q3: Why do people use SLPs in your country (employment, marriage etc.) – how do you know? + 20%.

+ CULTURAL.
+ PEER/Social (Influencers/globalization)