Eliminating Childhood Exposure to Lead Paint

Overview of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint

Walker B. Smith
Director, Office of Global Affairs and Policy, US Environmental Protection Agency
Chair of the Lead Paint Alliance
Lead is Poisonous

- Lead is harmful to health, especially for children
- Life-long consequences in children including serious and irreversible neurological damage and behavioral problems
- Globally lead in paint is the major source of childhood exposure
- There is no safe level of exposure to lead
High Cost of Lead Poisoning

• Reduction in intelligence quotient (IQ) can be correlated with decreases in lifetime earning potential.

• Children’s exposure to lead from all sources has staggering economic costs for countries.

• $977 billion cost for low and middle-income countries from children’s lost IQ.

Interactive map based on the findings of NYU analysis displays cost and corresponding percent GDP loss for 110 low and middle income countries.

Source:
http://www.med.nyu.edu/pediatrics/research/environmentalpediatrics/leadexposure
Only 30% of countries have laws
Lead Paint Levels are High Around the World
About the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint

- Lead Paint Alliance is a voluntary global partnership
- Launched by SAICM resolution in 2009
- Secretariat: UNEP and WHO
- Chair of Advisory Council: US EPA
- Partners: Governments, NGOs and Industry
- Alliance is modeled on successful Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles efforts to eliminate lead in gasoline globally

Goal: Establish laws globally
Key Activities of Lead Paint Alliance

- The Alliance developed an Action Plan for 2017-2018
  - Main goal is to encourage countries to establish and enforce lead paint laws
  - Also encourages industry activities, awareness raising and increasing the number of Alliance partners

- Providing information and tools:
  - Model Law and Guidance on Regulating Lead Paint
  - Regulatory toolkit, which includes information about health and economic impacts, alternatives to lead paint, paint testing methods
Recent Momentum on Lead Paint

- Model Law and Guidance
- UNEP 2017 Global Status Update on Laws
- WHO Global Map on Status of Lead Paint Laws
- Other Materials and Tools
  - UNEA3 Commitment model language
  - World Health Assembly Roadmap Chemicals Roadmap (May 2017) - calls for action on lead paint
  - NYU Map of Economic Impacts of Childhood Lead Poisoning (NYU School of Medicine)
  - IPEN Global Map of Lead Paint Testing Data
  - American Bar Association Resolution on Lead Paint
Model Law and Guidance for Regulating Lead Paint

- Governments requested guidance on a model for developing lead paint laws
- Industry and NGOs also supported the development of the model law
- UN Environment developed the law with help from WHO, EPA and other Lead Paint Alliance partners

Key Features
- Low concentration limit for lead in paint (90 ppm total lead)
- Applies to all types of paints (consumer and industrial uses)
- Provisions for effective compliance and enforcement
- Simple to implement
Key Ongoing and Future Activities

- EPA training of Environment, Science, Technology and Health officers in US Embassies by region (ongoing)
- Annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action (since 2013)
- UNEA3
  - Science Forum Session on Lead Paint
  - Government, NGO, industry UNEA3 commitments
  - USG Resolution on lead paint (Argentina co-sponsoring)
- World Bank Report (March 2018 TBC)
- Current regional efforts
  - West Africa - draft regional waste strategy includes lead paint
  - Caribbean - UN Environment / EPA / ABA Launch of Model Law in Jamaica
  - Central and Eastern Europe - US Department of Commerce Standards Officials Project and Eurasian Economic Union lead paint technical regulation
- Global Environment Facility Project on Lead Paint (2018-2020)
International Lead Paint Resources

- USEPA Lead Paint Alliance site: https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/epa-leadership-lead-paint-alliance
- Economic Impact of Childhood Lead Poisoning: http://www.med.nyu.edu/pediatrics/research/environmentalpediatrics/lead_exposure
- Map of Levels of Lead in Paint: http://ipen.org/projects/eliminating-lead-paint/lead-levels-paint-around-world
- American Bar Association Resolution on Lead Paint: https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/images/abanews/2017%20Annual%20Resolutions/109B.pdf