

2006 International Symposium on Environmental Risks of Chemicals

Kushiro, Hokkaido, Japan, 13th November 2006



WHO PROGRAMME ON HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Regional Office

Healthy communities for healthy children

- ❖ **Over 10 million children aged under 5 years old die every year globally**
- ❖ **98% of them in developing countries**
- ❖ **Pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria and other vector-borne diseases are major diseases causing child deaths**
- ❖ **Many of these are related to environmental risks**



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MAIN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS TO HEALTH

- ❖ Household water insecurity
- ❖ Poor hygiene and sanitation
- ❖ Air pollution – indoor and outdoor
- ❖ Disease vectors
- ❖ Chemical hazards
- ❖ Injuries and accidents



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WHO

WATER AND SANITATION

**Access to safe water and sanitation:
universal need and basic human right**

However, many people have no water or sanitation

**Globally,
1.1 billion – no water supply
2.4 billion – no sanitation**

**Asia and the Pacific
0.675 billion – no water supply
2 billion – no sanitation**



Impact on public health and education

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AIR POLLUTION

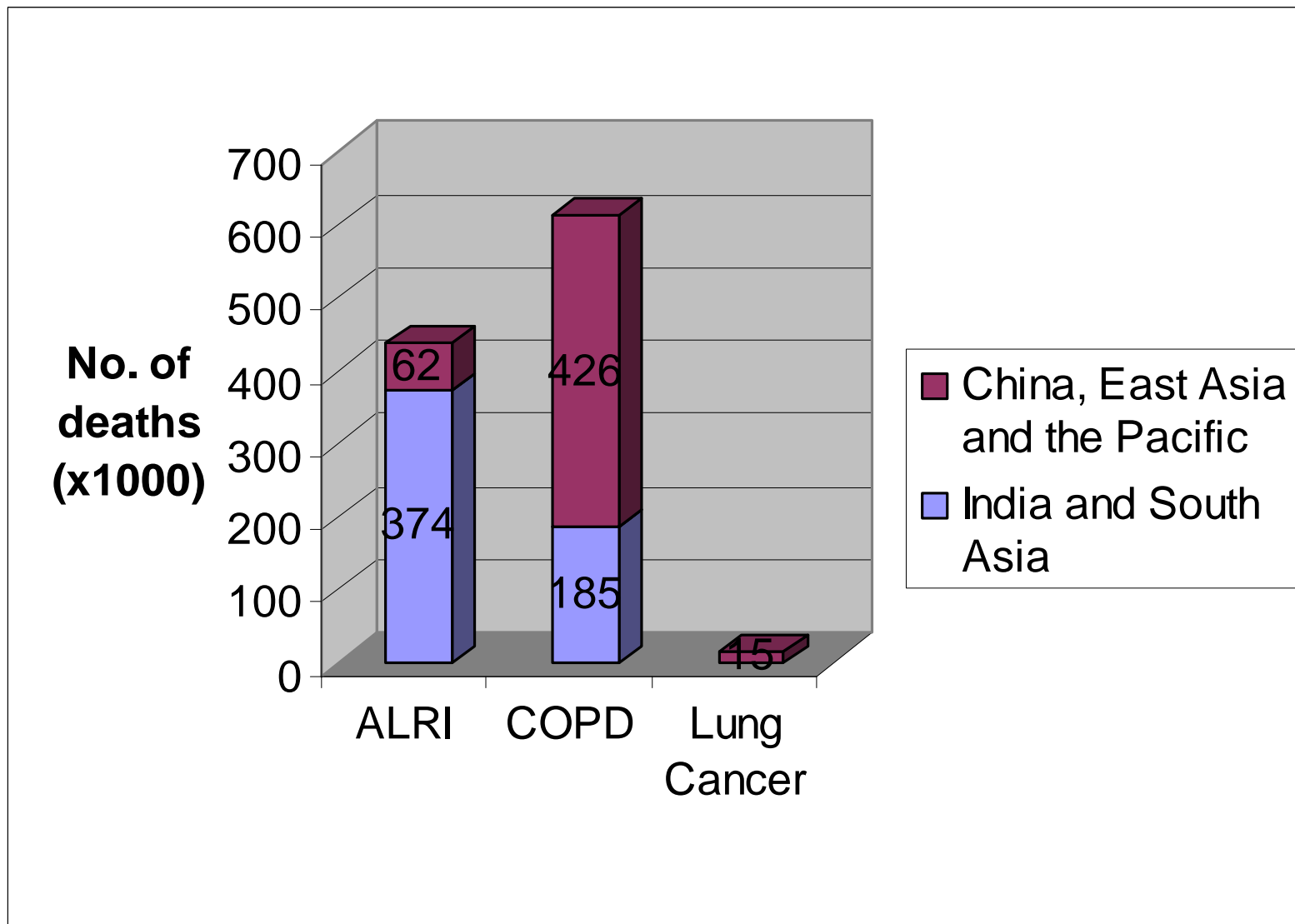
The homes and communities of poor children in developing countries may be unhealthy places

WHO

- ❖ **Urban air pollution poses a significant health risk to poor urban dwellers**
- ❖ **Indoor smoke from burning solid fuels is a major health concern for children living in rural and poor urban areas**
- ❖ **Second-hand tobacco smoke is also a major concern**

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Indoor smoke is a cause of 430,000 deaths in children in Asia and the Pacific



VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES ARE THOSE CARRIED AROUND BY "BUGS"



❖ Malaria

❖ Dengue

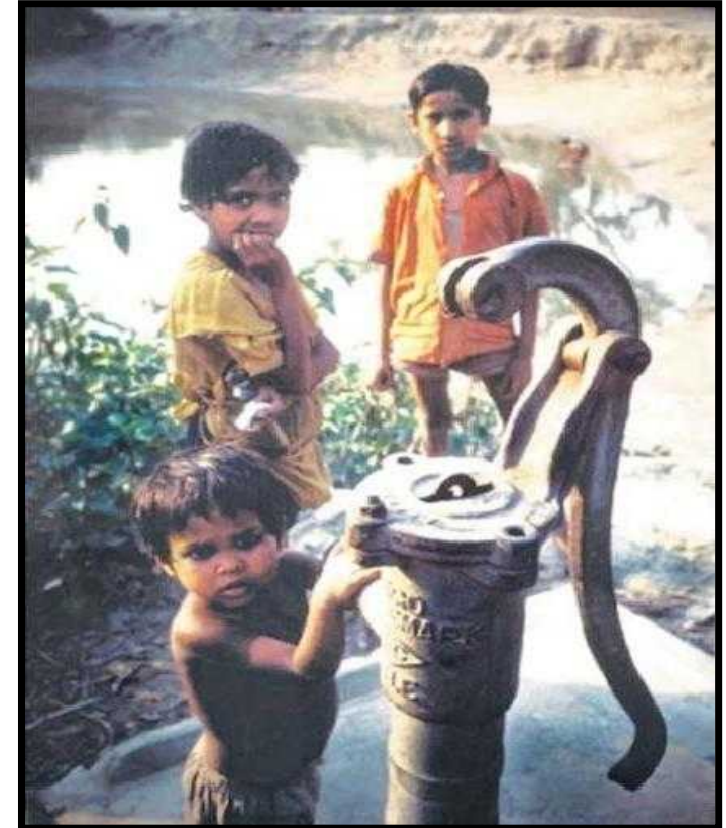
❖ Other

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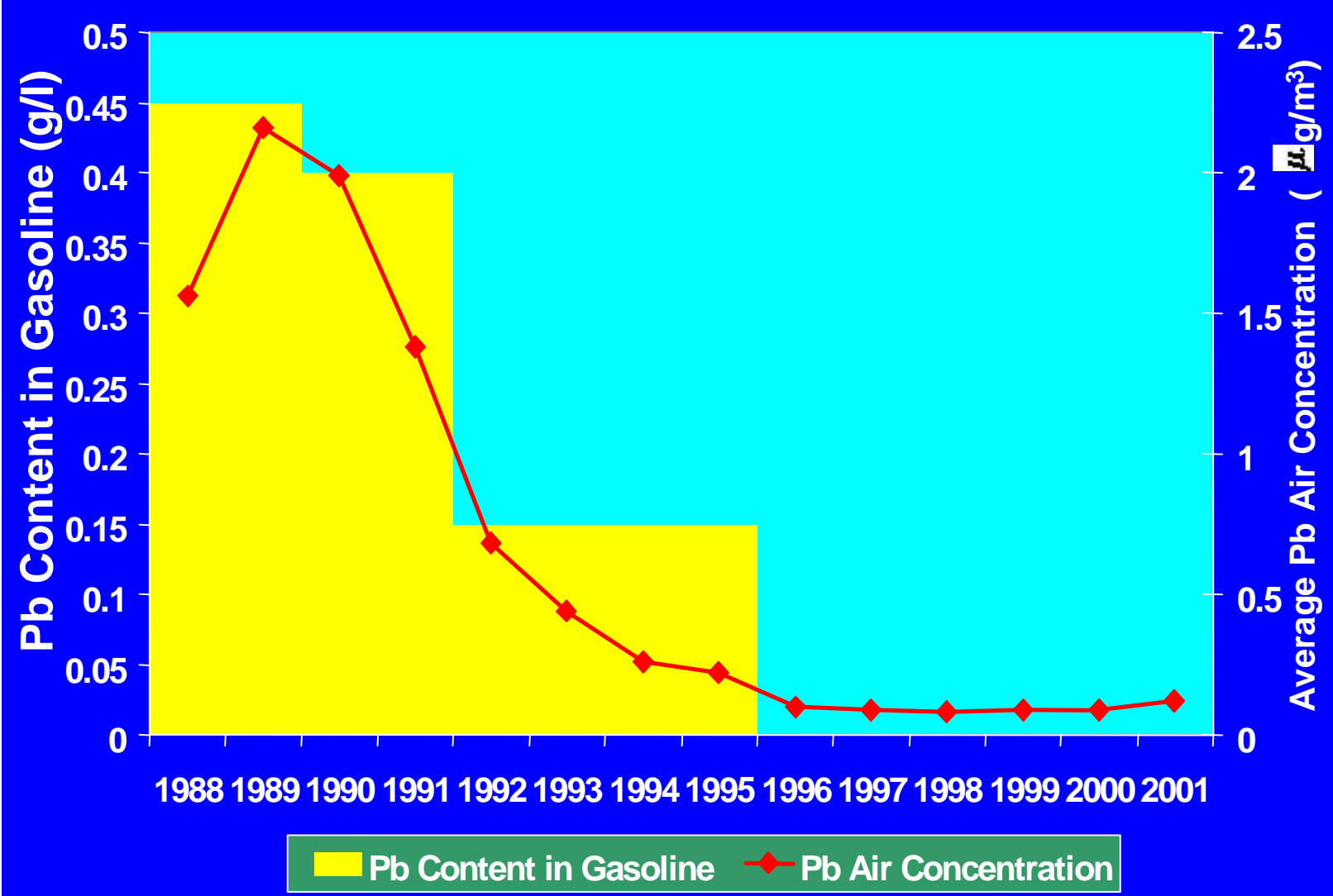
CHEMICALS OF CONCERN

- ❖ Lead
- ❖ Mercury
- ❖ Pesticides
- ❖ Arsenic
- ❖ Other chemicals (e.g. EDC)



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INJURIES AND "ACCIDENTS"

**Injuries cause
400 000 child deaths
every year**

**Survivors may
suffer lifelong
disability**



Fatal injuries in children under 15 years
WHO, 2001

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COMBINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS

A number of health problems are linked to:

- ❖ Heavy traffic
- ❖ Toxic waste sites
- ❖ Industrial effluents

where children live, grow and play



WHO

HOW CAN WE CREATE HEALTHIER AND SAFER ENVIRONMENTS?

❖ AT HOME

❖ IN SCHOOL

❖ WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

HEALTHIER HOMES

- ❖ **Store water safely**
- ❖ **Ensure good ventilation**
 - ✓ **Stay away from smoke!**
 - ✓ **Don't let people smoke inside the home**
- ❖ **Wash your hands with soap**
- ❖ **Keep chemicals locked away**



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HEALTHIER SCHOOLS

- ❖ **Inform your classmates about the need to create safer environments and how to do it.**
- ❖ **Keep your school clean, well-ventilated and well-lit, isolated from loud noise**
- ❖ **Request running water and separate toilets – that should be kept clean!**
- ❖ **Learn (and teach) about chemical and other threats**



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WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

- ❖ Request smoke-free public places
- ❖ Learn and teach how to recycle
- ❖ Avoid being near areas where pesticides are used
- ❖ Learn about safer roads and well-organized traffic
- ❖ Make sure unleaded gasoline is being used
- ❖ Plant trees that protect from the sun and bring beauty to your neighbourhood
- ❖ Make sure slides and swings are in good shape
- ❖ Use a helmet when riding bicycles and scooters



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WHO

***Creating healthier, cleaner and safer environments for children
will contribute to a more secure future for the world***

"Shaping the future of life"

World Health Day, April 2003