

# Chrysotile and human health WHO position

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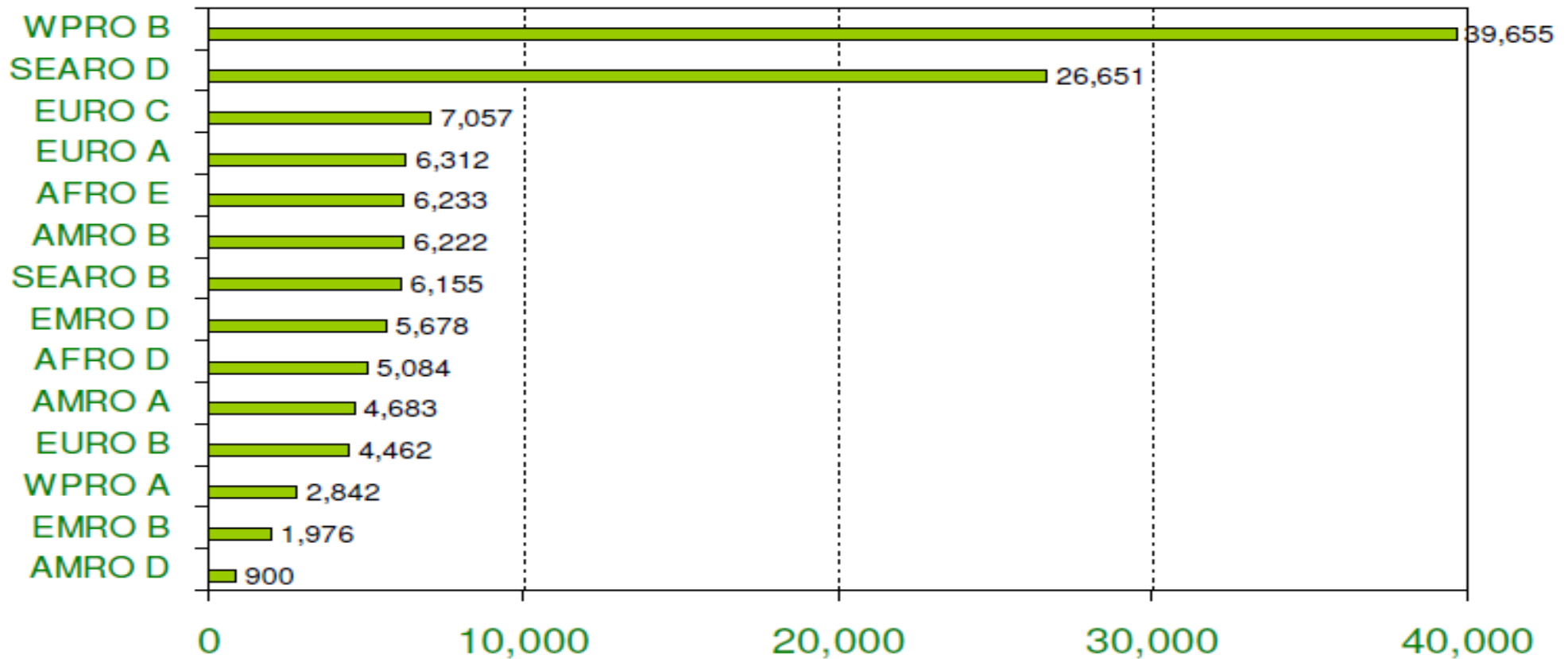
**World Health  
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# WHO position on chrysotile asbestos

- Exposure to asbestos and its impact on public health are substantial.
- All types of asbestos cause cancer in humans.
- Chrysotile is still widely used.
- Stopping the use of all forms of asbestos is the most effective measure of prevention.



*Worldwide 125 million people  
are exposed to asbestos (mostly chrysotile)  
75 million in Asia and Western Pacific*



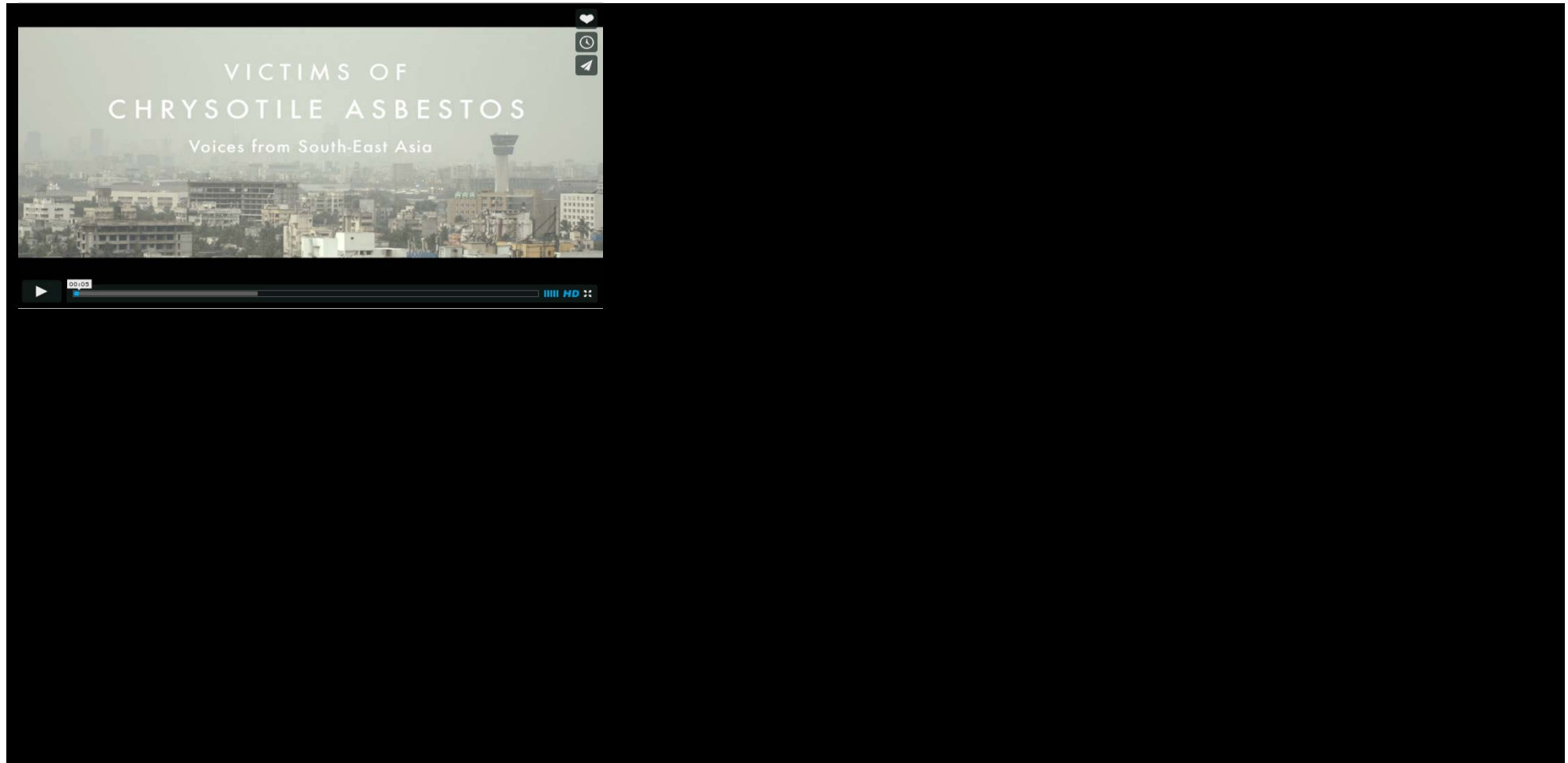
Population exposed to asbestos by WHO region and mortality stratum (thousands)

Concha-Barrientos M et al. , pp1651-1801 in Comparative Quantification of Health Risks, ed. Ezatti et al, WHO, 2004



World Health Organization

# Invitation to preview short film



<http://vimeo.com/107232435>



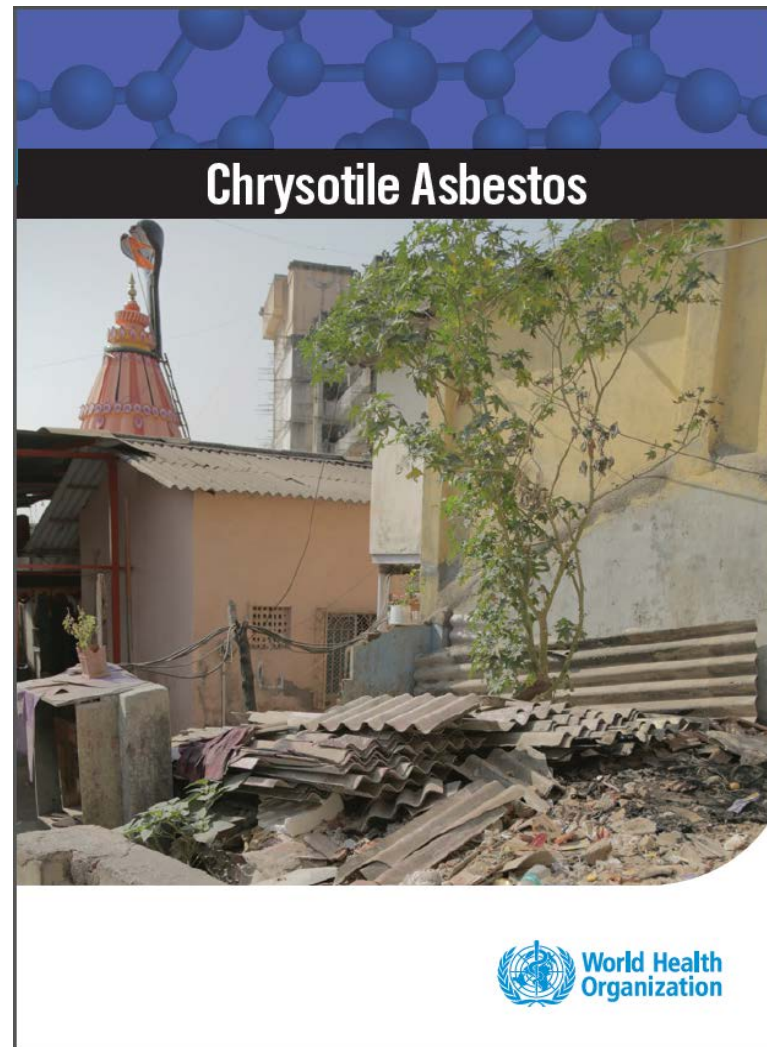
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# Why has WHO SEARO made this film?

- Confusion still exists that chrysotile has a different risk than other forms of asbestos.
- Use of chrysotile asbestos is growing in Asia
  - South-East Asia – about 40% of worlds total consumption of 2 million tonnes with increasing trend.
  - Widespread use in construction & in friction products.
- Limited awareness of three types of exposure to chrysotile (primary, secondary and tertiary).
- **Environmental exposure is significant public health concern**



# New WHO information for decision makers



## Three part publication (Nov 2014)

- Updated information for decision-makers on elimination of asbestos-related diseases.
- Q & A to commonly-raised questions.
- New technical summary on the health effects of chrysotile .



# WHO recommendations on prevention of asbestos-related diseases

- WHO committed to working with countries towards the elimination of asbestos-related diseases.
- Four key strategic directions:
  - **Stop using all types of asbestos**
  - Information about **solutions for replacing asbestos**
  - **Prevent exposure to asbestos**
  - Early diagnosis, treatment & rehabilitation



# Q & A on commonly raised questions

## Examples

- Is it true that chrysotile is not really a form of asbestos?
- What is WHO's policy on asbestos and on what authority does WHO speak?
- Why is important to tackle asbestos as a carcinogen when there are so many other carcinogens to be found in the environment?
- Could ongoing or future research into the toxicity of chrysotile change the current view of WHO and IARC regarding the occurrence of cancer?





# New technical summary on chrysotile

- Pulls together technical information published about chrysotile over the past 20 years
  - WHO/IPCS Environmental Health Criteria 230 (1993)
  - IARC Monograph 100C (2012).
- Provides summary technical information on key studies published since these were prepared.
- Discusses the application of WHO global burden of disease estimates.
- Provides WHO information on chrysotile substitute fibres.



# WHO global campaign on the elimination of asbestos-related diseases



- New WHO publication and film will be formally launched in early 2015.

**Thank you**