

# COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HELP ADDRESS PM<sub>2.5</sub> AIR POLLUTION IN BISHKEK

## KEY MESSAGES



IOM/Kyrgyzstan/2022/ Shailo Dzhekshenbaev



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# COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HELP ADDRESS PM<sub>2.5</sub> AIR POLLUTION IN BISHKEK – KEY MESSAGES

**Audience:** government, youth and advocacy groups

## Reducing impacts of PM<sub>2.5</sub> air pollution

Reducing the health impacts of air pollution in urban areas is only successfully accomplished through political and social awareness of the health impacts imposed by air pollution combined with awareness of cost competitiveness of clean and sustainable options and the role energy efficiency, finance and pricing structures can play.

## What have we learned about community and government awareness during the recent UNICEF air pollution study?

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As the household sector has only recently gained recognition as a major contributor, awareness of the benefits and relative cost of clean and sustainable household technologies is a key barrier to reducing air pollution.

The current study highlights:

- Lack of awareness of the importance of household contributions to the air pollution problem
- Residents indicated that they lacked information about clean heating alternatives
- Lack of awareness of cost comparisons between residential heating alternatives
- Lack of energy conservation in residential houses in Bishkek
- Lack of awareness of the role tiered energy pricing structure plays in engineering social change
- Lack of financial incentives to incentivize households to eliminate coal stoves
- Lack of low interest loans or small-scale financing options to overcome purchase barriers



## What role does communication and advocacy play in reducing air pollution impacts?

Social transitions to reduce air pollution emissions require a well-developed communication strategy using modern communication techniques. Communication is necessary to:

- Increase level of general awareness of the connection between air pollution and different health impacts
- Develop trusted sources of information
- Communicate results of pilots on affordability of alternatives
- Communicate the need for no burn areas
- Communicate importance of finance mechanisms to overcome cost barriers
- Communicate importance of energy efficiency in maximizing resources and reducing costs
- The need for investment and the benefits of acting sooner rather than later



Featured Photo from the exhibition by artist Shailo Dzhekshenbaev depicting the air pollution from landfills in Kyrgyzstan  
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## How can education play a role in addressing air pollution?

Education plays a critical role in communicating messages into community households

- Children that are educated in school about health and environmental issues can increase awareness in communities of these issues

- Teacher training colleges can play a significant role as post-qualification teachers have a continuous presence in the community and are assigned to schools often in hard to access locations.

## What sort of assistance can be provided to help government and youth efforts?

- Maintaining an online resource of audiovisual material for awareness-raising combined with authoritative information on health impacts and best practices
- Online educational resources on environmental health to use in established curricula
- Online educational resources for use in teacher training colleges

- Improving the evidence base through increasing local research capacity
- Increase awareness and use of internationally available tools to assist policy making (e.g. WHO CHEST<sup>1</sup>, including HEART, CHOICE, BAR-HAP, ABODE etc.).
- Regional, university-based air quality science and engineering programming to promote development of an air quality professionals workforce.

## THE NEED FOR COORDINATION

### Coordination of messages

- Consistency of messaging is necessary for common understanding of the problem
- Convening a regional Youth Summit on environmental health topics would provide momentum to youth groups in Bishkek that could be hosted in the Youth

Center established by the State Agency for Youth, Physical Culture and Sports

- Expansion of networks by linking to other multilateral and bilateral youth advocacy programs

### Involvement of the private sector

- Seed funding for small business opportunities
- Business expertise

- Start-up incubators
- Green development networking

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/tools/clean-household-energy-solutions-toolkit>

## EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMS THAT CAN ENGAGE YOUTH TO BE INVOLVED IN AIR POLLUTION REDUCTION

**U-report** - U-Report is a free digital tool which empowers young people around the world to engage with and speak out on different issues. Launched in 2021 by the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF as the 2nd country in the Central Asia region to launch the program.

**Upshift** - Upshift is a flagship UNICEF program designed to understand community challenges and design and build impactful solutions

**Start-up** - Start-up is a second gate funding program to foster entrepreneurial culture and employment for adolescents and youth through finding commercial avenues to market products developed in Upshift

**Podium** - Podium is a program to teach youth to advocate for the needs and rights of their communities through the power of social change and advocacy by cultivating campaign management and advocacy tactics.

**Ponder** - Ponder is a workshop to foster media literacy and critical approaches to information to judge the value, authenticity and authority of the information adolescents encounter.

**USAID Demilgeluu Jashtar** – This project helps youth to be more active in their communities as well as be better prepared for the labor market through skill training on leadership, life skills, entrepreneurship, and professional development.

**GIZ Prospects for Youth** – This project promotes employment and economic participation of young people including cross-cutting cooperation on youth work among government agencies, ministries, civil society and other stakeholders.

**Internet of Good Things (IoGT)** - Internet of Good Things is a mobile-ready website that enables free access to content without data charges in 63 countries in 13 languages.



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**FOR NOTES**

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

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A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

**For every child**

Whoever she is.

Wherever he lives.

Every child deserves a childhood.

A future.

A fair chance.

That's why UNICEF is there.

For each and every child.

Working day in and day out.

In more than 190 countries and territories.

Reaching the hardest to reach.

The furthest from help.

The most excluded.

It's why we stay to the end.

And never give up.



for every child


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