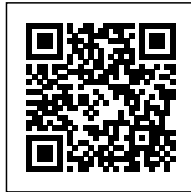


# COMBATting THE IMPACT OF AIR POLLUTION ON MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH IN MONGOLIA

*Posted on March 29, 2023 by admin*



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Air pollution is a significant issue in Mongolia, particularly in urban areas like Ulaanbaatar. According to research by the United Nations Children's Fund, air pollution causes diseases that result in the deaths of 300 people each year in Mongolia, with 240 of those being children under the age of five.

In addition, a 2019 survey of large private sector organizations in Mongolia found that air pollution increased the annual expense of an employee by about 10%, putting significant pressure on the country's economy. In 2016, Ulaanbaatar health institutions spent MNT 10.4 billion treating air pollution-related illnesses in children aged 0-18, which accounted for 4.6% of the city's health budget. If air pollution is not reduced in the future, it is estimated that this number will increase to MNT 24.8 billion by 2025.

Respiratory diseases are also on the rise in Ulaanbaatar, with 1,961 people out of 10,000 visiting outpatient departments in 2019 due to such illnesses, up from 903 in 2011. Children in Ulaanbaatar are 5-15 times more likely to suffer from bronchial inflammation than those in rural areas, and respiratory system diseases accounted for 38.8% of all illnesses in children aged 0-4 as of 2020.

Efforts are being made to combat air pollution in Mongolia, including the implementation of the project Combatting Urban Air Pollution Impacts on Maternal and Child Health in Asia by UNICEF, in collaboration with the Mongolian government and with support from the Swiss Development Agency. However, more needs to be done to address this pressing issue and protect the health of Mongolia's citizens, especially its most vulnerable populations.

**33% ↑**

The concentration of PM2.5 increases the mortality of children under the age of five due to respiratory diseases by 33 percent.

**40% ↓**

The lung function of children living in polluted areas of Ulaanbaatar is 40 percent lower than that of children breathing clean air.

**42.4%**

42.4 percent of hospitalized children aged 0-18 in Ulaanbaatar city were hospitalized due to pneumonia.

Source: UNICEF

The primary cause of air pollution in Mongolia is the use of traditional stoves, known as "ger" stoves, which burn coal and other fuels for heating and cooking. The use of these stoves is widespread, especially in the winter months, and is a major contributor to the country's high levels of air pollution.