



Fund for Support of Civil Initiatives of the Republic of Tajikistan

Project Title: "Enhancing the environmental policy of Tajikistan in reducing mercury pollution and healthcare protection".
The main goal of the project: To reduce the risk of exposure to mercury on human health, minimization of mercury waste and devices in Tajikistan, with the support of development of appropriate environmental policies.

BACKGROUND FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

High concentrations of mercury compounds are extremely dangerous to humans and nature. Currently, Tajikistan faces serious problems of mercury contamination. Such pollution is primarily associated with the activities of industrial enterprises. However, a significant source of mercury pollution is due to the operation of household mercury-containing devices - medical thermometers, fluorescent lamps and others.

Currently there is no reliable and complete information on the quantity and quality of mercury emissions in the various sectors of the economy and residential activities. The lack of a qualified management and control leads to penetration of mercury waste to landfill solid waste in urban areas, garbage dumps in rural areas, as well as their accumulation at inappropriate premises (offices, medical institutions, households and etc). Such situation causes pollution and has a negative impact on human health. Low knowledge and awareness about the issue also contributes to exacerbation of the situation.

KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Project activities had covered considerably wide range of issues. At the initial stage, FSCI together with the specialists of the Chemistry Institute, Ministry of Health, the Committee on the Environment Protection and Dushanbe municipality, had conducted an initial assessment of mercury emission sources, as well as evaluation of their impact on both environment and health. Ore, soil and water were sampled at the territories of the existing mining companies in the Sughd region. Analyses of samples had shown presence of contamination in excess of the permitted levels. A poll conducted for local residents (living nearby mining plants) identified specific health-related problems.

In order to reduce the risk of mercury contamination in medical facilities, mercury-free equipment and devices for the five medical institutions had been purchased. Equipment was provided to the National and Republican medical centers, adult and pediatric infectious diseases hospitals in Dushanbe and the city hospital in Vakhdat.

PROJECT PHOTO



Mercury is quite harmful for human health, even in small amounts

PROJECT DATA

- Project Donors:**
The Small Grants Programme of the Global Environment Facility,
UN Development Programme
- Other Project Partners:**
GRID-Arendal, IPEN, "ECO – Soglasie" Center
- Geographical coverage:**
Dushanbe city and Vakhdat district,
The Republic of Tajikistan
- Project beneficiaries and stakeholders:**
Population of Dushanbe city and Vakhdat district, the Committee of Environment protection
- Project duration:**
June 2012 - July 2013



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KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Together with the Environment Agency in Dushanbe city, project conducted so called “spot checks” of points, receiving mercury-containing bulbs from the population in the four micro districts of capital city, which revealed non-compliance with existing standards and requirements. Working meetings with local officials were held about revealed problems at each micro-district of the city, environmental agencies and employees of public utilities. Later, four warehouses for receiving mercury containing bulbs were renovated. All points have been equipped with the necessary equipment.

Series of workshops were held, in order to increase awareness about the risk of exposure caused by mercury pollution and the importance of appropriate handling of mercury wastes, involving both the local population and staff of medical facilities utility services’ agencies. The most relevant and interesting project activities had been broadcasted by national TVs and local newspapers.

The Republican conference “Strengthening of environmental policy towards reduction of mercury pollution and protection of human health in the Republic of Tajikistan” was the final stage of the project. Several important recommendations, addressing this acute problem in the country, were developed in the course of this conference.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Overall, the project has contributed not only to public awareness to existing problems, but also to revitalization of the relevant authorities and institutions on mercury pollution issues. As a result of conducted seminars and dissemination of thematic publications, hundreds of hospital, environmental agency and utility organizations staff acquired new knowledge about the proper disposal and appropriate handling of mercury-containing wastes.

The importance of strengthening environmental policy in this area was recognized by all stakeholders. In connection with that, discussions on mercury pollution were brought to a higher level. Additionally, a working group, consisting of relevant specialists and experts, was established. It is envisaged that recommendations designed by the working group will be included into the new National Program of Action for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The project laid the foundation for further action for accession of Tajikistan to the Global Agreement on Mercury.

The project had lead to several practical results. The project carried out a complete renovation of four points receiving mercury-containing bulbs (in accordance with existing regulations) that provide their services to the population of the capital city. Five medical institutions in Dushanbe and Vakhdat had received mercury-free 250 thermometers and 60 blood pressure monitors, as well as 65 containers for collection of the hazardous waste.

PROJECT PHOTO



Sampling of soil at “tailings” of Adrasman ore mining and dressing plant



Equipped point for reception of mercury-containing bulbs



Workshop on mercury waste, conducted at the Republican infectious disease hospital

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT

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