Air Pollution Impacts on Children’s Health and what we can do

Maria Osbeck, Snr Programme Specialist Environment and Climate Change, UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office

Regional Workshop on Environment and Climate Change Issues in the Implementation of UNSDCFs

Issue-based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change
12-14 September 2023, Istanbul (Türkiye)
Breathless beginnings: the alarming impact of air pollution on children in Europe and Central Asia
96% of children in Europe and Central Asia breathe polluted air.
Around 85 per cent of under-20s who died from causes related to air pollution in Europe and Central Asia in 2019 did so before their first birthday.
Polluting fuels for cooking and heating

Air moves between indoor and outdoor

Combustion of fossil fuels for industry, energy supply and transport

Forest fires
Air quality in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Air pollution is a children’s rights issue.

1. Ensure **air quality standards** are in line with WHO guidelines.
2. Support **access to clean energy.** Promote energy efficiency and improved ventilation and insulating of private and public buildings.
3. Set up and maintain **air quality monitoring systems** nearby kindergartens and schools.
4. Collect **disaggregated data on the effects and sources of air pollution**, with a specific focus on research and recognition for pregnant women, infants and children.
5. Advocate for air pollution and its impacts on children to be considered in **national climate and environmental policies**, such as municipal action plans for air quality, National Adaptation Plans or Nationally Determined Contributions