



МОНГОЛ УЛСЫН
ЗАСГИЙН ГАЗАР

ЭРҮҮЛ
МЭНДИЙН ЯАМ



On the health risks and impacts of air pollution in Mongolia

O. Oyun-Erdene, National Center for Public Health, PhD in Public Health

- Air pollution in residential areas during the winter season is increasingly attributed to the combustion of solid fuels (80%) and emissions from vehicles (20%).
- According to the World Health Organization's database on global health monitoring, the mortality rate attributable to air pollution from both external and internal environments in 2019 was 214.7 per 100,000 population, which is twice the global average.
- It has been established that 39% of deaths caused by stroke and ischemic heart disease are attributable to air pollution.
- Mongolia has set a goal to reduce air and environmental pollution by 80% by the year 2025.
- Since May 2019, the Government of Mongolia has prohibited the use of unprocessed coal for heating in areas other than the Ulaanbaatar thermal power plant, utilizing a temporary solution to transition to cleaner fuels

MORBIDITY, MORTALITY

Leading Causes of Morbidity in the Population



Respiratory system disease



Gastrointestinal disorders



Urinary system disorders



Cardiovascular disease



Injury, poisoning, and other specific disorders not caused by external factors

in comparison to 2010, it has increased by 2.2 times.

Leading Causes of Mortality in the Population



Cardiovascular disease



Injury, poisoning, and other specific disorders not caused by external factors



Respiratory system disease



Cancer



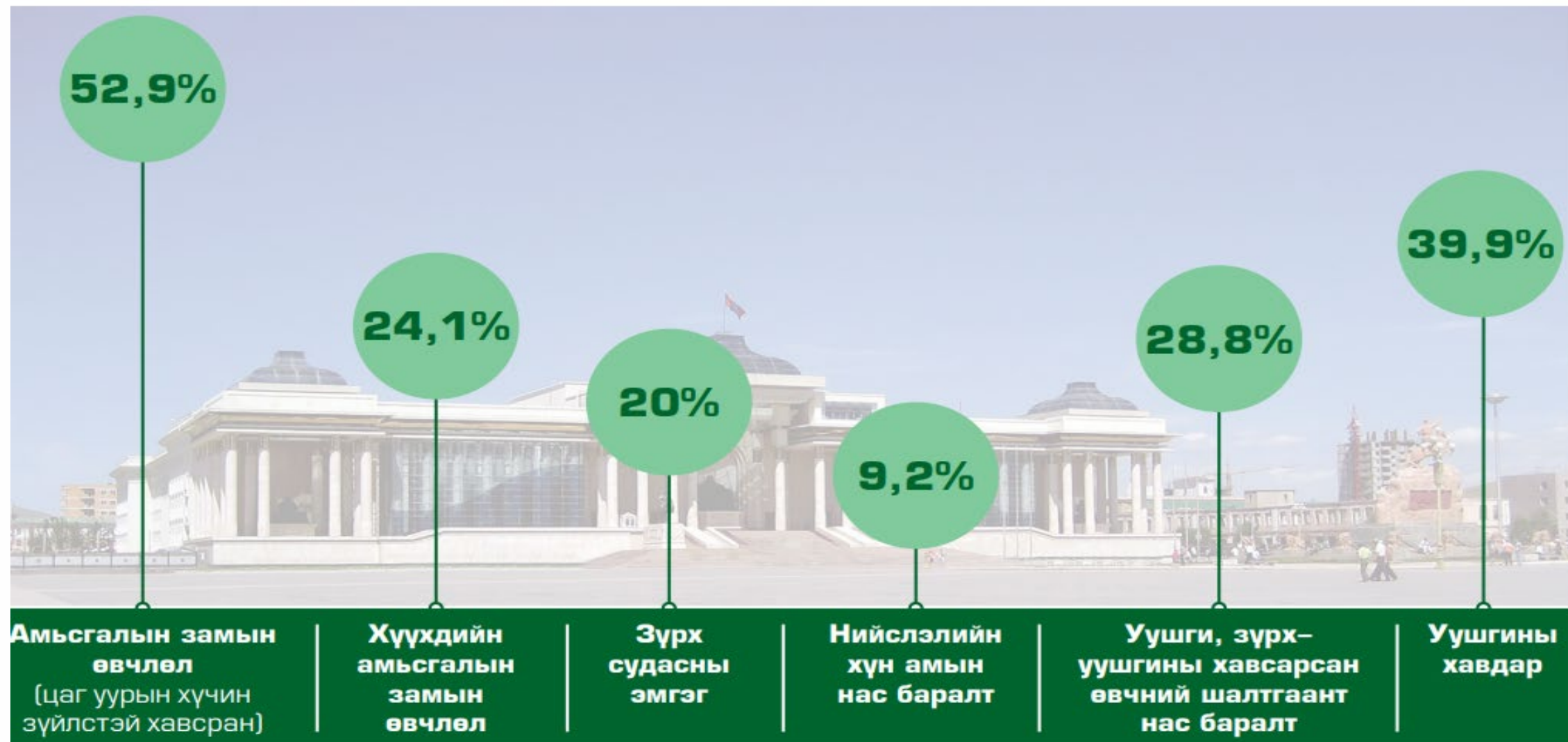
Gastrointestinal disorders

Health Assessment of Air Pollution

Period	Direction	Air Pollution Indicators
Before the 1990s	Assessment of the Impact on Respiratory Tract Diseases	SO₂, NO₂, total pm, CO
1990-2007	- Respiratory tract diseases - Immune system	- SO₂ - NO_x - Жигнэгдэгч бодис, TSP
Since 2008	- Respiratory tract diseases - Cardiovascular diseases - Fetal development - Disease burden research - Indoor air quality - Cost-effectiveness analysis	- PM10 - PM 2.5 - SO₂ - NO_x - O₃ - VOC

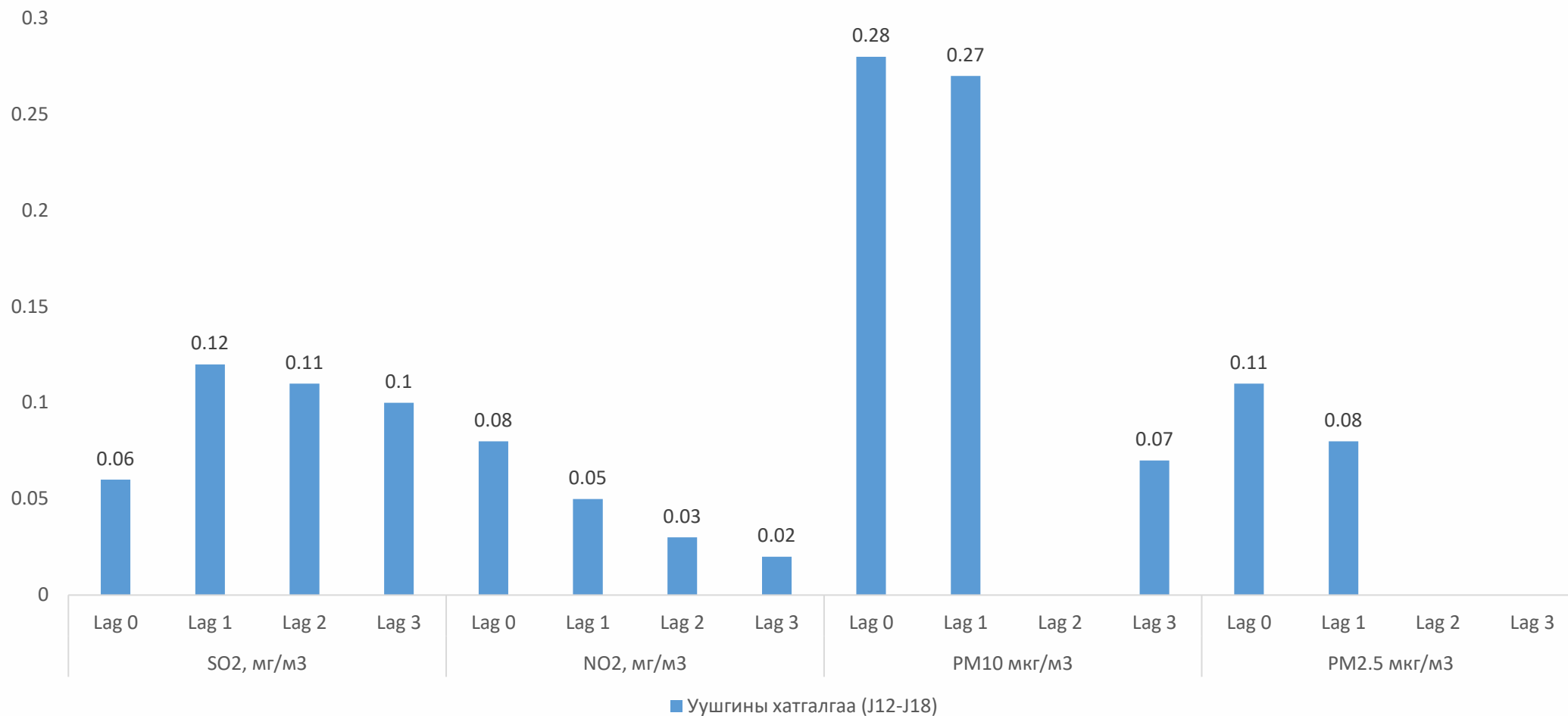
Since the 1980s, there have been over 40 studies related to air pollution and health, conducted by organizations such as the National Center for Public Health, the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, the National Emergency Management Agency, and the Ministry of Health.

Overview of the studies

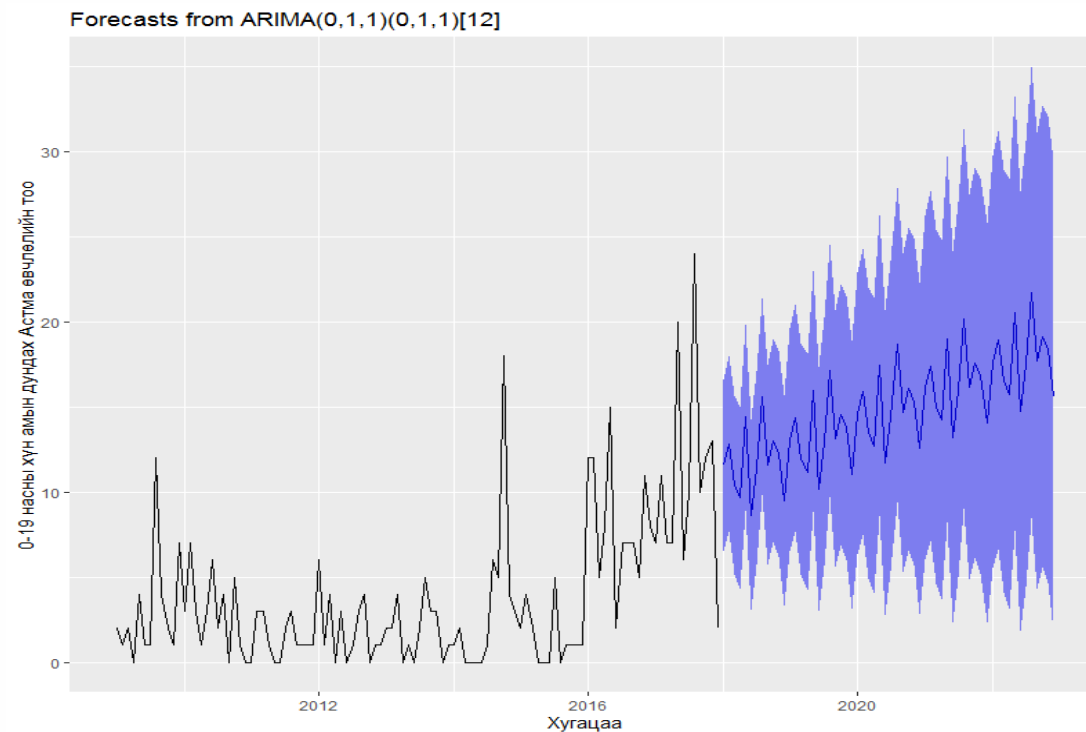
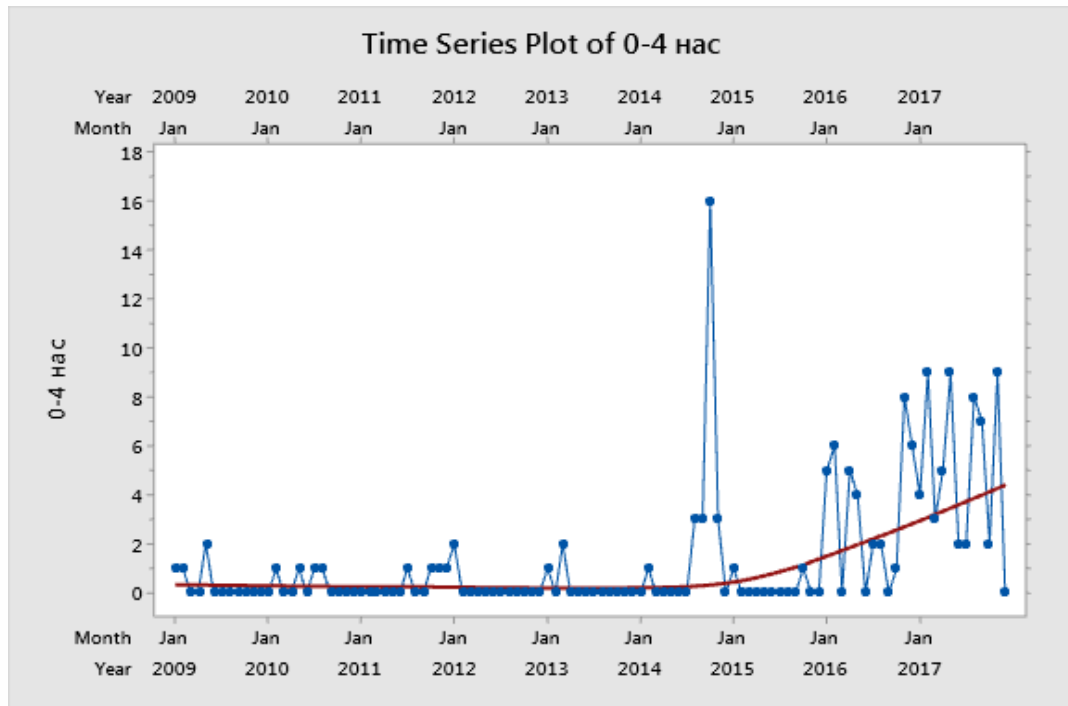


Амьсгал, зүрх судасны тогтолцооны эмгэгийн улмаас эмнэлэгт хэвтэлт, насны бүлэг, Улаанбаатар, 2008-2017

Category of diseases	0-4	5-64	65 over	Total
A3T				
Acute upper respiratory infection (J00-J06)	74 (0.0%)	316 (0.1%)	31 (0.1%)	421 (0.0%)
Lower respiratory infection (J10-J11)	190991 (41.5%)	125141 (31.9%)	4013 (10.4%)	320145 (35.9%)
Pneumonia (J12-J18)	28220 (6.1%)	21167 (5.4%)	1575 (4.1%)	50962 (5.7%)
Chronic rhinitis (J30-J32)	122179 (26.6%)	43796 (11.2%)	5582 (14.4%)	171557 (19.2%)
Bronchitis (J40-J42)	3823 (0.8%)	40080 (10.2%)	2956 (7.6%)	46859 (5.3%)
Pulmonary emphysema (J43)	711 (0.2%)	37975 (9.7%)	10186 (6.3%)	48872 (5.5%)
Other chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (J44)	0 (0.0%)	284 (0.1%)	165 (0.4%)	449 (0.1%)
Asthma (J45-J46)	12 (0.0%)	8749 (2.2%)	5743 (14.9%)	14504 (1.6%)
Other respiratory system diseases (J20-J22, J33-J39, J47-J99)	150 (0.0%)	10599 (2.7%)	2366 (6.1%)	13115 (1.5%)
Acute upper respiratory infection (J00-J06)	113732 (24.7%)	104559 (26.6%)	6052 (15.7%)	224343 (25.2%)
Total	459892	392666	38669	891227
3CT				
Other and unspecified diseases of the circulatory system (I00-I09, I26-I52)	207 (25.2%)	44790 (11.9%)	6255 (3.8%)	51252 (9.5%)
Hypertension (I10-I15)	0 (0.0%)	158964 (42.4%)	79308 (48.2%)	238272 (44.1%)
Ischemic heart disease (I20-I25)	2 (0.2%)	82483 (22.0%)	51623 (31.3%)	134108 (24.8%)
Cerebrovascular disease (I60-I69)	417 (50.7%)	53002 (14.1%)	21029 (12.8%)	74448 (13.8%)
Diseases of arteries, arterioles, and capillaries (I70-I99)	196 (23.8%)	36000 (9.6%)	6458 (3.9%)	42654 (7.9%)
ЗСТӨ НИЙТ	822	375239	164673	540734



Air Pollution in the Respiratory Tract, 2012-2021



In our country, the scope of research has expanded in connection with the commencement of measuring PM10 and PM2.5 particulate matter.

The study by A. Enkhjargal et al. in 2021 titled "The Impact of Air Pollution from the External Environment on Respiratory and Cardiovascular Diseases, Mortality, and Disease Burden"



Pneumonia

18.03 %



**Уушгины архаг
бөглөрөлт өвчин**

13.29 %



**Chronic
Obstructive
Pulmonary
Disease**

30.98 %



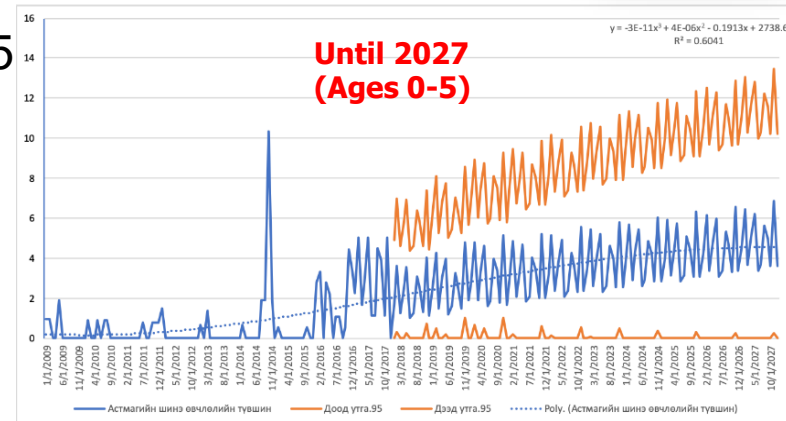
**Coronary artery
disease**

31.45 %

Changes in Health Due to Increased and Decreased Air Pollution 2009-2020



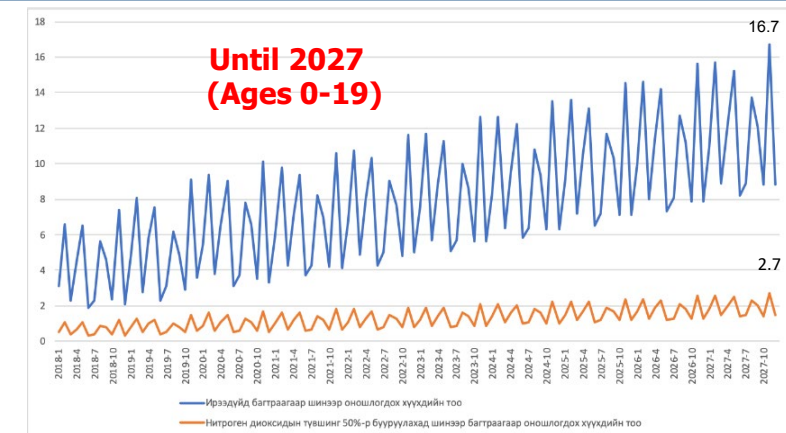
- It has been established that an increase in PM2.5 concentration by $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ results in a 0.8% increase in hospital admissions due to cardiovascular diseases. (A. Enkhjargal et al., 2009)
- For each unit increase in PM2.5 particulate matter, the number of hospitalizations for pneumonia and respiratory infections among children aged 0-5 increases by 15. (D. Gantuya et al., 2019)



The incidence of new asthma cases among children aged 0-5 in Ulaanbaatar (per 100,000 children) - Projections (National Center for Public Health, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, 2020)

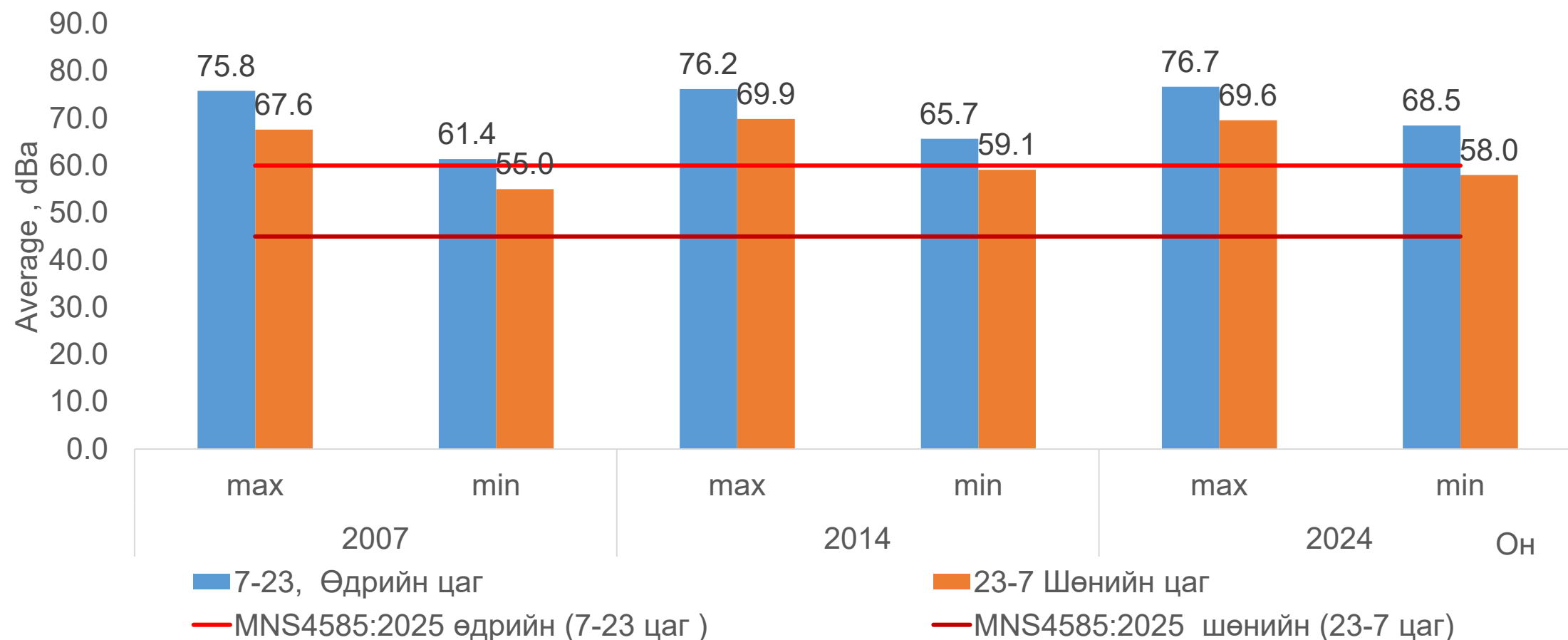


- When the concentration of PM2.5 decreases to $100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, the number of deaths attributed to cardiovascular diseases is expected to decrease by 11, while the number of deaths attributed to respiratory diseases is projected to decrease by 5. (A. Enkhjargal et al., 2009)
- Reducing the PM2.5 concentration to $200 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ could potentially decrease respiratory and cardiovascular mortality by 28% during the cold season. (O. Chimedsuren et al., 2015)



If the number of children diagnosed with asthma in the future decreases by 50% due to reduced air pollution, the number of newly diagnosed children with asthma will also decrease (Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, 2020.)

Noise levels during the daytime (700-2300) have a maximum value of $L_{max}-0.5\%$ and a minimum value of $L_{min}-7\%$. During nighttime (2300-700), the maximum value is $L_{max}-3.4\%$ and the minimum value is $L_{min}-7.5\%$, indicating an increase in the minimum value.



Source: O. Oyun-Erdene et al., Analysis and Assessment of Noise in Ulaanbaatar- 2007, 2014, 2024)

The air quality standard of Mongolia MNS4585:2025, resulting from construction activities, exceeds the permissible levels of 45 dBA at night and 60 dBA during the day.

During the night, levels of 58.9-83.5 dBA have been recorded.

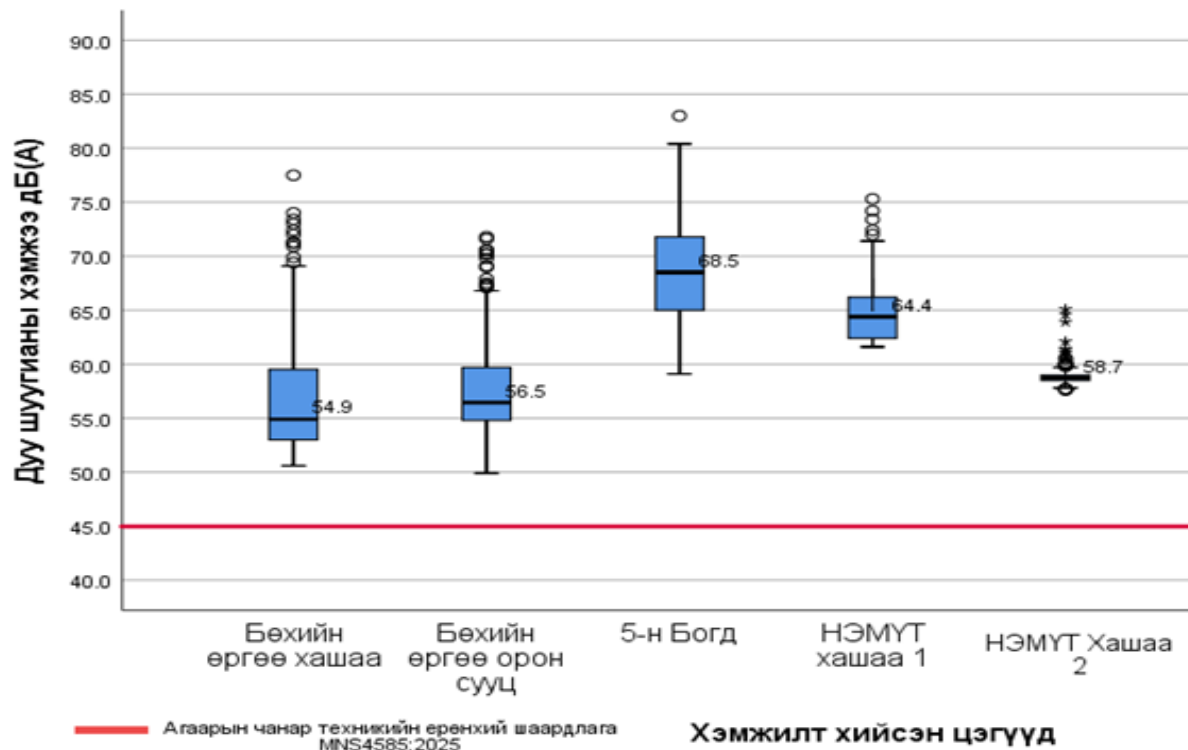


Figure 2. Measurements 22:00 to 07:00, Ulaanbaatar, August 2025.

During the daytime, levels of 69.7-80.5 dBA have been recorded

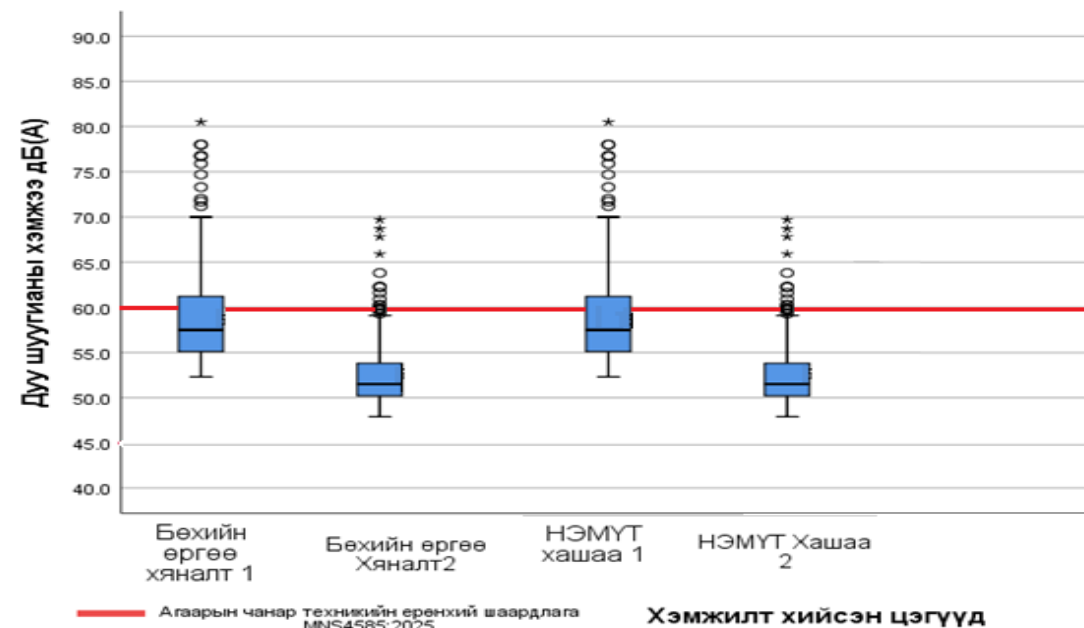
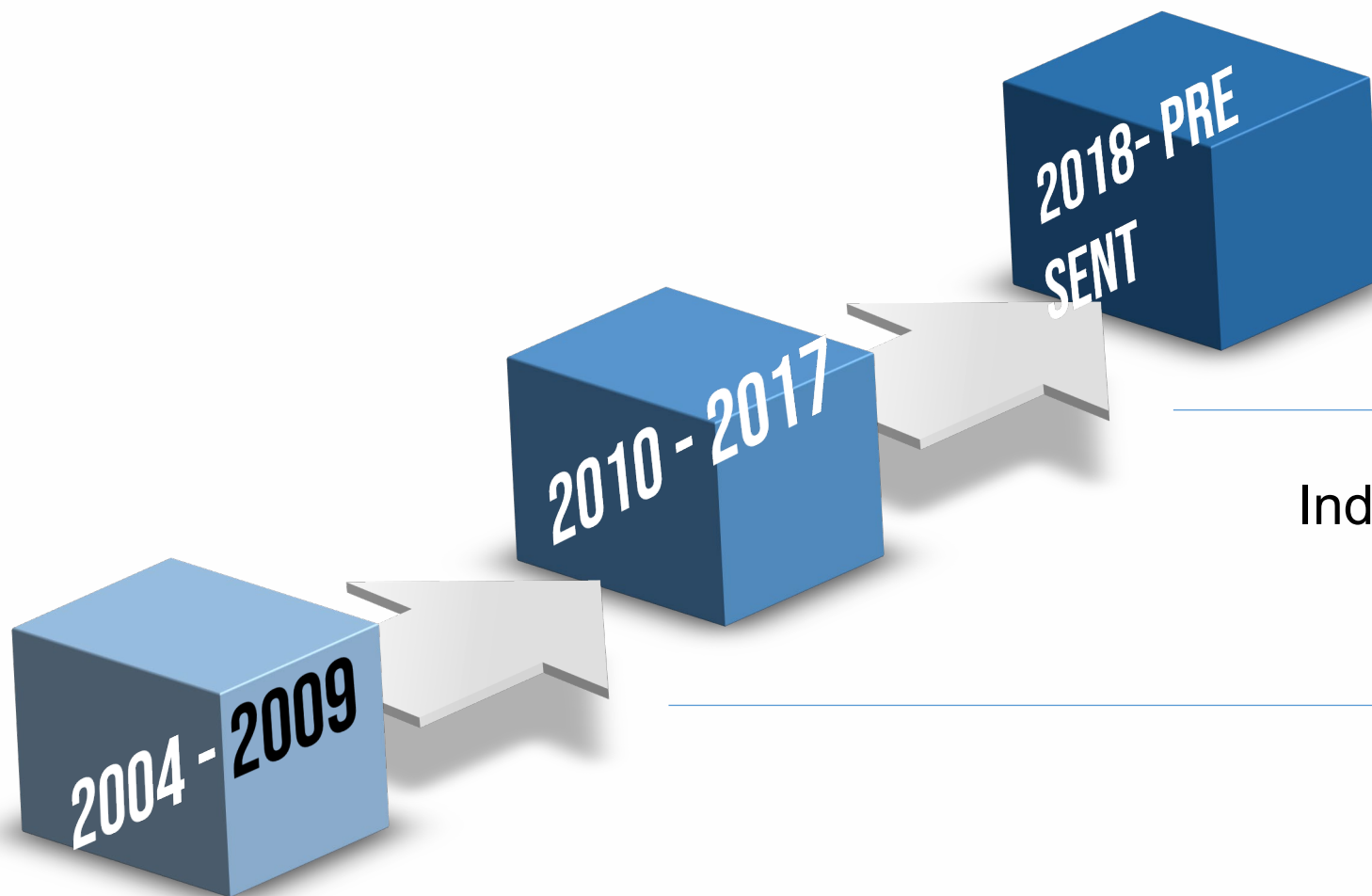


Figure 3. Measurements 07:00 to 22:00, Ulaanbaatar, August 2025.



CO, VOC,
Mold fungi,
CO poisoning, fatalities,
individual exposure

Indoors of schools and kindergartens:
PM2.5, PM10, SO2, NO2, CO2

In the household environment
PM10, SO2, NO2, CO2
Respiratory diseases: Asthma, Bronchitis

Indoor Air Quality and Health, 2016-2021

Organization	Research title	Results
 National Center for Public Health, 2016	"Assessment of Air Quality in the School Environment and the Health Standards of the Learning Conditions"	The concentration of PM2.5 fine particulate matter in the indoor air exceeds the levels specified in the Mongolian standard MNS4585:2016 by a factor of 3.1 to 10.05, indicating a significant risk.
 ASHUYNIC	Research on Interventions to Improve Indoor Air Quality in Residential Buildings in Ulaanbaatar City	The use of air purifiers during pregnancy to reduce the concentration of PM2.5 particles in the indoor environment resulted in an increase of 80 grams in newborn weight and a height increase of 0.4 cm, positively influencing fetal development.
 National Center for Public Health, 2021	Indoor Air Quality	The concentration of PM10 particulate matter in the indoor environment during the household heating season accounted for 25.7% of the total measurements (n=369), while PM2.5 particulate matter represented 38.4% of the total measurements (n=500), exceeding the MNS4585:2016 standard.

Indoor air pollution is at a level that negatively impacts human health

Indoor air quality monitoring and health assessment

PM2.5 Levels in School Classrooms:

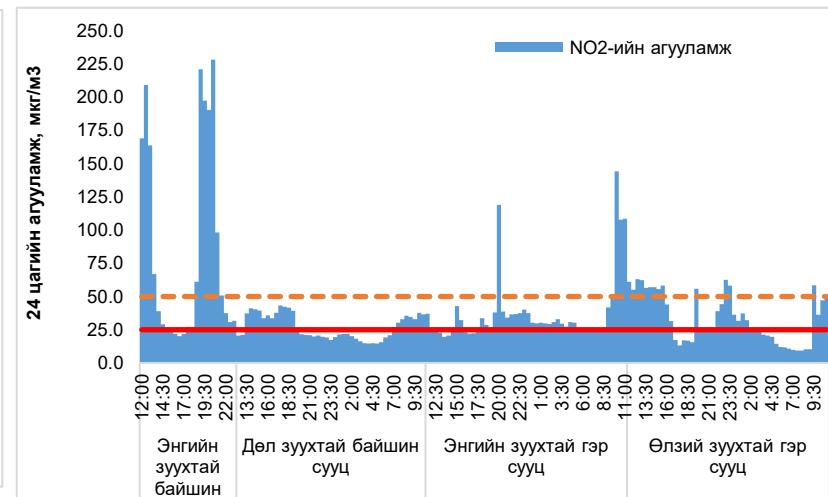
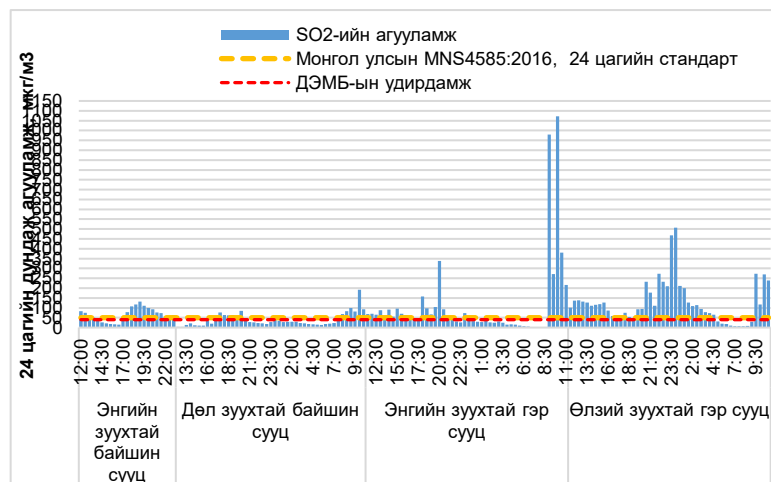
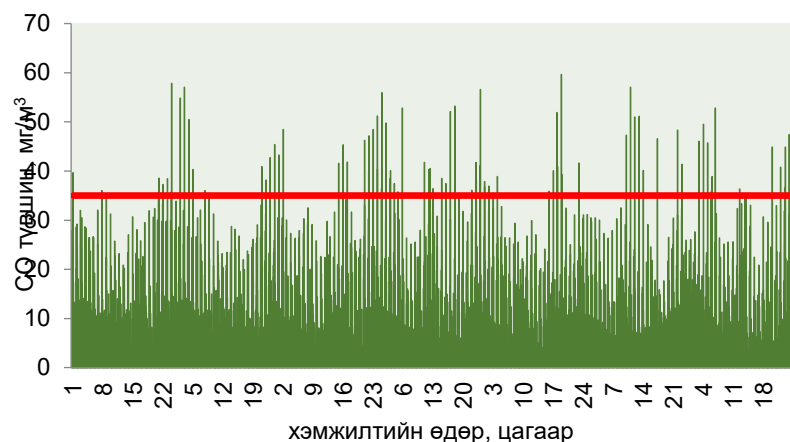
- Connected schools: 272.25 (95% CI: 11.86-532.64)
- Schools with partial heating: 635.96 (95% CI: 471.26-800.65)

(Source: School Indoor Air Quality and Health Assessment of the Learning Environment, NCPH, 2017)

The indoor air quality of households during the heating season exceeds standards.

- PM2.5 particulate matter: 76.6 (95% CI: 56.9-166.3),
- PM10 particulate matter: 83.8 (95% CI: 78.2-189.5)

(Source: Assessment of indoor air quality and gas pollutants, NCPH, ADB, 2021-2022)



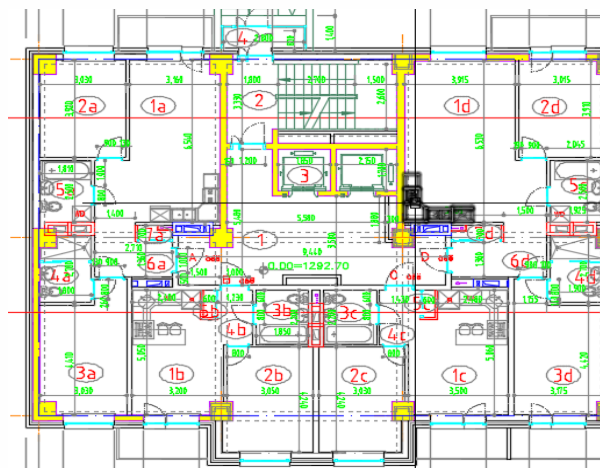
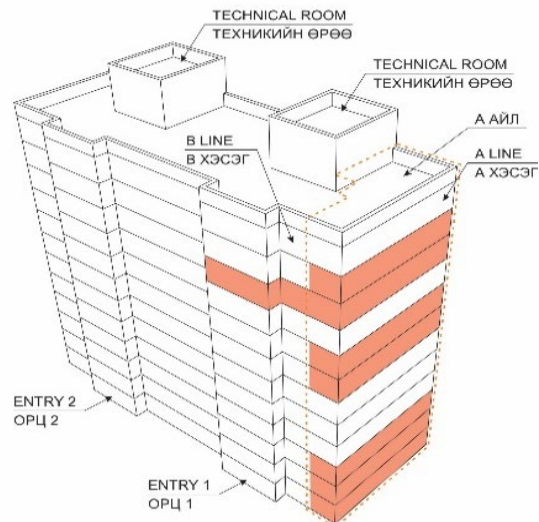
When coal is burned, chemical pollutants are released into the indoor environment throughout the day, leading to accumulation. (Determining the air quality of household indoor environments and gaseous pollutants, NCPH, ADB, 2021-2022)

The exposure to carbon monoxide is compared based on smoking and the type of fuel used.

Reference level COHb, (%)	Participants in the study n=189	Processed coal		Raw coal	
		Average [95% CI]	P value	Average [95% CI]	P value
Non-smoking 2.0%	Child n=	3.0% [2.3-3.8] ↗	0.001	6.0% [4.3-7.7] ↗	0.001
	Adults N=	3.8% [3.3-4.3] ↗		4.1% [2.5-5.7] ↗	
Smoking, 5.0%	Adults, n=42	9.0% [7.7-10.2] ↗	0.001	9.2% [6.4-11.9] ↗	0.001

Source: O. Oyun-Erdene, "The Impact of Indoor Air Quality and Pollutant Gases on Human Health," 2024.

Air Quality in Indoor Environments During the COVID-19 Pandemic



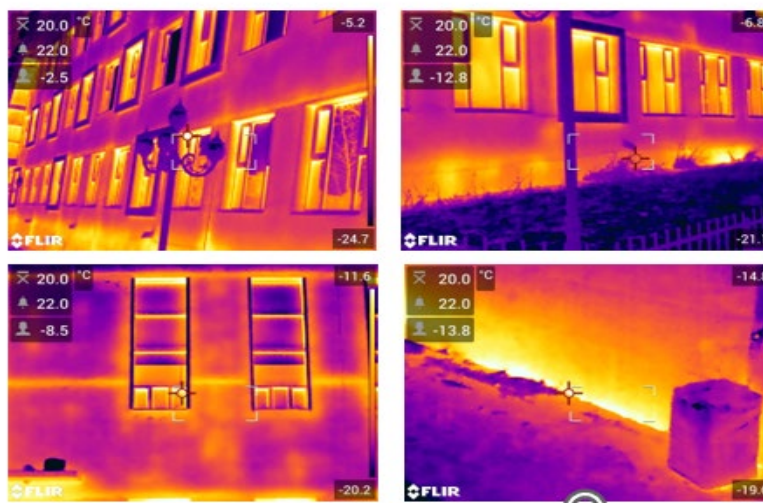
Buildings are not constructed according to the design; they are arbitrarily modified..



Зураг 15. Сургуулийн хооллох залны агаар сорох системийн сэнс, зонтоор сорсон агаарыг зайлуулж буй шахт (эхний том сараалж)



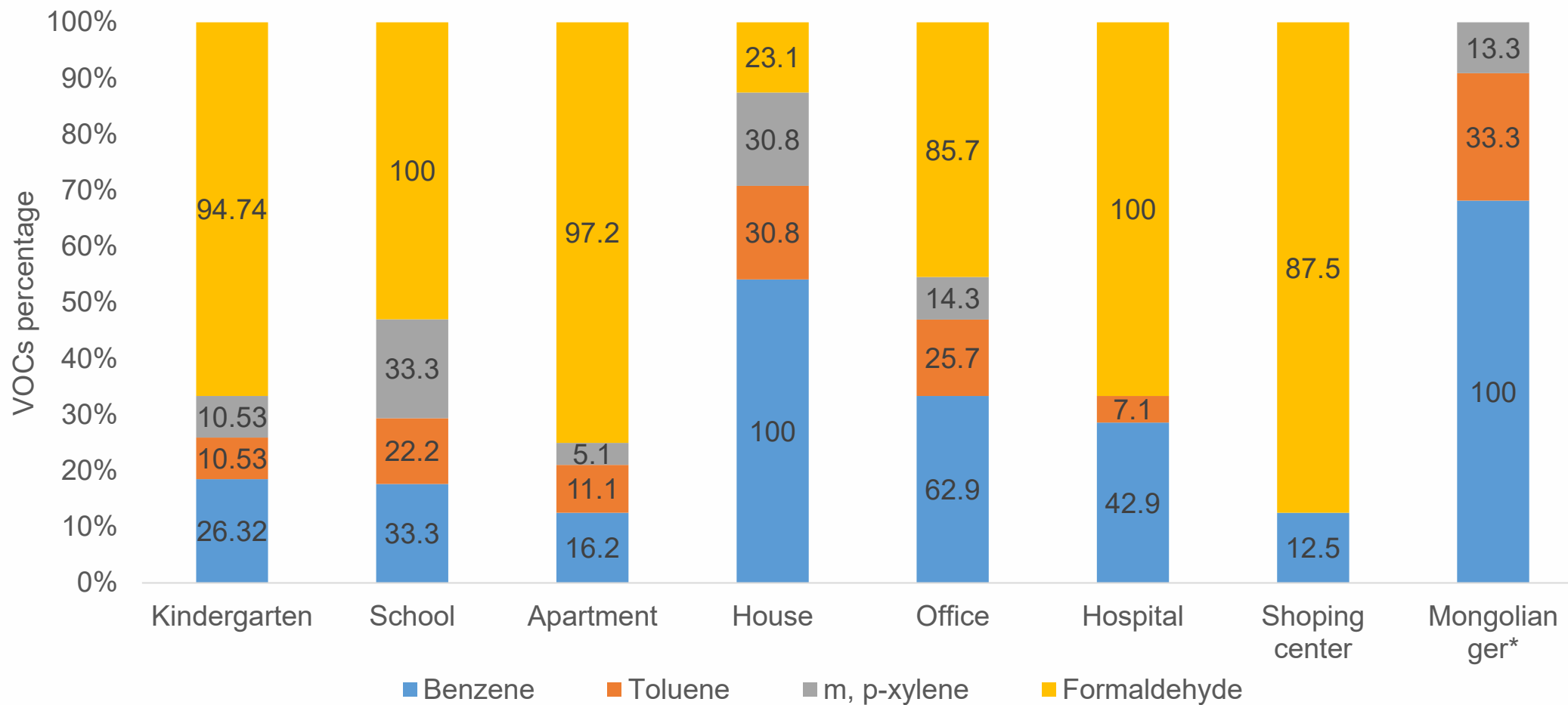
Зураг 16. Ердийн агаар сорох системийн зайлуулах шахт, түүнийг бөглөсөн байдал



The ventilation system is not functioning, leading to heat loss, and there are issues with the quality of the structure and the chimney.

(Source: Assessment of the condition of the ventilation systems in schools and kindergartens, Ministry of Health, National Center for Public Health, WHO, 2021)

Volatile organic compounds, pollutants by type of environment

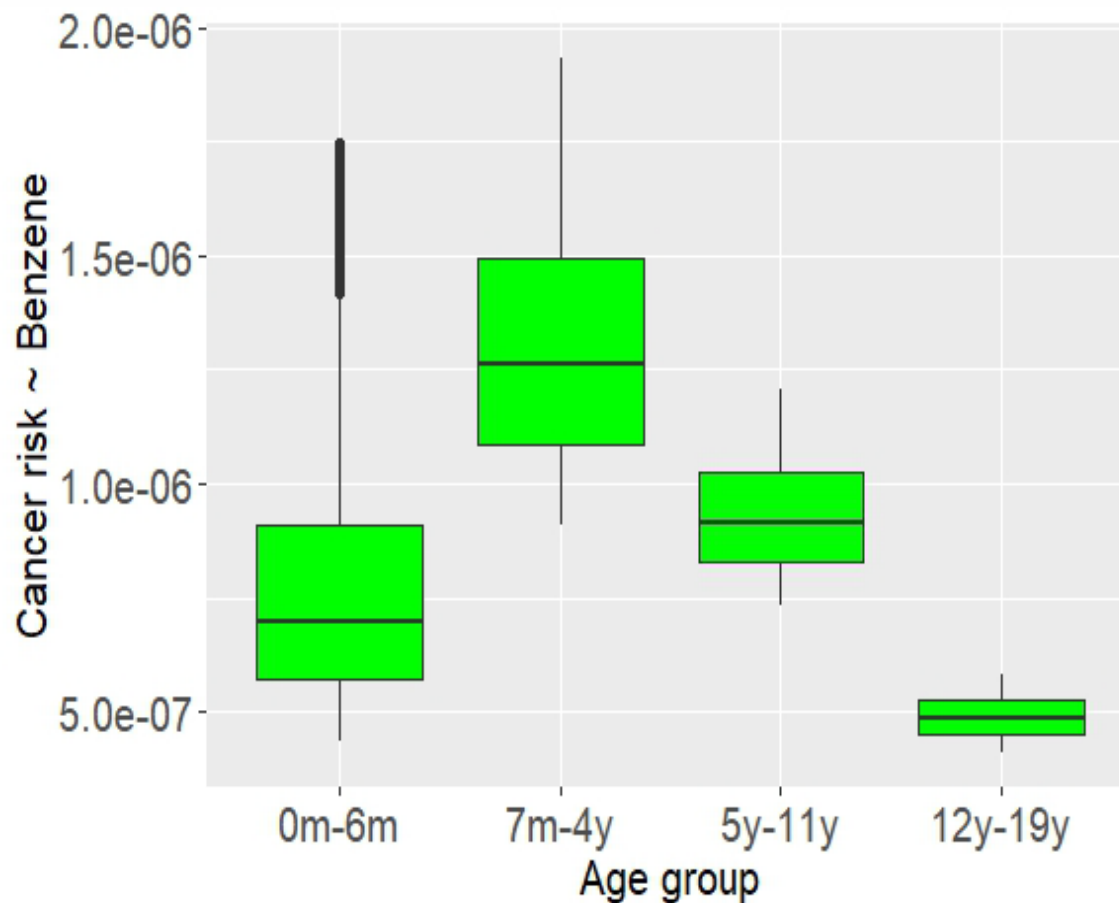
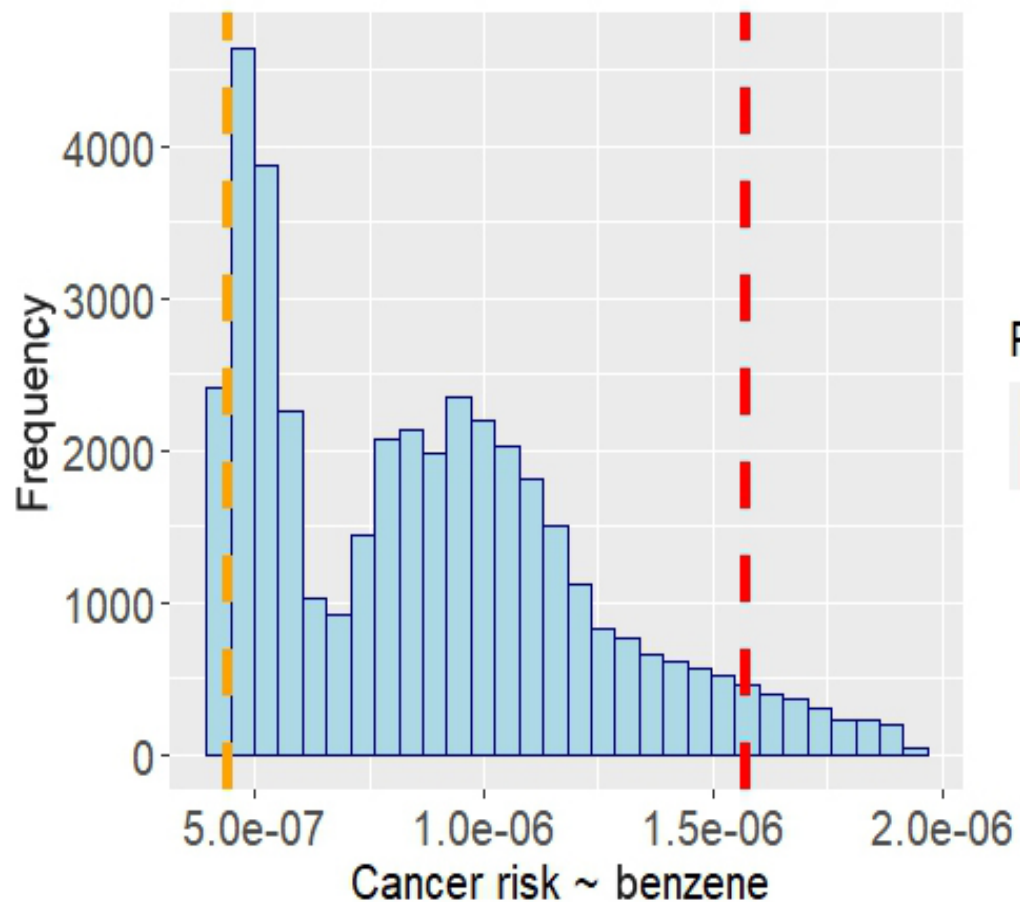


Volatile organic compounds, categorized by type of pollutant

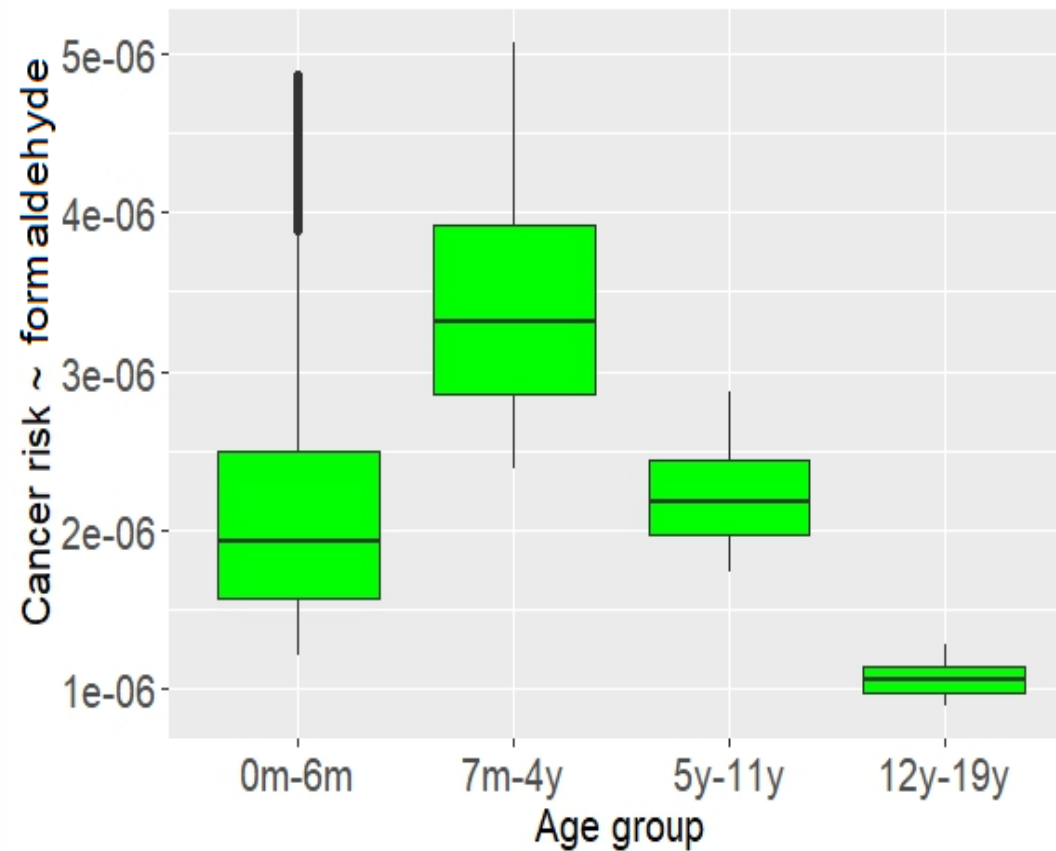
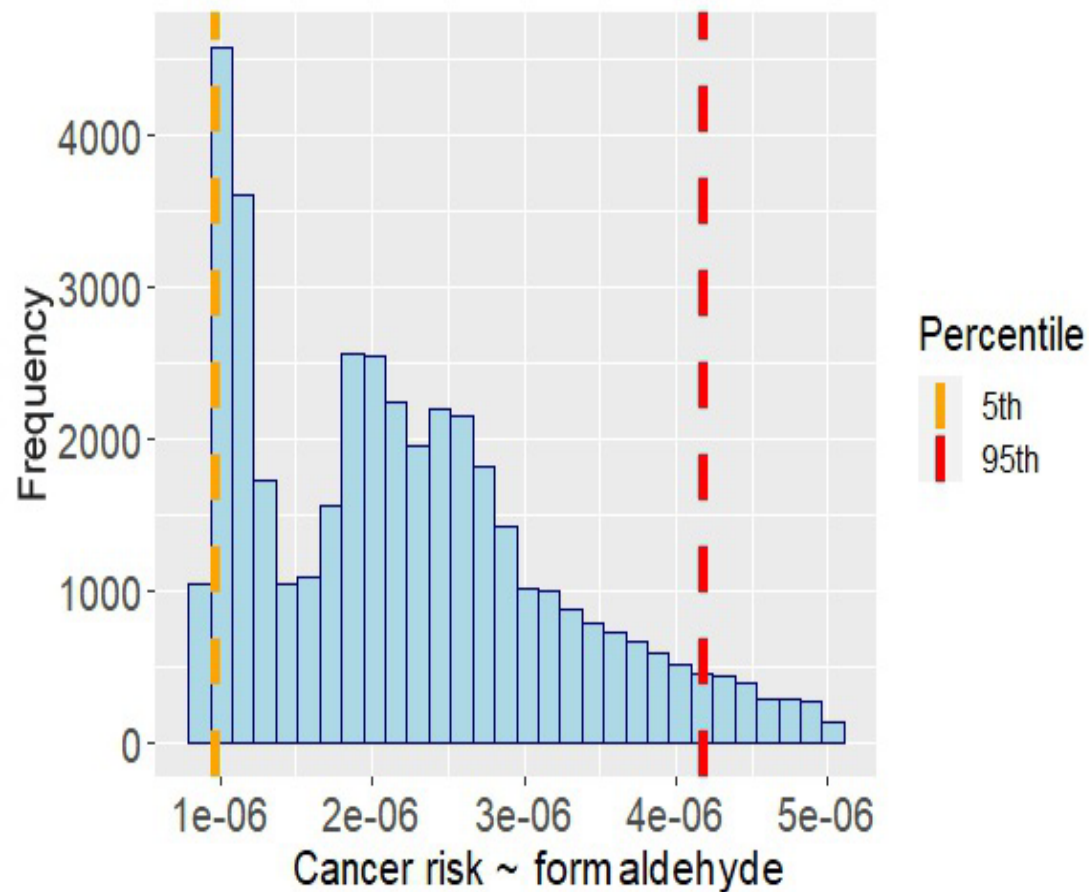
Heating system	Measurement location	VOC average [95% CI], µg/m ³			
		Formaldehyde	Benzene	Toluene	m,p-Xylene
Central heating system	Kinder gardens	81.2 ↗ [74.5-88.3]	9.8 ↗ [6.9-14.1]	100.7 ↗ [65.9-154.0]	102.9 ↗ [58.2-182.0]
	School	86.3 ↗ [86.3-96.7]	6.6 ↗ [6.6-9.8]	87.9 ↗ (87.9-96.7]	46.8 ↗ [46.8-63.7]
	New apartment	5.2 [2.8-19.82]	15.2 ↗ [14.9-83.3]	68.1 ↗ [87.3-90.6]	82.9 ↗ [42.3-95.5]
	Old apartment	20.4 [5.6-22.3]	24.2 ↗ [24.9-38.4]	74.9 ↗ [84.3-98.7]	71.8 ↗ [51.9-89.7]
Section heating	Private house	203 ↗ [185.0-225]	114.9 ↗ [89.0-142.0]	179.3 ↗ [135-236]	76.5 ↗ [59.0-115.0]
	Traditional ger	NA	93.2 ↗ [78.3-121.9]	122.9 ↗ [74.7-181.9]	99.8 ↗ [78.9-280.6]
Reference value from the Germany		30	3	30	29
P-утга		0.001**	0.001***	0.65	0.6

Source: O. Oyun-Erdene, "The Impact of Indoor Air Quality and Pollutant Gases on Human Health," monographic work, 2024.

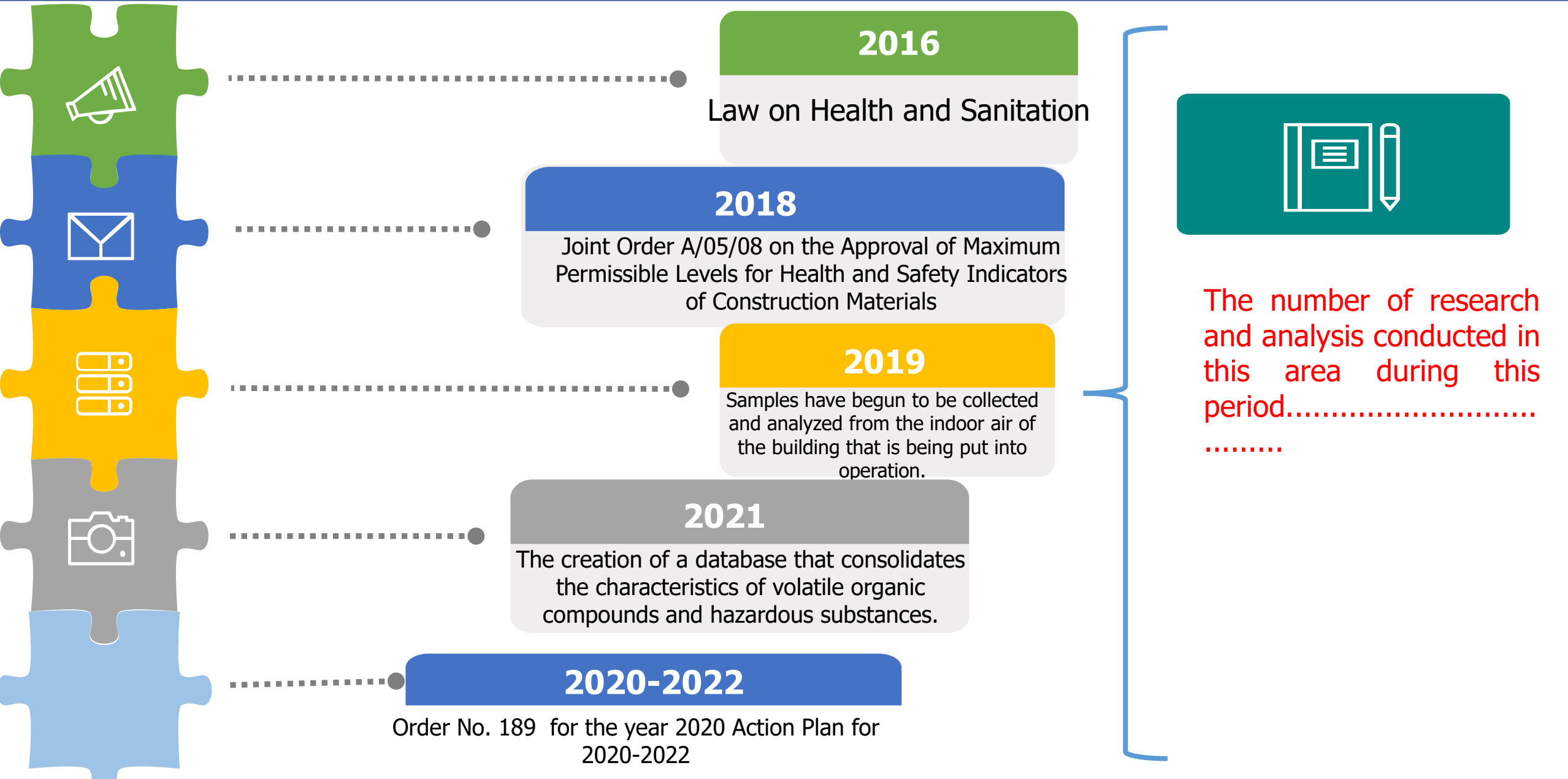
The risk of benzene-related cancer by age group



The risk of Formaldehyde cancer by age group.



Indoor air quality in relation to the health standards of building materials



n accordance with the implementation of the joint order A/05 and A/08 issued by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Construction and Urban Development in 2018.

The "National Conference on Construction Material Manufacturing" organized by the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing in 2020 in the Arkhangai Province.



Implementation of the recommendations from the "National Conference on Construction Materials Industry 2020"
Order No. 189 of the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development for the year 2020
Action Plan for 2020-2022

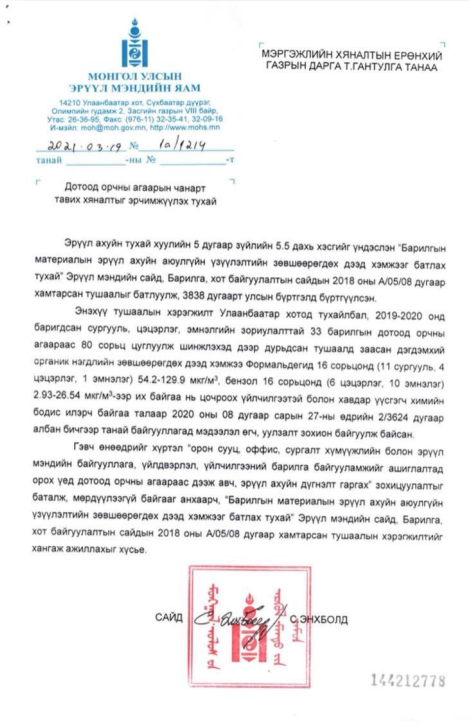
1.3.2 Establishing a database for building health indicators

3.4.1 Implementing and promoting joint directives

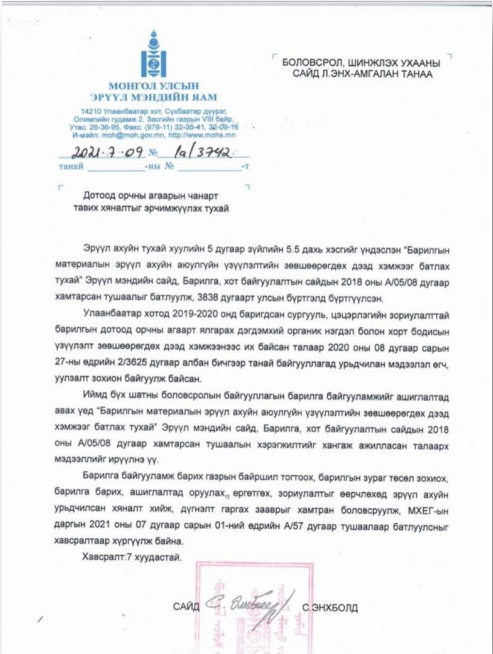
In order to ensure the implementation of the plan:

On July 19, 2021, a joint discussion meeting was organized by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development, the Ministry of Education and Science, the General Authority for Specialized Inspection, the National Center for Public Health, and UNICEF.

In accordance with the implementation of the joint order A/05 and A/08 issued by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Construction and Urban Development in 2018.



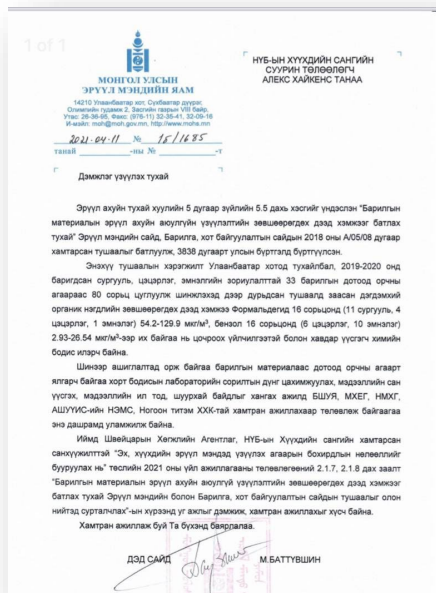
On March 19, 2021, an official letter numbered 1a/1214 regarding the intensification of monitoring air quality in indoor environments was submitted to the General Agency for Specialized Inspection.



On July 9, 2021, a letter numbered 1a/3742 was submitted regarding the implementation of the joint order A/05 and A/08 of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Construction and Urban Development, which pertains to the acceptance of the buildings of educational institutions at all levels by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The results of the assessment of the ventilation systems in schools and kindergartens, along with recommendations for improving air exchange in educational institutions at all levels, were delivered via official letter No. 2/2382 on April 19, 2022.

In accordance with the joint order A/05 and A/08 issued in 2018 by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Construction and Urban Development, measures will be taken to ensure its implementation.



Official letter No. 1b/1685 dated April 11, 2021, from the UNICEF "Regarding the support for the digitization of laboratory test results of harmful substances emitted into the indoor air from newly commissioned building materials and the establishment of a database."

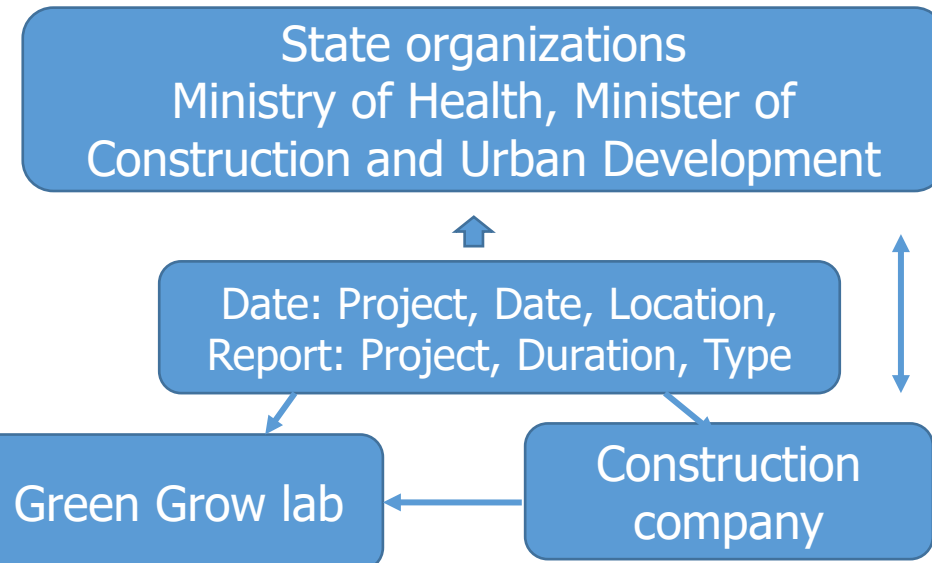
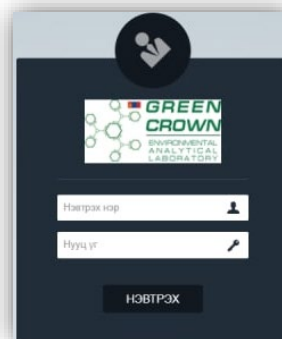


In 2021, a consolidated database of the results of indoor air pollutant testing in buildings was established at the request of the Ministry of Health.

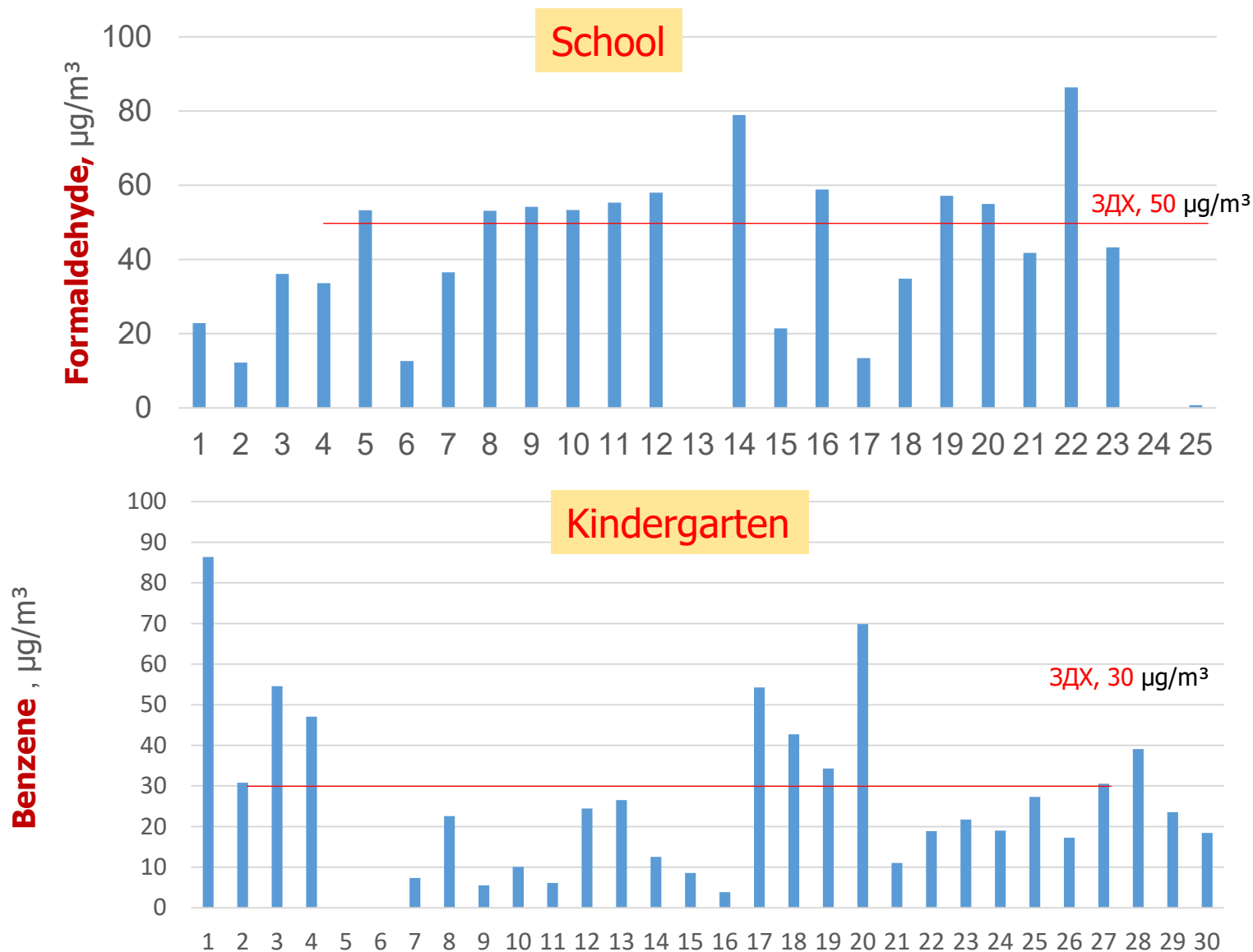
Reports on over 180 tests conducted from 2019 to 2021.



More than 20 state inspectors, registered in the system.



Concentration of volatile organic compounds in indoor air, 2019-2020 /School, Kindergarten/



A total of 28 buildings
55 samples

Formaldehyde

15 samples
(11 schools, 4 kindergartens)
54.22-86.35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

Benzene

6 kindergartens
2.92- 26.54 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

It indicates the presence of
carcinogenic and mutagenic
chemicals.

AIR POLLUTION, CHILDREN'S HEALTH, ECONOMIC STUDY



2016

10.4 billion tugrug (4.8 million USD)



2.3 times



**Treating children
aged 0-18 years**



2025

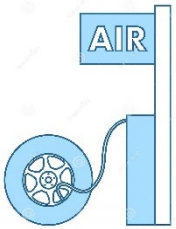
**24.8 billion tugrug
(9.8 million USD)**

Researchers from the Oxford Policy Research Institute, in collaboration with local scholars, have studied how air pollution affects children's health and the economy, with the research conducted in 2017.

Further actions to be taken



- A certain percentage of the environmental pollution fee will be allocated to a health promotion fund to enhance public health education, support active participation of individuals, families, and communities, and protect citizens from the impacts of environmental pollution.



- Transitioning to "clean fuels" to improve air quality, focusing on reducing air pollution.
- Developing and approving indoor air quality standards.
- Enhancing the capacity to measure and monitor PM2.5 and other health-impacting pollutants at the national level.



- Monitoring noise levels in urban areas and planning measures to reduce pollution.
- Strengthening the environmental health surveillance system and empowering professionals.

Thank you for your attention