



Hazmat Training Ensures Nationwide Safe Disposal of Construction Waste

Construction often involves working with and around hazardous materials, which if left untreated can cause illness to workers, environmental destruction and long-term health problems. And when a city is in the midst of a construction boom—like the one underway in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia—proper handling of hazardous materials and their proper disposal becomes even more important.

Through its five-year, \$285 million compact, the Millennium Challenge Corporation is working with Millennium Challenge Account-Mongolia to ensure the adoption of the international standard for management of hazardous materials and wastes for the renovation or construction of buildings—an approach used only sparingly in Mongolia until recently.



Hazardous materials used to be dumped in this trash site right outside of Ulaanbaatar.

MCA-Mongolia has worked tirelessly over the past several years to raise general awareness of the importance of proper management of construction hazardous wastes. As a result of these efforts, the Government of Mongolia has recently banned the use of asbestos in construction.

Batsaikhan Usukh, MCA-Mongolia's environmental and social assessment director for MCA-M, said he initially found it challenging to reach a common understanding with stakeholders on how to incorporate hazardous materials and waste management into compact implementation.

The next, more difficult step was to convince all construction contractors to comply with the Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management Plans (HMWMP), as required by MCA-M's hazardous materials and wastes management guidelines. These standards were the first of their kind in Mongolia.

With the compact now in its fourth year, Batsaikhan reports all contractors have been implementing HMWMP successfully.

“It was a pleasure to observe during our monitoring visits that the adherence of the contractors to the HMWMPs was satisfactory” he said. “My feeling is that the key to success is the close working cooperation between MCA-Mongolia and its contractors.”

In April 2012, MCC and the environmental and social assessment staff from MCA-Mongolia conducted a joint field trip to listen to impressions of beneficiaries after the completion of construction renovation works. The director of the Technical and Vocational Education College in Darkhan reported the construction work at the college is being completed in accordance with the guidelines. The college is also incorporating hazardous materials training into its curriculum.

The compact is expected to benefit 1.7 million people and raise household incomes by more than \$217 million. Its construction activities and a greater awareness about hazardous materials are working to create a healthier Mongolia.



MCA-Mongolia built an interim hazardous waste disposal and storage site to ensure proper handling of hazardous materials.