

Thousands of children die each year because of air pollution



Every year, the burning of fossil fuels claims four-million lives, including children, especially those living in low-income countries. The main victims, warns a report by Greenpeace Southeast Asia and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, are the impoverished people of the world.

It is estimated that approximately 40,000 children die annually before reaching age five due to exposure to particulate pollution from fossil fuels, according to the report.

These are not isolated statistics. In 2018, according to the World Health Organization, every day about 93 percent of the world's children under the age of 15 (1.8 billion children) are breathing polluted air that is seriously threatening their health and development.

In 2016, 600,000 children died from severe lower respiratory infections caused by polluted air. Many of them lived in low-income countries, according to WHO.

It is time to face this reality: "Air pollution is a threat to our health and our economies," said Minwoo Son, clean air campaigner at Greenpeace East Asia.

The burning of gas, coal, and oil causes three times more deaths each year than road accidents worldwide. Furthermore, it increases risk of stroke, lung cancer, and asthma, according to the Greenpeace Southeast Asia and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air report. Not to mention that air pollution costs the world economy \$8 billion a day.

This is a problem that we know how to solve. The transition to renewable energy sources is essential. We need to phase out diesel and gasoline powered cars and public transport vehicles, Minwoo Son recommended.

The expert concluded: "We must consider the real consequences of burning fossil fuels, not only for our rapidly warming planet but also for our health."

(from teleSUR)

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